
LGCDP Outcome 1

“Citizens and communities engage actively with local governments and hold them accountable”

Citizen Mobilisation in Nepal

**Building on Nepal’s Tradition of Social Mobilisation to make
Local Governance more Inclusive and Accountable**

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Acronyms

AAN	Action Aid Nepal
ADB	Asian Development Bank
AIDS	Acquired Immuno Deficiency Syndrome
ADS	Area Development Societies
APPSP	Agriculture Perspective Plan Support Programme
BDSPOs	Business Development Service Providing Organisations
BRAC	Bangladesh Rural Advancement Committee
CBO	Community Based Organisation
CSO	Civil Society Organisation
CCCs	Concerned Citizens Committees
CDF	Community Development Fund
CECI	Centre for International Studies and Cooperation
CF	Community Facilitator
CFUG	Community Forest User Group
CMC	Chairperson Manager Conference
CO	Community Organisations
CFPR	Challenging the Frontiers of The Poverty Reduction
COPE	Client Oriented Providers Efficient
CPRC	Chronic Poverty Research Centre
CTVET	Centre for Vocational and Educational Training
DACAW	Decentralised Action for Children and Women
DAG	Disadvantaged Group
DGCD	Donor Group on Community Development
DANIDA	Danish International Development Agency
DDC	District Development Committee
DFID	Department for International Development
DFO	District Forest Office / District Forest Officer
DLGSP	Decentralised Local Governance Support Programme
DNF	Dalit NGO Federation
DRSP	District Roads Support Programme
DSCO	District Soil Conservation Office
DWD	Directorate of Water Development
ECDC	Early Child Development Class
EP	Empowerment Programme
FCHV	Female Community Health Volunteer
FECOFUN	Federation of Community Forestry Users' Nepal
FUG	Forest User Group
GBV	Gender-Based Violence
GEEOW	Gender Equality and Empowerment of Women
GESI	Gender Equality and Social Inclusion
GoN	Government of Nepal
GSEA	Gender and Social Exclusion Assessment
GTZ	German Technical Cooperation

HCBO	Health Community Based Organisation
HH	Household
HIV	Human Immune Virus
IGA	Income Generating Activities
INGO	International Non Governmental Organisation
IPC	Integrated Planning Committee
IPCC	Integrated Planning and Coordination Committee
LA	Line Agencies
LDF	Local Development Fund
LDO	Local Development Office / Local Development Officer
LDTA	Local Development Training Agency
LFP	Livelihoods and Forestry Programme
LGAF	Local Governance Accountability Facility
LG(V)AF	Local Governance (Voice) Accountability Facility
LGP	Local Governance Programme
LIP	Livelihood Improvement Programme
LISP	Local Initiatives Support Programme
LRP	Local Resource Person
LSGA	Local Self Governance Act
LWF	Lutheran World Federation
MEDEP	Micro-Enterprise Development Programme
MWCSW	Ministry of Women, Children and Social Welfare
MLD	Ministry of Local Development
MORHU	Mobile Reproductive Health Unit
MCPM	Minimum Condition and Performance Measure
NFE	Non-Formal Education
NGO	Non Governmental Organisation
NGOCC	Non Governmental Organisation Coordination Committee
NLSS	Nepal Living Standard Survey
NRM	Natural Resource Management
NSCFP	Nepal-Swiss Community Forestry Project
NTFP	Non Timber Forest Products
NHG	Neighbourhood groups
P&E	Poor and Excluded
PAC	Project Advisory Committee
PAF PO	Poverty Alleviation Fund Partner Organisations
PAF	Poverty Alleviation Fund
PARHI	Population and Reproductive Health Integrated Programme
PASRA	Poverty Alleviation in Selected Rural Areas of Nepal
PDDP	Participatory District Development Programme
PEC	Popular Education Centre
PLA	Participatory Learning and Action
PLC	Participatory Learning Centre
PMC	Population Media Centre
PRA	Participatory Rural Appraisal
PRMCIP-MS	Nepal Marginalised Community Empowerment Project
PVSE	Poor, Vulnerable and Socially Excluded

REFLECT	Regenerated Freirean Literacy through Empowering Community Technique
RWUDUC	Rural Women Development Centre
RDF	Rural Development Foundation, Janakpur
REDA	Rural Economic Development Association
RH	Reproductive Health / Rural Health
RHDP	Rural Health Development Project
RUPP	Rural Urban Partnership Programme
RWSS	Rural Water Supply and Sanitation
S&C	Saving and Credit
SAGUN	Strengthened Actions for Governance in Utilization of Natural resources
SDC	Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation
SEG	Socially Excluded Group
SLC	School Leaving Certificate
SM	Social Mobilisation
SMELC	Social Mobilisation and Educational Learning Centre
SMOs	Social Mobiliser Officers
SP	Service Provider
SHP	Sub-health Post
SO	Support Organisations
TLO	Tole Lane Organisation
TOT	Training of Trainers
UCP	Underlying Causes of Poverty
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNFPA	United Nations Population Fund
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund
UPCA	Under Privileged Children Association
UNO	Upazila Nirbahi Officer
VDC	Village Development Committee
VF	Village Facilitator
VLDP	Village Level Development Programme
WB	World Bank
WBR	Well Being Ranking
WCF	Ward Citizen Forum
WDO	Women Development Officer
WSUC	Water and Sanitation Users Committee

Executive Summary

The Ministry of Local Development (MLD) has initiated a national programme on Local Governance and Community Development (LGCDP) supported by fifteen donors¹. The LGCDP strategic goal is 'the promotion of inclusive local democracy, through local community-led development that enables the **active engagement** of **citizens** from all sections of society' (LGCDP, 2008:16). 'Community-led' development is defined 'as an approach where citizens and communities either individually or collectively, as active partners in the local governance process, prioritise, implement or fulfil their basic needs through collective action' (ibid). The document captures the essence of this process in the words 'citizen-centred, responsive and accountable local governance system' (ibid: 67).

The programme document identifies social mobilisation as the process through which the critical link between citizen demand and state response will be developed. The 'social mobilisers' primary functions will be strengthening local voice and increasing the extent to which local groups and communities can participate actively in the decision making on the use of the block grant and hold their local governments and service delivery agencies to account' (ibid:20). The programme document expects the mobilisation to ensure social inclusion and to address the structural causes of inequalities (e.g. class, caste and ethnicity, gender and generation) and exclusion (ibid:20).

These expectations frame this review of social mobilisation and direct the focus of enquiry to those forms of social mobilisation that can address these specific requirements of building individual capability as a citizen. Moving from social mobilisation to citizen engagement requires a set of different processes and understandings from those routinely used to establish groups for service delivery, savings and credit and sectoral inputs.

In addition, LGCDP requires a harmonised approach to identification and targeting of disadvantaged households, as this will be required both for the social protection pilots as well as the allocation of VDC/Municipality block grant funds to such households and groups.

This review has two main objectives:

- To identify good practice in Nepal to inform options for harmonised approaches in LGCDP for:
 - o Social mobilisation/citizen engagement process
 - o Disadvantaged Household mapping
- To inform the Social Mobilisation Guidelines being developed by MLD.

¹ ADB, CIDA, DFID, DANIDA, Government of Finland, GTZ, JICA, Government of Norway, SDC, UNDP, UNICEF, UNCDF, UNFPA, UNV, WB. (source: MLD)

The Major Findings from the Study

The review used LGCDP's programme document to frame the analysis of social mobilisation approaches and its description of the mobilisation process to be followed by LGCDP; it has the following characteristics (LGCDP programme document 2008:19-20):

- Strengthening local voice
- Increasing extent to which local groups and communities participate actively in decision-making and hold local governments & service delivery agencies to account
- Ensuring social inclusion to enable marginalised/disadvantaged citizens to participate
- Addressing the structural causes of inequality – changes in formal rules & transformation in people's attitudes and behaviours – requiring targeted mobilisation (poor and non-poor)

Using the GSEA framework the study analysed the range of different forms of mobilisation practised in Nepal to identify those approaches that could best meet the LGCDP requirements. The study findings indicate that although mobilisation can focus initially on action in any of the three domains (assets and services, voice and rules of the game), many social mobilisation approaches focus only on organising groups for livelihood assets and services. But for real transformational or structural change to deliver the LGCDP outcomes, action is needed eventually in all three domains. There are relatively few programmes that use transformational approaches to mobilisation but those that do, provide some clear guidance on the types of approach LGCDP should follow. These approaches provide evidence of change in the voice and capability to demand of poor and excluded people and have in addition addressed some of the problems of social jealousy and obstruction often encountered in processes that target only the disadvantaged by engaging the elites as 'champions of the poor'.

Major findings are:

- Importance of **transformational approaches** to citizen mobilisation
- **Disadvantaged household identification**; community-based process creates good ownership, but there are many contradictory and conflicting indicators leading to mis-targeting, confusion and suspicion
- **Extreme poor** are left out or self-exclude from almost all mobilisation processes
- There are no **graduation mechanisms** to support movement of extreme poor and excluded into mainstream development opportunities
- Few programmes **link citizens/groups with local body processes**; group processes are generally isolated and parallel and are failing to support the development of citizen-state relationships.

In order to ensure that LGCDP can achieve its Outcome 1: 'Increase voice and capability of citizens to influence the decisions and processes that affect their lives through a citizen-centred, responsive and accountable local governance system (Project Doc); it requires transformational mobilisation processes to build peoples' capacity and confidence - particularly poor and excluded - to actively participate in their own governance.

LGCDP through responsive citizen engagement provides a potential peace mechanism and is a major opportunity to address the causes of conflict. But currently there is a risk of exacerbating conditions for conflict, unless some significant changes are put in place. Outcome 1 through a

citizen mobilisation process will build voice and demand. For this to be effective there must be adequate, timely and fair response to this demand. This requires that Outcomes 2 and 3 must provide the response and the enabling environment necessary to meet this demand.

Currently, there is no common agreed understanding of LGCDP and the profound importance of the linkages between its three outcomes. As a consequence there is a lack of consistency and linkage between programme outputs and no clear sequencing of key activities and links within an agreed and commonly understood and shared framework. This has led already to ambiguity, conflicts and contradictions between the programme document, strategies, guidelines and M&E framework. Such ambiguity and confusion allows business to continue as usual and provides the conditions for elite capture.

To deliver LGCDP's intended outcomes, careful work needs to be done to ensure that each outcome is linked and that commissioned studies, designs of new structures, strategies and guidelines complement and support each other.

To summarise, to achieve LGCDP Outcome 1 the following needs to be in place:

- Transformational approaches to citizen mobilisation
- Accountability of citizen mobilisers to citizens/community
- Separation of the citizen mobilisation process from local government
- Social protection processes linked to citizen engagement processes
- A combined community-based and proxy-means test approach to disadvantaged household identification with independent verification
- Planning for the whole VDC to include services, resources and the block grants
- Consistent, coherent processes, guidelines, strategies based on a common and agreed understanding about citizen-centred local governance that delivers responsive services to citizens
- A combined accountability and voice structure at national-level with operational implementation of citizen mobilisation through a consortia of INGOs and NGOs

In addition to ensuring that there is adequate response to the citizen-based planning process, priority must be given to ensuring coordination of planning and budgeting processes for line agencies, local government, and development partners. It is suggested that the conditional sectoral grant pilots, the social protection pilots and the citizen mobilisation approaches are brought together in the same districts to develop evidence, learning and practice of building a strong linkage between voice and response, where the extreme poor and excluded are supported to become active citizens engaging in their local governance processes, and services and local bodies are enabled to respond. To encourage districts to demonstrate effective coordination at their level and respond to citizen-based planning, incentives should be developed through the Minimum Conditions and Performance Measures (MCPM) in LGCDP Outcome 2.

Finally, for citizen-centred local governance to become fully effective it will be necessary to have a complete process of decentralisation. Clearly this is outside the mandate of this study and remains a subject of high-level political discussion but without this it is difficult to be certain that there will be effective response to citizen voice. Priority must be given to ascertaining that activities envisaged under LGCDP Outcome 3 focusing on building a strengthened policy and national institutional framework for devolution and local self-governance, are in place.

Methodology

The review was based on an extensive consultation process, against an agreed set of criteria, to identify the programmes/projects to be selected. Ten donors, eight INGOs and 24 programmes/projects² have been covered in the review, with a wide range of sector focus: forestry, poverty (urban and rural), health, drinking water and sanitation, local governance, micro-enterprise, Dalit, women and children's rights. A review of secondary documents and global practices informed the lessons learnt. Structured interviews, focused group discussions and wider consultations were held at national, district and local-level with government, donors, project staff, district staff, service providers, political party representatives, social mobilisers, community groups, federations, cooperatives, VDC/Municipality representatives, and with representative organisations of women, Dalits, Janajatis, Madhesis, Muslims and other excluded groups. A total of 15 districts and 40 VDCs were covered in the review. A series of feedback sessions to review draft findings and recommendations were held to incorporate into the final report.

The study addressed the following key questions:

- what modality, process, tools are being used for a) identifying the poor and excluded and b) social mobilisation?
- what practices are there that have strengthened the capacity of citizens – particularly the poor and excluded – and community organisations to actively participate in VDC/DDC/Municipality level planning and prioritising the allocation of block grants, other public funds and resources; and oversight mechanisms of the use of these funds and the quality and inclusiveness of public services?
- how is social mobilisation empowering citizens, including the poor and excluded, to access public resources and services?

Major findings

Building on a long history of community-based development

Over the past 25 years Nepal has developed a vibrant practice of social mobilisation for group-based action. From the very first efforts of the Small Farmer Development Programme, the Production Credit for Rural Women Programme and the Community Forestry Programme back in the early 1980s, group based approaches have combined empowerment and social transformation goals with more practical objectives of improving their members' lives through activities to enhance livelihoods or service delivery.

Continuum of mobilisation approaches: transactional to transformational

By 2004 there were already nearly 400,000 documented community groups in operation in rural Nepal. Different programmes over time have developed very different mixes in their relative emphasis on the transformational side of individual and group based development aimed at "changing the rules of the game" for women, Dalits or for the poor and the more transactional side focused on helping group members – whoever they are – to improve their situation under the current rules of the game. The transactional approaches use social mobilisation as a process

² These 24 programmes/projects were: DACAW/UNICEF, DLGSP/UNDP, Early Childhood Development/PLAN, Empowerment Programme/LWF, Gender Equality and Empowerment of Women/DWD/ADB, Marginalised Community Empowerment Project/MS Nepal, Livelihood Forestry Programme/DFID, LISP/REDA/Helvetas, MEDEP/UNDP, NSCFP/SDC, PAF/WB, PARHI/UNFPA, PASRA/GTZ, Reaching the Disadvantaged/DWD/ADB, RUPP/UNDP, RHDP/SDC, RWSS/WB, SAKCHAM/CARE, SAGUN/CARE, HCBO/Sahakarya, SAMANTA/CARE, Value-based Governance/RDF/ DANIDA, Village Level Development planning/NSCFP/ SDC, Urban Poverty Empowerment Programme/Action Aid

of group formation to organise people more efficiently to transfer assets and services. The review found a range of social mobilisation processes in operation along the continuum from the transformational to the transactional.

Limited sustainability of transactional approaches

Almost all group-based approaches have saving and credit activities, but those which have limited themselves to credit transactions and some technical/sectoral services, have developed less capacity to sustain themselves as a group (beyond the project intervention), identify their needs and look for solutions, than those who have undergone a more transformational process.

Individual and collective capabilities built through transformational approaches

Among the transformation processes, collective analysis of power relations and adoption of REFLECT³ principles and processes were found empowering for community women and men as the process developed people's capacity to analyse issues and to identify and implement local action. In a fragile post conflict setting where tensions can run high over shifting power relations and social hierarchies, involvement of the elite in the transformation process can help reduce conflict.

Duplication of groups and processes

In areas where many projects/programmes are working there is duplication of groups, social mobilisers, processes for well-being ranking and saving and credit efforts. At the same time, in less favoured areas⁴ which do not have a history of development interventions, there are hardly any groups, providing an opportunity for a different approach to mobilisation.

Parallel decision-making and service provision structures

VDC/DDCs have not been able to play their natural governmental role of coordinating diverse inputs as projects/programmes often work without informing them. There is an urgent need for local bodies to coordinate incoming assistance and provide evidence for area/target group selection. There is **no systematic database with VDC/DDCs** on the economic/wellbeing situation of women and men of different social identities in their area; nor is there any comprehensive listing of on-going or planned interventions. This has led to multiple and repeated targeting processes and often inconsistent categorisation of households, thus establishing parallel decision-making and service provision structures.

Lack of commonly held understanding of role and mandate of social mobiliser

There is no clear or commonly held understanding of the role of the social mobiliser or what kind of training and qualifications he/she should have. In many cases social mobilisers are acting as micro-finance providers or other forms of technical service provider. At the same time, they are expected to work on empowerment and group organisational capacity building, leading to confusion between the mobilisation and technical aspects of their work. There is higher emphasis to fulfil the technical instead of the empowerment part of the job.

Exclusion of households

Most of the group-based processes miss the poorest and most excluded households either because of barriers to entry to the groups or through self-exclusion by excluded households (due to reasons such as lack of time to engage, insecurity in terms of benefits from involvement

³ Although the team did not encounter it directly in their field work, the Appreciative Inquiry (AI) approach which is used by a number of agencies (CEDPA, UNICEF, Mountain Institute) also falls into the transformational category. See Messerschmidt, 2008.

⁴ According to a recent social mobilisation mapping study, 11 percent VDCs have no social mobilisation activities in the 66 districts mapped. Amongst these, 25% VDCs have coverage of only 25% households (DLGSP, 2008)

in groups, lack of self-esteem and confidence, costs of membership and difficulties of maintaining credit repayments).

Different mobilisation approaches required for poor and excluded

Reaching the poor and excluded requires deliberate and sustained effort over time with creative strategies and sufficient resources. The mobilisation support required is very different from that used for most group-based formation processes, requiring mobilisers who have empathy and experience of working with the very poor and excluded and ability to provide individual household support.

Identifying the Poor and Excluded

Since the new VDC Grant Operation Manual mention that special funds are to be directed towards the '*atti garib*' or extreme poor, MLD now needs to be able to **objectively define this group and determine how they are to be identified**. While the participatory nature of wealth/well-being ranking processes currently used in disadvantaged household mapping can build community buy-in and reduce resentment over the selection of targeted households, it is **not an adequate basis for identification of those in need of formal social protection measures from the state**.

Varying indicators, repetitious efforts and differing categorisations used for disadvantaged household mapping have created confusion in the identification of the poor and excluded. Refinement of the existing **Proxy Means Testing** instrument used by some programmes, may be a more reliable means of assessing economic status than only the currently widely used food sufficiency criteria.

Linking social protection and citizen mobilisation

Across the projects/programmes reviewed, although there was recognition that the extreme poor are excluded, there were few examples of practices that were trying to deal with this problem in a targeted manner. Even the more transformational approaches were failing to reach the extreme poor and excluded.

In the examples where these households were targeted with particular mobilisation support, an individual household-based coaching/counselling approach was found to be most effective combined with social transfers (conditional and unconditional cash transfers). However, for this individual support to be effective, the learning was that it needs to be linked to a graduation mechanism that helps individual households to access mainstream development opportunities and to the local body planning processes for access to services and other public goods.

Working with the elites to transform them into 'champions of the poor'

Several programmes/projects have developed some interesting processes to engage the elites with the extreme poor in analysis of the underlying causes of poverty and the changes that need to be put in place at the local-level to address these (e.g. ensuring minimum wage rates are paid). Working with the elites has led to positive change in terms of increasing poor people's access to local assets (land, forests, water-bodies). This focus on the wider relations of structural inequalities has been important in beginning a process of longer-term transformation.

Linking social mobilisation with local body planning

Most programmes/projects do not link groups with local body processes. Group processes are generally isolated from the local body. There are increasing examples of group successes in accessing resources and services directly from local bodies but these still reinforce a parallel structure rather than strengthening the local governance processes. Higher level bodies formed

of community organisations have been able to take a wider view of community development but are focused on the development of their sector and their group members. They are generally not working with the wider body of citizens within a VDC or municipality.

Conflict of interest between social mobilisation role and implementation of local planning processes for local bodies

There is also confusion between the social mobiliser's role in supporting citizens and groups to make claims on the local bodies, and their role as an 'arm' of local bodies to help them implement planning processes. If the social mobiliser is employed by the local bodies, this creates a conflict of interest and makes them less effective and credible as facilitators of social accountability processes that are intended to hold these same bodies to account. Perhaps for this reason, the study found very few initiatives that build citizen's capacity to engage with the state.

Lengthy planning processes as a barrier to inclusion

The review found that the planning process for allocation of VDC grants requires a lengthy engagement of households in discussing their priorities for provision of public goods. Often those who are **the poorest and most excluded can least afford to invest time in such processes** when the return is an uncertain public goods benefit that may not have a direct bearing on their already precarious livelihood security.

Politicisation of planning and decision-making processes

Programmes and projects particularly those engaged directly in local body planning processes have experienced a range of problems with politicisation. Some have been successful in reducing the effects of politicisation through active and transparent engagement with political parties from the outset. This has helped to reduce the potential for conflict between parties and has made them publicly transparent about commitments to local development and poverty reduction.

Confusion of planning and budgeting processes, local bodies, line agencies and development partners

The acute contradictions in timing of planning, budgeting and decision-making processes for allocation of resources and services by local bodies, line agencies and development partners is a major disincentive to building effective citizen engagement in local body planning processes. As a result of the late release of the budget ceiling, VDCs/municipalities are forced to plan in the same year (and usually at the end of financial year) for implementation in the same year. This results in poor process, hurried decision-making and poor implementation practices.

Social accountability mechanisms

The review has found uneven experience in implementing effective social accountability mechanisms and very little evidence of accountability for decision-making in the VDC over allocation of VDC block grants. Most programmes/projects use public audits and public hearings but these have become ritualised rather than processes that lead to change or challenge. These tools without processes to support their implementation remain tools and not mechanisms for accountability to citizens. This is only developed when there are processes in place to build citizen capability; that regularise and institutionalise mechanisms of accountability; and where poor practice receives sanctions. These processes still need to be institutionalised in Nepal.

Summary of Recommendations for LGCDP

Citizen Engagement Processes

Citizen mobilisation

A very different kind of mobilisation is necessary for effective citizen-state engagement envisioned in LGCDP. To distinguish this new practice from what we have commonly known as "social mobilisation" we have used the term "Citizen Mobilisation". Rather than being responsible primarily for forming groups for savings and credit or sectoral inputs, "Citizen Mobilisers" are responsible for bringing information to citizens and communities on resources and services available from the state and building the capabilities of individuals and groups to claim those services and resources. Importantly, it focuses on the citizen and her/his ability to claim as an individual directly through the planning process and also through groups.

Transformational approaches to citizen mobilisation

In the context of LGCDP, Citizen Mobilisation is intended to strengthen the ability of citizens to i) influence the resource allocation decisions of local bodies and ii) hold local bodies – and line agencies – accountable for the use of public funds. Using PRA and other tools, a good Citizen Mobiliser will be able to facilitate negotiation between diverse members of a community – women and men, the well off and powerful and the poor and those with low social status – to establish their individual and collective priorities for the use of public funds. S/he will also be able to organise the citizens and the community to choose and apply appropriate types of social accountability mechanisms (such as public audit, report cards, expenditure tracking, etc.) to ensure that those funds are used properly.

Citizen mobilisation approaches to be adapted to social, political and geographical contexts

The political, geographical and social identity contexts impact mobilisation efforts. Citizen mobilisation will need to be organic enough to adapt to changing contexts, without missing opportunities for building capacity of citizens to be able to claim their rights and at the minimum, hold the government accountable for delivering the entitlements that are already provisioned.

Required competencies and skills of citizen mobilisers and community facilitators

It will be necessary to have recruitment and selection processes of Citizen Mobilisers that focus on aptitude, attitude and understanding of transformational approaches to mobilisation combined with an understanding of extreme poverty and exclusion. Capacity building programmes need to be commissioned by the LGCDP that can train citizen mobilisers in the transformational mobilisation approaches as well as focusing on the skills and competencies required to work with the extreme poor and excluded. These programmes must draw on national and international good practice and experience.

Taking the citizen mobilisation process to scale

Building a citizen engagement process around transformational mobilisation approaches combining elements of REFLECT and other empowerment approaches does mean that careful consideration must be given to the extent to which there are service providers and existing experience of these approaches. Given the difficulty of going to scale in a short period of time and the need to test and learn, LGCDP could follow transformational citizen mobilisation approaches in those VDCs/municipalities where the sector conditional grant pilots and social protection pilots are to be developed, build best practice learning from these approaches and build a training programme with service providers to support training of transformational

citizen mobilisers. The existing social mobilisers cannot take on the role of citizen mobilisers without going through a selection process and a training/reorientation programme. This would require a separate process of reselection and retraining.

Separation of the hiring of citizen mobilisers from the state

It is essential to separate the responsibilities of citizen mobilisation (i.e. the demand side) and the government responsibilities (i.e. the response side). Transparent, professional selection processes need to be adopted with criteria ensuring non-governmental/private sector organisations are selected that have the ability – and the incentive -- to facilitate transformative relationships.

Harmonising processes around a framework for negotiation in VDCs/Municipalities

The process of citizen mobilisation for LGCDP will not replace the good work of the many on-going group-based efforts. While there is duplication, existing groups cannot be asked to merge into one as all are in their own process cycle. The duplication can be reduced through agreements between donors and government to support a common framework of working through the Ward Citizen and Village Citizen Fora and through the Integrated Planning and Coordination Committee (IPCC). This provides linkage between the groups and citizens. It also provides a means to jointly plan for access to all resources within VDCs and municipalities.

To facilitate the citizen engagement process required for LGCDP, representation of groups (and of people who are not in groups) must be through a ward level institutional mechanism. Thus citizens and the various groups that operate in each ward will be helped to select representatives to participate in a Ward Citizens Forum (WCF). In addition to other responsibilities, the WCFs will select representatives to attend the IPCC, will develop a list of the development priorities of that ward and negotiate those priorities with the lists of the other wards to articulate the overall priorities of the VDC.

As a minimum it is recommended that new groups are not started where existing groups can be built upon. This study should aid in the development of improved training and curricula for social mobilisation more widely in Nepal.

Coordination of citizen mobilisation

Institutional mechanisms in local bodies like (IPCC in VDC/Municipality, Citizen Mobilisation Committee in DDC) will be used to coordinate all citizen mobilisation efforts in the different VDCs/Municipalities and wards of the VDC.

Disadvantaged Household Mapping

Harmonisation of terminology, process and criteria

Harmonisation of terminology is required both for identification of the extreme poor and excluded, as well as agreements on the other categories (names) for households, poor, medium poor etc. The study team suggests the use of the terms '**poor and excluded**' as these indicate both economic and social disadvantage

The major change that needs to be introduced through LGCDP in agreement with donors is to move from only a food sufficiency based well-being ranking process to one based on a combination of Proxy Means Testing and a community-based process. The ranking should be undertaken by service providers experienced in these approaches. LGCDP also needs to institute a verification process that will assure fairness in the targeting process.

An independently facilitated simple process for targeting of disadvantaged households should be developed by LGCDP that can operate across all VDCs/municipalities. This should be based on the process to be piloted in the LGCDP social protection pilots.

Gender analysis should be carried out to provide gender disaggregated evidence of the existing reality of women and men's differential opportunities, ability to access these opportunities, ability to influence public decisions and the barriers which constrains them. The existing pattern of gender-differentiated labour, access and control profile should be a part of the database/profile that the VDC/Municipality/District maintains.

VDC/DDC/Municipality database

A VDC/DDC/Municipality authorised standard database of existing power centres, poverty pockets and disadvantaged households should be developed. These data can be used by all (local bodies, line agencies, programmes/projects) as the basis for design and for monitoring change. Mapping of disadvantaged households must be linked to addressing underlying causes of poverty and not remain an activity to just target available resources. Local bodies and line agencies should use the poverty pockets information to select their work area and plan accordingly. The disadvantaged household rankings should provide them guidance for interventions. Programmes/projects must use the information generated from the different processes to develop appropriate sector/issue-based services.

Social Protection processes and mobilisation

Working with the extreme poor and excluded

The difficulties of working with the extreme poor and excluded require that LGCDP follows a careful process of linking social protection to the wider citizen engagement processes. The programme will need to develop a transition process that supports the extreme poor and excluded to have access to decision-making fora that allow their voices to be heard and at the same time ensure inclusion of the non-poor without their domination.

The options for social protection through conditional and unconditional cash transfers are already defined in the social protection pilot design document. This review has reinforced the findings of this design in particular its support to a mix of conditional and unconditional cash transfers. However, the design is unclear about the mechanisms for providing support to extreme poor and excluded households, presuming that the social transfers will themselves be sufficient to overcome social and economic exclusion. LGCDP in its social protections pilots needs to develop graduation mechanisms through its citizen mobilisation support to enable the extreme poor to join mainstream development. This citizen mobilisation support must target particular forms of support to households experiencing different levels of poverty and exclusion. This experience will be used as the basis for learning to extend the mobilisation approaches across Nepal.

Linkages with local body planning

Citizen engagement in planning processes

MLD and its development partners must address the problem of conflicting planning, decision-making and budgeting processes between line agencies, local bodies and development partners very seriously and take action to address the inconsistencies and contradictions between the existing planning processes. For the purposes of ensuring effective response to these demand-based citizen planning processes and reducing the potential for heightened frustration and

local-level conflict, priority must be given to LGCDP Outcome 3 to ensure that at the national-level the full implications are understood of the risks of not being able to respond effectively to a citizen-centred local governance process.

The team recommends that the sector conditional grant, social protection pilots and the approaches to citizen mobilisation are all developed in the same districts and VDCs to ensure the greatest complementarity and learning between these approaches and to ensure that LGCDP can demonstrate the linkages between its three outcomes. In particular, this will demonstrate the response of basic services (agriculture, health and education) to citizen-based demand processes.

In addition to the pilot for sectoral conditional grants the study team recommends that LGCDP develop incentives for districts to demonstrate effective coordination and response to citizen-based planning through the Minimum Conditions and Performance Measures (MCPM), the system of rewards and sanctions established by MLD for local bodies.

Identification of local areas of disadvantage: VDC/municipality poverty pocket identification and power mapping

To ensure that planning is informed by an understanding of the current poverty context in the VDC and Municipality, all citizen mobilisers should initiate work in a VDC/municipality with power-mapping and identification of poverty pockets. This will support the VDC/municipality in effective targeting of its block grant funds, and in ensuring that services reach the areas and people most in need of them.

Long-term planning linked to annual planning for all resources and services for the VDC

The planning process should be broadened beyond planning for the Block Grants to include planning across all resources, services in the VDC/Municipalities/districts. This planning process should include 5-year perspective plans as well as annual plans.

Removing ambiguities in the VDC Block Grant Operational Manual 2008

A number of critical issues and areas of ambiguity have been identified in the VDC Grant Operational Manual 2008 that will hinder development of meaningful citizen engagement in the local planning process. All of these issues require urgent resolution. The MLD and its development partners should review the VDC Grant Operational Manual 2008 to ensure that it is consistent with the spirit and the outcomes of the LGCDP that focus on citizen-based governance systems where there is separation of the demand-side from the response. It is essential that this separation is retained and that communities and citizens can have confidence in their representatives and in particular that representatives are not nominated by VDCs. This VDC manual must be written in clear and simple language so that it is easily understood locally.

Linkages of citizens with local body decision-making

There is an absence of structures for citizen voice and participation in local governance processes. Two main areas for citizen engagement - the Ward Citizen Forum and the Village/Municipality Citizen Forum are required. Each of these fora will be facilitated by the citizen mobilisers and community facilitators as part of a process to ensure fair representation of citizens, particularly the poor and excluded. The Village/Municipality Citizen Forum and the Ward Citizen Forum should be mandated in all relevant guidelines as the main fora for citizen engagement.

Social accountability

Systems have to be established through which citizens' capability and understanding is developed to use social accountability mechanisms like public audit, citizen score-card, public hearing to ensure downward accountability of service providers, including the citizen mobilisers. This requires that there are sanctions that can be enforced when there are problems identified through the accountability mechanisms. In addition, to local accountability mechanisms, there are a range of programmatic mechanisms. The Local Governance (Voice) and Accountability Facility (LG(V)AF) will be an independent structure with oversight responsibilities to ensure that the citizen mobilisation process is objective, transformative and protected from elite capture.

Management Structure for Citizen Mobilisation

The study team **strongly recommends** that the Local Governance Voice and Accountability Facility which critically brings together the two key elements of building effective demand – voice and accountability, must be the body for recruitment and oversight of the social mobilisation process. This will allow a strong demand-side process that can respond to the diversity of contexts across Nepal, ensure lessons are learned, provide advocacy support at the national-level and ensure the independence of the processes put in place. For implementation, a consortia of international and national NGOs working through local service providers (at regional and district-levels) would deliver the most effective processes, geographical coverage and responsiveness to diversity.

The team **recommends** that MLD and the development partners reconsider the scope and mandate of the LGAF and expand it to include voice and accountability.

The proposed LG(V)AF should be funded through a basket fund with contributions from GoN and donors. This fund will cover accountability, citizen mobilisation (voice) and information activities. Part of this fund will pay for the regional and district service providers and for the citizen mobilisers.

Monitoring and learning processes

The proposed LG(V)AF should play the central role in ensuring that learning mechanisms are in place; the experience and evidence from the demand-side processes are captured and shared widely; the learning is used to inform policy change and programmatic activity. As part of this learning process it should be responsible for supporting innovation in both accountability and voice processes and learning from these innovations to spread practice across the whole programme.

Accountability mechanisms for citizen mobilisation

Citizen mobilisers and community facilitators will be directly accountable to the people of the VDCs. Ward Citizens' Forums and Village Citizens' Forums and IPCC in VDCs/municipalities, Citizen Mobilisation Committee in the DDC and the national level body will use appropriate tools such as **annual public hearing** and **performance evaluation** based on job descriptions for downward accountability.

Chapter 1: Introduction and Study Context

1.1 Introduction

The Ministry of Local Development (MLD) has initiated a national programme on Local Governance and Community Development (LGCDP), to support good governance and inclusive community development. This programme, supported by fifteen donors⁵, has an important focus in one of its three outcomes to increase the capacity of citizens to engage with local bodies to influence the way they allocate public resources and make them accountable for the proper use of those resources. The design document envisions that this citizen engagement will be facilitated by a process of “social mobilisation”-- referring broadly to the group-based approach that has with many variations been widely used over the last 25 years by agencies in Nepal to involve local people in their own development.

A recent rapid diagnostic study (Hobley, and Paudyal, 2008) found that the quality, depth and sustainability of the social mobilisation processes in practice in many programmes were questionable. The study highlighted the inconsistencies in approaches and definitions for beneficiary targeting and social mobilisation and found that the overall lack of coordination between different projects was causing duplication and inefficiency in project implementation and confusion and suspicion at the community level. A Donor Group on Community Development (DGCD), formed to pursue greater harmonisation between donors and move towards an eventual Sector-Wide Approach to Community Development under government leadership, recognised that given the centrality of social mobilisation in the design of LGCDP, it would be wise to learn more about how various approaches were working on the ground prior to finalising the approach to be used in LGCDP.

The priorities of this action learning were to: i) identify the approaches to the process of social mobilisation and group formation/graduation that are the most effective, sustainable and resistant to elite capture and ii) seek ways to bring greater harmony to the process of identifying or “targeting” the disadvantaged groups. Currently, donors have different approaches to identifying disadvantaged groups; sometimes a single donor will have several different approaches in its different projects. While the Ministry of Local Development has done extensive work in identifying disadvantaged VDCs in collaboration with the DACAW programme of UNICEF and former DLGSP of UNDP, a standard tool and set of criteria for identifying disadvantaged households is yet to be developed.

MLD requires social mobilisation guidelines that provide general guidance to the local bodies (VDC/Municipality/DDC) and local development partners to facilitate a more inclusive process of bottom up planning for and oversight of the use of the expanded block grants and other public resources available to local bodies. What the findings of this review suggest is that most of the approaches to social mobilisation currently in use would not meet the requirements of LGCDP. A new generation of social mobilisation that builds on the past successes but focuses specifically on building citizen engagement for public rather than private goods is required for LGCDP. In the sections that follow we will lay out our findings, what this new approach could

⁵ ADB, CIDA, DFID, DANIDA, Government of Finland, GTZ, JICA, Government of Norway, SDC, UNDP, UNICEF, UNCDF, UNFPA, UNV, WB. (source: MLD)

be, the international and Nepal-specific experience on which it is based and the institutional setting that it requires to be successful.

1.2 Objectives of study

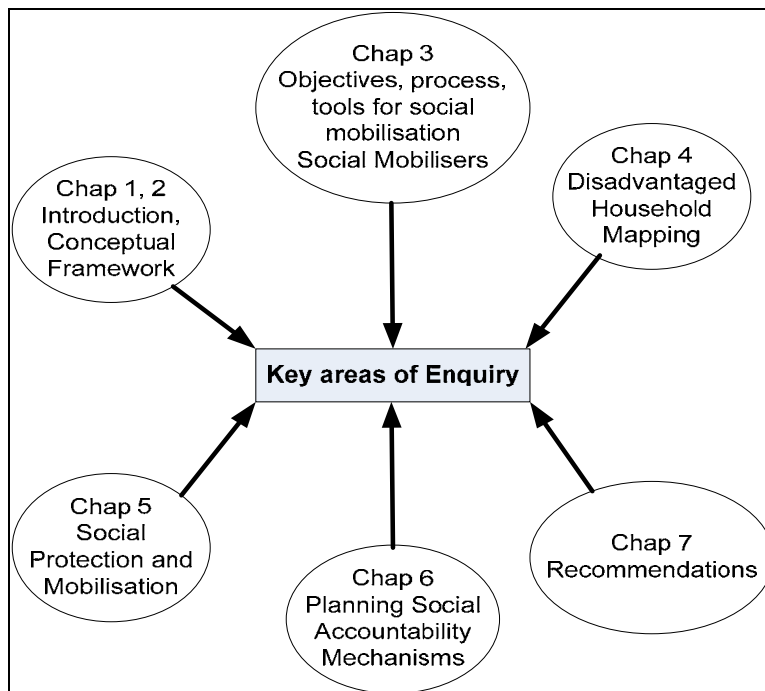
The objectives of the study were to identify good practice in Nepal to inform options for harmonised approaches to:

- social mobilisation/citizen engagement process
- disadvantaged household mapping

Additionally, a key objective was to inform the Social Mobilisation guidelines which would be prepared based on this review and assessment of the existing approaches, modalities and methods of social mobilisation currently in use in Nepal.

1.3 Structure of report

The report is organised as below:



1.4 Methodology

Human Resource Development Centre (HURDEC), a private management consultancy firm in Nepal was commissioned by WB/DFID to lead this study. A core team of two consultants formed the Nepali team with additional members for field visit coverage and social mobilisation operating cost analysis. One international expert on citizen-state engagement, social mobilisation and community development, Dr. Mary Hobley, who had previous experience in Nepal and was part of the LGCDP appraisal team, was commissioned by SDC to support the Nepali team in conceptualising the review framework, in report preparation and to identify global practices relevant for Nepal. (refer annex 1 for ToR of HURDEC and Dr. Mary

Hobley). Dr Lynn Bennett of World Bank guided the team with substantive inputs throughout the process.

The following steps were followed for the review:

1. **Consultations with MLD and donor partners for identification of programmes/ projects:** Based on the ToR, the study team developed broad criteria for selection of programmes/projects to be reviewed, the list of people to meet at national, district, and VDC levels, the checklists for such discussions and the matrices for social mobilisation and disadvantaged household mapping. (Refer annex 2 for instruments used). A list of agencies using social mobilisation as an approach was prepared and these were requested to suggest programmes/projects for review based on the identified criteria. The recommended programmes/projects were then circulated to MLD and donor partners. Field visit sites were planned accordingly and VDCs identified based on the programmes/projects being implemented. Ten donors, 8 INGOs and 24 projects⁶ have been covered in this review. The focus of projects included: forestry, poverty (urban, rural), health, drinking water and sanitation, local governance, micro-enterprise, Dalit, Women and Children's rights.
2. **Review of secondary documents:** The identified programmes/projects were requested to make available relevant documents to the study team. Programme progress reports, study reports, social mobilisation guidelines, manuals, and other programme/project documents were reviewed. Based on these, the checklists and matrices were revised and adapted. **For global practices**, relevant experiences from India, Bangladesh, Indonesia, Cambodia, and Chile were accessed. Programme documents, social mobilisation, citizen-state engagement and community development related interventions and lessons were reviewed and pertinent examples identified. (see Bibliography).
3. **Structured interviews, Focus Group discussions and consultations:** **Structured** key informant interviews were held with: National level: Government, donors, project staff; District-level: key district staff (DDC, Line Agencies), project staff, service providers, representative organisations, political party representatives; **Focused group discussions and structured interviews at Village-level** were held with: community groups, social mobilisers, VDC secretary, community leaders, political party representatives and other representative organisations. The team consulted stakeholders related with local governance, community development, social mobilisation, gender and social inclusion at VDC, district, regional and national levels. In two VDCs in each district, consultations with VDC representatives, local leaders, school teachers, other community leaders and political party representatives were held. Meetings were held with MLD officials, DDC staff, project staff and representative organisations of women and the excluded (Dalits, Janajatis, Madhesis and Muslims) at district levels. Focus group discussions: Focus group discussions were held with community organisations, users' groups, women's federations, women's groups, child clubs, other cooperatives and social mobilisers.

As HURDEC was also responsible for the development of the GESI strategy for LGCDP, its preparation informed this social mobilisation review.

⁶ i.DACAW/UNICEF, ii.DLGSP/UNDP, iii.Early Childhood Development/PLAN, iv.Empowerment Programme/LWF, v.Gender Equality and Empowerment of Women/DWD/ADB, vi.Marginalised Community Empowerment Project/MS Nepal, vii.Livelihood Forestry Programme/DFID, viii.LISP/REDA/Helvetas, ix.MEDEP/UNDP, x.NSCFP/SDC, xi.PAF/WB, xii.PARHI/UNFPA, xiii.PASRA/GTZ, xiv.Reaching the Disadvantaged/DWD/ADB, xv.RUPP/UNDP, xvi.RHDP/SDC, xvii.RWSS/WB, xviii.SAKCHAM/CARE, xix.SAGUN/CARE, xx.HCBO/Sahakarya, xxi.SAMANTA/CARE, xxii.Value-based Governance/RDF/DANIDA, xxiii.Village level Development planning/NSCFP/SDC, xxiv.Urban Poverty Empowerment Programme/Action Aid

4. **Field visit coverage:** A total of 15 districts and 40 VDCs were covered in this review. The number of people met included: DDC Line Agencies/Political Party Representatives: 63; VDC Representatives/Political Party Representatives: 68; Community Groups: 668; Social Mobilisers: 80; Programme Staff: 28 and Representative Organisations: 35. Additionally 8 VDCs were visited during the GESI strategy preparation. (Refer annex 4 for details of coverage and list of people met).
5. **Information Collection and Analysis:** A matrix for each programme/project on their social mobilisation and disadvantaged household mapping process was prepared as a draft based on secondary information and field-based discussions. These were then sent to the programmes/projects for confirmation/revision. All programmes/projects reviewed were requested to provide data and information regarding the diversity profile of their social mobilisers and for calculating the operating cost of social mobilisation. Despite a lot of follow-up, diversity profile information was received from nine programmes/projects and for operating costs from only seven programmes/projects.
6. **Briefing of Social Mobilisation Thematic Group/MLD, Social Mobilisation Guideline Preparation team and Donor Partners and finalisation of report:** Three presentations about process and key findings were made to the Social Mobilisation Thematic Group and SM guidelines preparation team. A preliminary draft report was shared with the Thematic Group and a presentation was made to the Donor Partners. Feedback was incorporated into the draft report. This was distributed to all stakeholders for feedback which was collected in a final sharing workshop.

Chapter 2: The Study Conceptual Framework

2.1 The LGCDP expectations of mobilisation processes and citizen engagement

The Local Governance and Community Development Programme has, as its strategic goal ‘the promotion of inclusive local democracy, through local community-led development that enables the **active engagement** of **citizens** from all sections of society’ (LGCDP, 2008:16). ‘Community-led’ development is defined ‘as an approach where citizens and communities either individually or collectively, as active partners in the local governance process, prioritise, implement or fulfil their basic needs through collective action’ (ibid).

The programme document identifies social mobilisation as the process through which the critical link between citizen demand and state response will be developed. The ‘social mobilisers’ primary functions will be strengthening local voice and increasing the extent to which local groups and communities can participate actively in the decision making on the use of the block grant and hold their local governments and service delivery agencies to account’ (ibid:20). The programme document expects the mobilisation to ensure social inclusion and to address the structural causes of inequalities (class, caste and ethnicity, gender and generation) and exclusion (ibid:20).

The objectives of LGCDP require that the mobilisation process develop peoples’ capabilities to engage with the state as citizens. These expectations frame this review of social mobilisation and direct the focus of enquiry to those forms of social mobilisation that can address these specific requirements of building individual capability as a citizen. Moving from social mobilisation to citizen engagement requires a set of different processes and understandings from those routinely used to establish groups for service delivery, doing savings and credit activities and working on sectoral issues.

In this section we unpack some of the key elements required for **citizen engagement** and some of the experience that underpins this understanding. The main elements required to deliver the types of changes envisaged by LGCDP are the development of: a) capability of **citizens** to exercise **voice**, b) the ability for institutions to **respond**, and c) capability of citizens to hold duty-bearers and service providers to **account**. These four elements: citizen, voice, accountability and response are differently held and developed by individuals and depend on relations of power; these differences divide those who are poor and excluded from those who are not. For LGCDP the challenge is how to support those forms of mobilisation that build the capability in **individuals** to be able to voice their demands and be sure of a response that does not undermine their livelihood security or expose them to high levels of risk. This requires a process of empowerment that ‘enhances the assets and capabilities of diverse individuals and groups to function and to engage, influence and hold accountable the institutions that affect them’ (DFID/World Bank 2006:9).

2.2 What do we mean by citizen, engagement voice, accountability and response?

Citizen

The term 'citizen' is used to describe a person possessing rights as a member of a state. Thus citizenship rights capture 'what individuals can expect and demand from the state' (Goetz and Gaventa, 2001:8). Under the Interim Constitution of the Federal Democratic Republic of Nepal, citizens are accorded the rights to basic necessities (food, shelter, clothing, education and medical care) as well as the rights to work and to social assistance (GoN, 2007). Access to public services is therefore a fundamental right and not a charitable provision. Nonetheless, current channels of public service delivery in Nepal treat people, especially poor people, as recipients of benefits rather than as citizens claiming their rights. For LGCDP, citizen engagement implies active engagement in decision-making processes relating to policy-making and to resource allocation.

Two key principles were identified, governing an interpretation of citizen engagement:

Firstly, citizen engagement leads inexorably to addressing the problem of unequal distribution of resources (Gaventa et al, 2002). **Secondly**, citizen engagement is a political right which can be claimed by marginal and excluded peoples (Moser et al, 2001).

These principles make citizen participation an inherently political perspective on development. It casts the relationships between state and citizen in a different light and presumes a change in the terms of engagement for those in clientelist relationships. As experience in India shows this shift from patron-client relations to that of active citizens has been critical in redefining the relationships between government and people (Dwivedi and Gaventa, 2008).

Engagement

Engagement is a political process beyond the meaning usually associated with participation; it brings in the concept of deliberation and negotiation - the thoughtful exchange of views and the resolution of different opinions, not only between government officials and the public but among members of the public themselves (IoG 2005). This is where engagement is: '*democratic* in its reliance on the participation and capacities of ordinary people, *deliberative* because it institutes reasons-based decision-making, and *empowered* since it attempts to tie action to discussion' (Fung and Wright 2001:7 cited in Gaventa 2002).

Citizen engagement allows people as individuals and as members of groups to be involved in collective choice decision-making, according priorities and making tradeoffs between allocation of resources and services. We distinguish "citizen engagement" here from the more general term "citizen participation." What we want to emphasise here is an active, intentional partnership between the general public and decision makers, at whatever level is appropriate to the decision (Lukensmeyer and Torres, 2006). Engagement includes the need to ensure that different and varied voices are heard and to ensure that decision-makers are willing to treat engagement seriously and make use of its results (IoG 2005).

Voice

Voice is the capacity of all people - including the poor and most excluded - to express views and interests and demand action of those in power. Voice can be exercised through a variety of

formal and informal channels and mechanisms. It can include complaint, organised protest, lobbying and participation in decision-making or policy implementation. Effective voice requires the capacity to access information, scrutinise and demand answers with a view to influencing governance processes and improving access to resources and services as a result. Building voice without building the capacity for response and accountability is a meaningless and can ultimately be a destructive process.

Accountability

Accountability refers to the nature of the relationship between two or more parties. An accountable relationship is where A is obliged to explain and justify their actions to B, and B is able to sanction A if their conduct or explanation is considered to be unsatisfactory (O'Neill et al 2007 citing Goetz and Jenkins 2002). Thus there are two dimensions to accountability: answerability and enforceability. There are two forms of accountability necessary: upward and downward. Generally upward accountability mechanisms are usually in place (including **financial** - through auditing, M&E systems, **human resources** - performance assessments, annual reports for staff; **administrative** through planning processes). Downward (or social) accountability is either weakly developed with limited power of enforceability and answerability or non-existent (Vijayanand, 2006). The two areas of major downward accountability are: political through electoral processes and stakeholder through civil society organisations (CSO) mechanisms (generally interest groups with agendas around particular interests). For the purposes of this study we are interested in **social accountability**⁷.

Responsiveness

The other part of the equation, 'responsiveness', can be described as the 'extent to which public service and civil society providers demonstrate receptivity to the views, complaints and suggestions of service users, by implementing changes to their own structure, culture and service delivery patterns in order to deliver a more appropriate product to clients' (Goetz and Gaventa, 2001:9). Responsiveness covers all actors responsible for services, including NGOs, private sector, local government and line departments. It implies a repositioning of actors in the political space to ensure service delivery which meets the demands of poor people, within a commitment to political decentralisation.

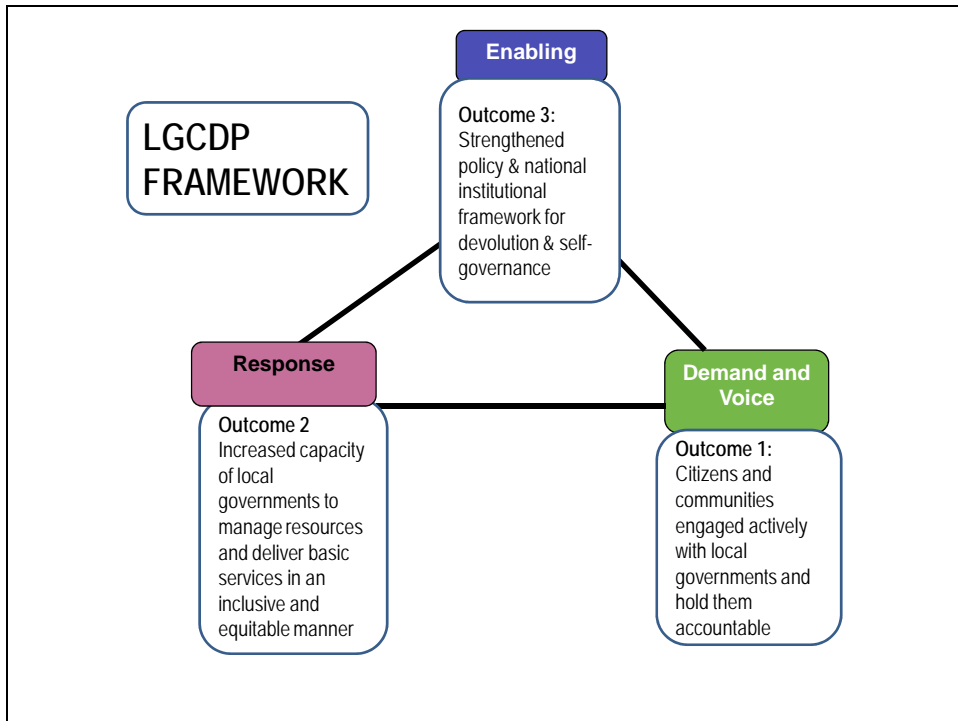
2.3 The LGCDP conceptual framework

Figure 2.1 illustrates schematically the framework underpinning the LGCDP; the social mobilisation elements and building citizen-state relationships are mainly focused under Outcome 1. This diagram, showing a decentralised form of local governance, links voice to response to accountability. Voice without responsiveness leads to frustration (in the words of one LDO 'as previous years demands have not been met, people are not prepared to sit in more planning meetings to collect more demands' (field notes 2009). Equally without accountability mechanisms, there is no means to ensure that the nature of the response by local government is appropriate and addressed to those it should reach. These are all necessary elements. If any are missing there is a chance that incomplete or unfair processes of voice and response with inadequate accountability mechanisms will increase the potential for local level conflict. Since LGCDP is

⁷ Social Accountability mechanisms refer to a broad range of actions (beyond voting) that citizens, communities and civil society organisations can use to hold government officials and bureaucrats accountable. These include citizen participation in public policy making, participatory budgeting, public expenditure tracking, citizen monitoring of public service delivery, citizen advisory boards, lobbying and advocacy campaigns (World Bank website <http://go.worldbank.org/2VER6887N0>.)

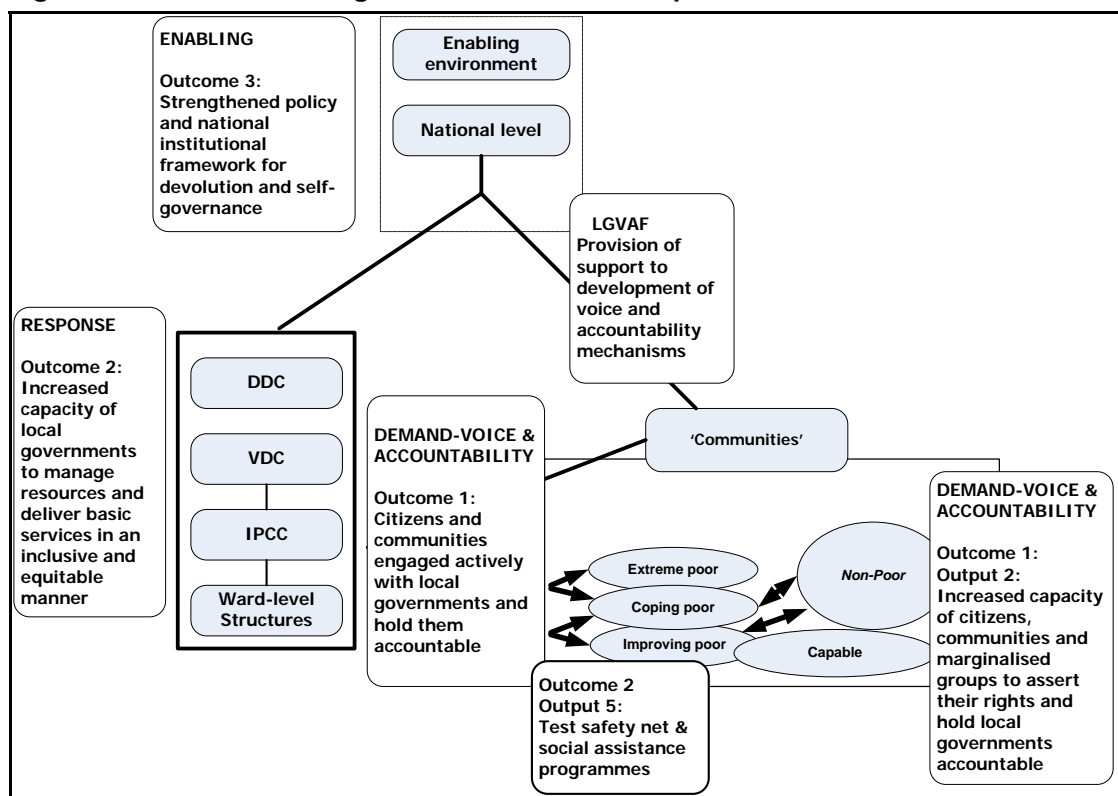
expected to address structural causes of inequalities and exclusion, Figure 2.2 illustrates the disaggregation of 'community' into its constituent parts to indicate that processes need to respond to these differences in power and vulnerability.

Figure 2.1 Relationships between the three LGCDP outcomes



There are many interfaces and channels between citizens and the state but in LGCDP the main channel through which voice and response meet is the planning process for allocation of block grant funds and in the future through local elections (i.e. political accountability). As Figure 2.2 illustrates, for the demand-side processes to be effective (LGCDP Outcome 1), it is equally important to support the response-side (LGCDP Outcome 2) to ensure services can be delivered that respond to the demands articulated through the VDC or municipality planning processes; and to create an enabling environment in which decentralisation can happen (LGCDP Outcome 3). We have illustrated some of the key elements of the programme that are necessary to deliver on meaningful citizen engagement.

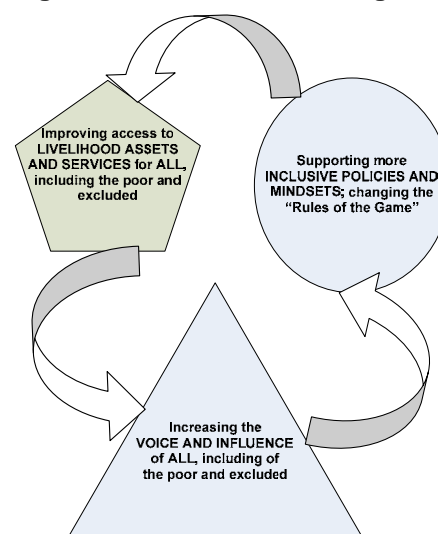
Figure 2.2 LGCDP: Building citizen-state relationships



This review therefore has also looked at the degree to which social mobilisation processes adopted by the 24 programmes/projects reviewed has led to an effective demand-side interface between citizens and local bodies. The capacity and structural issues of the response-side lie outside this review and remain the responsibility of other parts of the programme to deliver (Outcomes 2 and 3), although the study does indicate areas, from experience, where further support is required (Chapter 7).

The conceptual underpinning for the mobilisation processes are best depicted by the GSEA framework (World Bank/DFID2006:9), Figure 2.3 which posits three “domains of change” where interventions to reduce structural exclusions can be directed: 1) improved access to assets and services, 2) changes in rules of the game, and 3) changes in voice, influence and agency.

Figure 2.3 Domains of change



LGCDP’s performance will be judged on its effectiveness in supporting change in each of these three domains. These will include: citizen mobilisation processes to increase voice and agency to influence the decisions and processes that affect people’s lives; changes to the enabling institutional environment at macro-, meso- and micro-levels that lead to changes in practices, attitudes and behaviours to the poor and excluded (through for example implementation of GESI strategy, changes to planning practices, budgetary allocations etc); and changes to the access to assets and services by ensuring the

reach of services to the poor and excluded. The role of the citizen mobilisation process is not to deliver these assets and services directly but through the **voice and agency** work to help individuals to claim from existing resources within a VDC or municipality, from groups and from government. This distinguishes the citizen-based approaches from conventional social mobilisation which tends to focus on building groups to which services are then directly delivered by programmes/projects/organisations.

Chapter 3: Social (Citizen) Mobilisation Existing Practices

3.1 What is meant by social mobilisation and how does it differ from citizen engagement?

For the last two decades in Nepal there has been a heavy emphasis on social mobilisation for group formation to support community-led development. Groups have been responsible across a range of sectors for successfully delivering services to their members, mobilising labour and financial assets to support individual and group-based development. These groups range from forest user groups, agriculture groups, health and non-formal education groups, through to many small savings and credit groups. Biggs et al (2004) estimate that there are nearly 400,000 groups and then suggest this is probably a gross underestimation.

Despite the incontrovertible success of group-based development, it has remained relatively unchallenged as a development approach despite the abundance of international evidence and evidence from Nepal to indicate that groups, due to a failure to develop explicit governance rules and norms, are in many circumstances highly exclusionary both of the extreme poor and socially marginalised (Guijt and Shah, 1998; Kabeer, 2003; Cleaver, 2003; Biggs et al, 2004; Hickey and Mohan, 2004; Manor, 2004; Hobley and Paudyal, 2008) and depending on the processes of formation do not necessarily lead to social transformation but often reinforce existing power structures (Box 3.1).

Box 3.1 The wrong approach to social mobilisation: the views of an NGO

“The wrong concept of social mobilisation is being used; it is all about service delivery and not about empowerment... We need to first understand the social and political issues within a VDC and then recruit a social mobiliser with the skills to deal with these issues. Trying to address these issues with money will not work, first you need to deal with the structural problems causing poverty.”

Source: Hobley and Paudyal, 2008

Currently in Nepal there are a range of forms of social mobilisation practised with differing objectives and therefore processes. In the main, social mobilisation, as a consequence of the dominance of group-based community development and the need during the conflict period to deliver quick and tangible wins, has become synonymous with group formation to deliver project assets and services with in some cases secondary objectives of voice

and agency. However, as this review shows, there is a range of ways in which social mobilisation is understood and practised which is captured by the definition of social mobilisation provided by Biggs et al (2004:29):

‘Social mobilisation – implies organising people into community level groups, to accomplish specific aims and objectives, according to locally identified needs and desires, and project or programme objectives. It is an attempt to harness and enhance human capacity i.e. the willingness of local people to help themselves. Often one of the main social mobilisation goals is to mobilise the poor, socially-excluded, marginalised and deprived people (women, Dalits, poor Janajatis and the ultra-poor of any caste/ethnicity), to realise their power and to achieve voice and agency through collective action. ‘Good’ social mobilisation empowers group members through the democratic processes of participatory planning and action, as well as through capacity-building and benefit-sharing’.

As with other parts of South Asia, social mobilisation approaches fall into different categories (Thornton et al 2000 for example distinguish four types⁸).

For the purposes of this study we have crudely distinguished two distinct forms using the three domains of change:

1. **transactional approaches** where the focus is primarily on the economic dimensions of empowerment and service delivery i.e. focusing on assets and services (and not on voice and agency or changing the rules of the game); and
2. **transformational processes** focused on empowering citizens to build their voice, claim assets and services and influence decisions, procedures and (eventually) the formal and informal rules of the game (i.e. focusing on all three elements of the domains of change but where people themselves take responsibility for gaining access to services, assets, and decisions and can eventually bring about changes in the institutions or rules of the game which have always favoured the elite) (see also Hickey and Mohan, 2004).

The choice is not as stark as presented here and in general the review shows that there is a continuum of approaches adopted by programmes and projects. This continuum is also necessary at times since transactional approaches can be good entry points with provision of essential services for the people. The vision for this transactional approach to move towards transformational is necessary. Table 3.1 describes some of the broad characteristics and differences between these approaches. In the following sections we consider the detailed evidence from the review and look at the approaches followed by programmes and projects and the lessons to be learnt.

⁸ 1) Those organisations and approaches focused on economic dimensions of empowerment through the provision of financial services for groups of poor people to facilitate their economic development (through IGAs), market access and economic accumulation; 2) Social service delivery organisations which focused on human capital development (through health and education services); 3) Social development organisations which combined economic and social service provision with some attention to the political dimensions of empowerment; 4) Social mobilisation organisations which emphasised political empowerment through challenging power structures and promoting rights

Table 3.1 Continuum of social mobilisation approaches

	Transformational	Transactional plus Transformational	Transactional
Ideological basis	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Freirean processes of conscientisation and organisation mobilisation leading to collective action that challenge power structures 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Combination of economic and social empowerment with some attempts to build political empowerment 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ A neo-liberal approach based on market-incorporation – where economic empowerment is considered to be a pre-requisite for political and social empowerment
What is meant by mobilisation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ A process of building social movements empowering people to have their own agency to represent their own views and building their collective capabilities to claim their rights as citizens 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Social mobilisation as a means to build groups to increase social solidarity and individual economic empowerment 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Social mobilisation as a process of group formation – a managerial approach to organising people for easier more efficient transfer of assets and services
Poverty and exclusion understanding	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Poverty is a political and not an economic problem and seen as a lack of voice, agency and organisation, as well as resources. Fragmentation and disunity of poor is a result of their incorporation into vertical relationships based on patronage rather than horizontal relations based on solidarity ▪ Unaware of constitutional rights and legal entitlements 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Focuses on removing barriers to accessing resources and considers livelihood security as an essential precursor to political empowerment 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Poverty seen as a lack of resources and not an absence of entitlements; poverty is an effect of the forms of growth and market formation Understanding of symptoms of poverty i.e. analysis that focuses on resolving lack of access to services and resources and not focused on the underlying causes of these symptoms
Entry-point	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Analysis of social and political context ▪ Class based analyses of power and poverty used to help understanding of underlying structural causes of poverty bringing together elites and extreme poor and excluded through this analytical process 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Provision of services and some support to group-based solidarity; can also be single-interest often around management of a resource e.g. forest, water 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Provision of services to alleviate identified livelihood resource constraint.
Mode of operation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Rejects service delivery role considered to create new forms of patron-client relationships between NGOs and constituencies and works to support the poor to develop capabilities for collective action 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Combines service delivery with empowerment processes 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Operates through delivery of services and assets
Group-formation processes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Emerges from a carefully facilitated process to develop individual and collective capabilities. Groups emerge over time and are not the immediate focus of action ▪ Based on collective analysis and discussion of underlying causes of poverty focused on an understanding of distribution of power and resources 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Groups formed from outset – maybe of homogenous class-based groups (extreme poor) or identity-based (Dalits, janajatis) or users of a particular resource (FUGs) combination of service provision, access to resources and group-based action 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Groups organised at outset for ease of supply of service delivery activities ▪ Group formation instrumental to effective functioning (delivery of services)

	Transformational	Transactional plus Transformational	Transactional
Inputs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Building individual and collective capabilities to take action, building voice around issues. ▪ Facilitation to build self-awareness to take action ▪ Training inputs - information on rights and entitlements, reflection and analysis processes on understanding underlying causes of poverty 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Technical inputs around particular services, resources to be managed; group-based governance coaching to develop internal cohesion – transparency and accountability; 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Technical inputs mainly focused on savings and credit, group-based training on maintaining records, accounts etc.
Types of processes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Uses power analyses, understanding of underlying causes of poverty, REFLECT processes to help individuals build their own understanding for their social, economic and political condition 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Limited use of tools and mainly for member identification and group formation (social mapping, well-being ranking) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Limited use of tools and mainly for group formation (social mapping, well-being ranking)
Membership	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Members come from similar backgrounds and enjoy equal status – membership is more stable and meets outside the formal group. Group has a strong sense of belonging and common goals. Helps overcome the isolation of being poor and weak in social resources. Often an overt focus on the poorer households and most marginalised; rarely includes extreme poor 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Membership tends not to include the extreme poor (difficult to attract or retain in groups). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Membership from diverse backgrounds often excluding the extreme poor either because they are considered a risk to the group – they cannot save or provide necessary inputs such as voluntary labour and/or because the extreme poor and marginalise self-exclude.
Target group	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Focus mainly on poorer households, often difficult to include extreme poor because of time and resource constraints as well as other factors of self-exclusion 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Range of types of groups from homogenous groups to mixed; often excludes the poorest, difficult to organise into groups, requires different mobilisation processes 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Focus mainly on those with assets and easily organised. Generally excludes the poorest due to high barriers to entry – regular savings and repayments of loans.
Aggregation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Supports organisations and movements up to national levels – focuses on amplifying voices for national-level influence. Voices of poorest tend to become more silent at higher levels of aggregation due to lack of time and resources to participate at these levels 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Supports networks, federations at VDC-level and above 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Rarely aggregated beyond the group or the village

	Transformational	Transactional plus Transformational	Transactional
Outcomes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Builds individual and collective capabilities to take action beyond the period of inputs of the organisation/project; builds political agency to challenge and transform power structures 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Supports economic empowerment with some social empowerment, tends not to focus overtly on political empowerment. Incremental processes of change focused on building economic livelihood security, limited challenge to structures of inequality 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Group is organised to regulate and discipline actions and behaviour of members Focused on individual improvement and gain, does not challenge deeper structures and does not encourage collective solidarity and capability to challenge Often groups do not sustain beyond the period of inputs from an external organisation/project
Skills required	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Social and political analytical skills, local context analysis facilitation and ability to support others to take action; advocacy/lobbying, campaign, linkages with others working on power transformation, social accountability skills and tools, negotiation and mediation skills, gender and social inclusion conceptual clarity, Underlying Causes of Poverty analysis 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Local context analysis facilitation and ability to support others to take action, gender and social inclusion conceptual clarity, social accountability skills and tools, advocacy and Disadvantaged household mapping skills, Project planning and management, motivation to form groups and their strengthening, ability to support education/health/economic and community infrastructure related activities, group saving and credit management; network /linkages for resource mobilisation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Disadvantaged household mapping skills, project planning and management, motivation to form groups and their strengthening, ability to support education/health/economic and community infrastructure related activities, group saving and credit management; network /linkages for resource mobilisation
Examples	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Empowerment Program/LWF, Marginalised Community Empowerment Project/MS Nepal, SAKCHAM/CARE, SAMANTA/CARE, UPCA/Action Aid, VBG/RDF⁹/DANIDA 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> DACAW/UNICEF, DLGSP/UNDP, PASRA/GTZ, GEEOW/DWD/ADB, HCBO/Sahakarya/CECI, LFP/DFID, NSCFP/SDC, PARHI/UNFPA, Reaching the Disadvantaged/DWD/ADB, RHDP/SDC, RUPP/UNDP, SAGUN/CARE, VLDP/NSCFP/SDC 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ECD/PLAN, LISP/Helvetas, MEDEP/UNDP, PAF/WB, RWSS/WB

Sources: Field notes 2009; Bebbington 2006 ; Green and Hulme 2005; Hickey and du Toit, 2007, Hickey and Mohan, 2004; Kabeer, 2003

⁹ There are two RDFs in Nepal. This report discusses experiences of RDF Janakpur

3.2 Social mobilisation objectives and definition

Programme/project objectives guide social mobilisation processes where social mobilisation is generally seen as a means to achieve the specific objectives of a programme or project whether it is involved in transactional or transformational activities - building entrepreneurship or improving economic livelihoods or in some cases mobilising particular groups for action.

Specific objectives of social mobilisation were developed only by PAF, DLGSP and LFP and all contain a clear link to different types of empowerment processes covering economic, social and political aspects but none of them covering each of these. Often there is also a gap between the programme/project document understanding of the role of social mobilisation and that of the social mobilisers and group members (Box 3.2). Generally there is a reduction in the scope and ambition of the objectives contained in the programme/project documents to objectives based on getting access to the development services and assets on offer.

Box 3.2 Programme objectives for social mobilisation and social mobilisation implementers' understanding of objectives

Programme Objectives

- **PAF:** to create awareness among the community people (poor women, Dalit and Janajati), help them to organise, empower them for decision-making so that they can identify and prioritise their needs, use funds for IGA (source: website)
- **DLGSP:** Social Mobilisation is a dynamic and participatory process of empowering people, specially the poor and the socially excluded, for their socio-cultural, political and economic upliftment in a sustainable manner (source: Social Mobilisation Guidelines)
- **LFP:** to mobilise and empower community members to more effectively participate in community activities, strengthen the functioning of FUGs and improve the livelihoods of P&E people; Social Mobilisation is defined as the process which facilitates context specific positive change from individual to policy level through active involvement of all relevant sectors and individuals in different kinds of interactions and coordination work. (source: Animation and Social Mobilisation Guidelines)

Social Mobiliser/Programme staff on social mobilisation objectives

“Social Mobilisation is for making women aware about child issues and their rights”; (DACA); “improve socio economic status of the community people”; (DLGSP); “organise the community people into groups, increase their awareness about rights; and assist them to survive as equal citizens” (LWF); “For PAF, SM is to reduce poverty through increased access to funds and infrastructure but otherwise Social mobilisation is for changing society—to address inequalities and build people's capacity” (PAF PO); “implement health and hygiene services such as drinking water and toilet” (RWSS)

In almost all programmes/projects, community level group members expressed that they joined groups (synonymous with social mobilisation in the present context of Nepal) because of the potential benefits available and for the development opportunities- “*samuhama nbasian pache, vikasma chutinche*” (“If I don't join a group, I will miss development”). Since groups are the main channel through which services can be obtained, group membership is an essential part of securing benefits. Thus, it is common to see households holding membership in several groups, particularly those households that are more capable and have the resources to afford the time and the costs of group membership. Commonly poorer households have membership of fewer groups and for the extreme poor they are often members of no groups. What is interesting, and unsurprising, for those programmes/projects working through transformational approaches there is a much clearer focus by group members on issues of voice and agency (e.g. UPCA), than those mobilised through a more transactional approach (e.g. DLGSP) (Box 3.3).

Box 3.3 Group members' voices on social mobilisation objectives**Members' reasons for joining groups**

"To improve socio-economic situation": (DLGSP); "to access natural resources such as forest, pond and public land for prevention and utilisation of the forest" (LFP); "To make husbands quit alcohol and domestic violence; To have some money for times of sickness and emergencies" (GEEOW); "To raise voice to solve issues identified and also for improving economic status by starting saving/credit and income generating activities" (UPCA); "for collective efforts, to fight domestic and social violence and ills, build local capital base" (LWF); "to fight discrimination against us Dalits" (SAMANTA)

The vision for social mobilisation in most cases is framed by what the programme/project needs to provide as services e.g. for LISP/Helvetas - ginger production, DACAW, child rights and for RWSS, water and sanitation. Group members too are oriented accordingly. In others like GEEOW, UPCA and LWF, the group members have come together to collectively fight against violence and discrimination and to access different kinds of resources. In these cases the objective of the mobilisation process is to build the capability of individuals for collective action to mobilise existing resources to meet their demands; and not necessarily just to access project-provided services. For many community people a key objective of being mobilised is the saving and credit activities. It is a major bonding factor for the group members and is a key reason for groups remaining functional; conversely it can also be the cause of group breakdown where there is poor group governance and ability to maintain individual repayments or protect group resources from predation (Clark et al, 2004).

3.3 Social mobilisation process

In general there are two distinctive processes followed by programmes and projects for social mobilisation. Those that are centred on events that lead to the formation of groups as a means to deliver services, manage resources, receive assets - what we have described earlier as transactional; and those that are focused on building capability to understand the reasons for poverty and to take collective action to address some of the underlying causes - transformational approaches.

For the transactional approaches programmes/projects follow a common pattern: they start their processes with social mapping, disadvantaged household mapping and/or household survey. This information is used to identify work areas/settlements or to identify target households.

The process of social mobilisation is similar in most programmes (except for those following more transformational REFLECT processes - see below) with group formation achieved in short periods of time, regular fortnight/monthly meetings, saving and credit (S&C) activities, training on group management, leadership, income generating activity and sectoral training/services as mandated by the programme/projects' sector (e.g. child and women's health for DACAW, water and sanitation for RWSS, IGA/small infrastructure for PAF). The final step for many is the establishment of cooperatives/federations registered at the local administration office.

Only six programmes/projects/agencies (PASRA, DACAW, UPCA, HCBO, RHDP, LWF) work with existing groups or facilitate people to join existing groups (e.g. PASRA). Others form new groups to meet their particular objectives. The programmes/projects using REFLECT processes (LWF, CARE Nepal, Action Aid) often do not form groups immediately. Issue-based groups are formed once the discussions between REFLECT circle members identifies the need for such a group.

The incentives to form new groups are powerful. Broad targets set for numbers of community organisations formed also drive the process of mobilisation and make the mobiliser focus on outputs rather than outcomes. For social mobilisers their performance is judged on the creation of groups, numbers and types of households included, quantum of savings, credit repayments, areas of forest managed etc. Tangible outputs are easy to monitor and drive a highly transactional form of mobilisation.

Information regarding time required to form groups was uneven in the programmes/projects reviewed. Very few were able to categorically state the time required for the process up to group formation. Reasons cited were the variations in the context e.g. if the groups had been previously mobilised it would take less time (even half a day would suffice according to one social mobiliser) otherwise the motivation to form groups itself would require much more time, even weeks. Information available of selected programmes/projects is presented below (Table 3.2):

Table 3.2 Time to group formation from entry of programme/project

Programme/Project	Time to form group from initial entry
LISP, REDA/ Helvetas	Immediate
PARHI, UNFPA	2 weeks for neighbourhood committee formation
MEDEP/UNDP	1 month
SAKCHAM, CARE	1 month
Reaching the Disadvantaged	2 months
VDP-DLGSP	3 months (after first orientation)
HCBO/SAHAKARYA	3 months
Urban Poverty Empowerment Programme, Action Aid	Dependent on when households decide they want to form a group 3 months before REFLECT classes are held in other AAN areas
Marginalised Community Empowerment Project/MS Nepal	6-7 months
Empowerment Programme/LWF	12 months
DACAW, PASRA, RHDP use old groups; LFP, Sagun, NSCFP/SDC work with CFUGs	

Source: Programme Staff, field notes, 2009

For most of the programmes/projects the amount of **contact time** spent by each mobiliser in the group formation process is very limited and of a similar duration (even though the whole process may extend over 3-6 months), with an extremely short period between start-up and savings. Because the point of mobilisation and group formation is to start accessing services or savings and credit, the need to spend time on support to building capability of members to build their understanding of their conditions and the need for change is very limited. Contact time for transformational approaches is significantly higher, with mobilisers tending to stay in the community they are working with on a continual basis for the first few months to a year (field notes, Nari Bikas Sangha). It would appear that the speed of the group formation approach used is itself acting as a barrier to the inclusion of the poor and excluded in these groups: two examples from the field visits illustrate aspects of this point:

“In a PAF funded group there are a total of 24 Dalit members out of a total of 36 Dalit households in the tole. The remaining 12 households are excluded from the group because they were not present at the ward meeting held at the beginning of the programme to identify households to be included in the community organisation” (field notes 2009).

“Our experience indicates that Dalits tend to be slow to join groups, very difficult to convince and generally are only convinced when it is too late to join, which is why we don’t start with groups, we start by building understanding and the confidence eventually to form or join a group (Nari Bikas Sangha notes 2009).

The incentives for the social mobilisers are to focus on formation of groups, to demonstrate that the groups are saving and to ensure that proposals are submitted for funding. None of these tasks require investment in a political or social process of transformation, rather they require compliant groups of individuals that are able to save, take on IGAs and repay the loans. Once saving has started it becomes much more difficult for non-member households to enter because of the requirement to deposit a similar amount of savings as each member has already accumulated (Box 3.4).

Box 3.4 The community organisation as an exclusionary structure: the experience of Yangsila CBO

These extreme-poor households are very vulnerable and at risk, they do not come to meetings – they neither have time nor do they feel comfortable so they self-exclude. In order to build their self-esteem and confidence the CBO staff said time has to be spent with them to build trust, it is very difficult to reach them and in many cases they have failed. From the community organisation (CO) level they have tried but the COs don’t have the incentives to include them in the CO, so we cannot expect to build inclusion through this process. The CO is a mixed group of the wealthy, teachers, politicians and poor so naturally the poor and disadvantaged do not speak out, they sit in a corner and have to leave early as they cannot give up to 3-4 hours of time for these meetings. At the beginning there was an entry fee to the group – the poor didn’t want to take the risk and so did not join. Now it is too expensive for them to join.

Source: Field notes 2009

Focus on savings and credit activities

As can be seen in this study, savings and credit activities predominate in 22 of 24 programmes/projects (except Village Level Development Planning, NSCFP (SDC) and Value based Governance/RDF (DANIDA)). These programmes/projects conduct savings and credit activities, irrespective of whether transformational or transactional approaches are used. For service providers, it serves as an entry point to engage women and men. For group members, their interests are the immediate direct benefits they can use for addressing cash constraints at the household level e.g. the REFLECT circle members of SAKCHAM started saving and credit as they required cash at low interest rates. Due to the small amounts of money available through one group, a single savings and credit group does not satisfy the financial needs of most of the members, who are always short of funds. Hence a household is often a member of two or more savings and credit groups (where there are many programme/project interventions) at the same time. For those who have more time and are better-off, membership in many groups brings social and political influence to the member. But multiple membership has resulted in over-burdening of poor and women with group activities, with multiple overlapping processes to be followed to gain membership of particular groups.

Although most programmes and projects are working with savings and credit, the longer-term outcomes for groups formed under transactional as opposed to transformational approaches appear to be different. Unless the group has been sufficiently empowered (through different processes like REFLECT), the group members, especially the poor and excluded, still hesitate to approach service delivery agencies after the completion of the programme/project. As such sometimes only the savings and credit components of the programme and project remains, a few years after the interventions phase out. Even these fizzle out as members find it difficult to follow-up, maintain records and continue without the facilitation of the social mobiliser.

“There were six/seven groups established by different projects like those of WDO, RWUDUC...which after project phase out was difficult to manage. I could not run after everyone to ask for the installments or maintain the records alone. So we just put all the money in the savings and credit cooperative running since 2057(2001) in our community and the different groups just dissolved.” Health CBO chair, Dadeldhura (Sahakarya/CECI) field notes, 2008.

3.4 Transformational processes: REFLECT and power analysis

For those following a more gradual transformational approach to mobilisation and group formation generally a REFLECT (Regenerated Freirean Literacy through Empowering Community Technique) is used¹⁰. (Box 3.5). This has been popular in Nepal since 1998. Many organisations use REFLECT as a tool for learning, empowerment and social action, adapting it and renaming it e.g. GTZ has Participatory Learning Centres, CARE: Popular Education Centres, LWF and Action Aid: REFLECT. In these centres, issue-based discussions are the basis for literacy skills but more importantly, it engages community women and men as innovators, leaders and change agents against injustice and exclusion. Besides, enabling and facilitating efforts of excluded groups and communities for positive change in their lives, REFLECT also empowers these groups to organise themselves, claim and enjoy their rights (Hickey and Mohan, 2004).

Women and men who have been through a REFLECT process develop an ability to recognise issues and identify required action. We found examples where even after the phasing out of the project, women and men are very articulate and active in their effort to access resources (e.g. in Doti and Accham, where LWF had supported a REFLECT process seven years back, the women were still very active in mobilising to secure their rights, organising campaigns against alcohol and domestic violence). Numerous examples of social actions (against alcohol and domestic violence, against unequal wages, against corruption in school management committees, for forest resources) were found in groups which had undergone such a process (e.g. in LWF, UPCA, CARE supported programmes).

Box 3.5 What is a REFLECT circle?

REFLECT circle is a forum where the disadvantaged are brought together to identify, analyse and take actions on issues that directly affect them. The main purpose of the circle is the empowerment of the poor and excluded. The facilitator of the circle helps to educate the members on their rights and support them to take actions to ensure access to services. It helps to capacitate members to advocate and lobby for their rights. The circle not only takes up the issues of the disadvantaged, it also encourages the members to fight for the rights of the community as a whole. On the one hand it encourages the poor to bargain with the richer section in the community and side by side it also takes up the issue of the whole community, including that of the rich and the elite, up to VDC and the district level. In this way the circle can be effective to ensure the rights of the disadvantaged on the one hand and gather support of the rich and the elite of the community on the other hand.

Source: Field notes discussion with Action Aid 2009

For the mobilisation process following REFLECT principles, the difference lies in the discussions in the regular weekly meetings and the issue-based social action that members of the REFLECT circle take to address problems. This space for reflection, discussion and action is an empowering process and enables group members to develop their own capacity to identify and address issues affecting their lives. While the members of the REFLECT circle are usually the illiterate people of the community, the literate members are also involved in the local action.

¹⁰ Although the team did not encounter it directly in their field work, the Appreciative Inquiry (AI) approach which is used by a number of agencies (e.g. CEDPA, UNICEF, Mountain Institute) also falls into the transformational category. See Messerschmidt, 2008.

REFLECT circles seem to be highly successful in mobilising the wider community. They have been effective for identification and analysis of local issues and then ensuring follow-up action. The issues taken up by the circle are immediate and affect the whole community, thus support is also widespread and active. The circles have been highly effective in accessing services from local bodies as well as other service delivery agencies. One factor for the success of the REFLECT circle is its acceptance of different social groups of people in the discussions and actions and advocating on wider issues that affect the community. For example they have worked on wage labour issues and also facilitated vital registration, drinking water, citizenship, etc., which are the concerns of the whole community rather than a group within the community. This has supported solidarity and cohesiveness within a community; and is another example of building social compacts between different classes of people and reducing elite backlash.

Power analysis and building social compacts with the elites

One of the important elements of any effective social mobilisation process is working with those relationships, attitudes and behaviours that maintain extreme poor and excluded households in their positions of deprivation (DFID 2008). This DFID study suggests that since 2006 there has been a reversal in many communities of the positive behavioural changes in caste and gender discrimination. Key to this is changing attitudes and understanding of the elites (Box 3.6).

SAMANTA and SAKCHAM explicitly address these issues supporting people to create the conditions in which they themselves take action to address the causes of their poverty (Bode, 2008:2). These projects develop **power maps** (Box 3.7) which depict institutional and resource availability in different wards. They note the location of schools, health post, roads, irrigation, drinking water sources, cooperatives, service centres and types of houses in each ward. These maps indicate where resources, development investments and institutions are concentrated. They also indicate the links between political party leaders/community leaders/influential person's residence (ex VDC chair and vice chair, etc) and resource concentration. This is used as the basis for a series of public analyses to consider the reasons for these concentrations of resources and services. This step also helps to identify the wards which are the **poverty pockets** and have less resources compared to the other wards of the VDC. Further discussion identifies the worst-off settlements within these wards.

Box 3.6 Attitudes of the non-poor to poor and excluded households

Although the poor should start to understand the causes of their poverty, it is equally important to facilitate these discussions and understanding with the non-poor to address their attitudes and behaviours to poor and excluded people. Most non-poor state that the 'poor can't do and won't do so it is not worth investing in them'. An example of this was cited demonstrating how the non-poor blame the poor for failure when there are other causes of failure: DLGSP had a hybrid goat distribution programme to the poor, grants for toilet construction, and support for kitchen gardens. In all three cases the extreme poor did not show any interest. For the hybrid goats they could not supply the quality feed necessary; they had no land available either for the toilets or for the kitchen gardens; seeds and inputs are the least of their problems; access to land is the key. Inside the CO there was also pressure put on the poor by the non-poor, they told the poor that they shouldn't take the hybrid goats because if they fail then the whole group will suffer.

Source: Yangsila VDC field notes 2009

Box 3.7 Power map and poverty pockets - Paklihawa VDC, Nawalparasi, SAMANTA Programme, Dalit NGO Federation/CARE

Process steps

- **Political and local leader orientation:** The programme team oriented the chairmen of the political parties, and informal elites who are interested, and the VDC secretary (if he is available) in the VDC about the programme and explained that they would like to work in the area and need to understand the locality and therefore are preparing a map that locates key infrastructure. **Mapping of resources and centres of power:** Prior to the meeting the team sketches the VDC boundary on a large sheet of paper. During the VDC-level meeting the local elites, teachers, political parties, community leaders, Dalit leaders and representatives of NGO/CBO map the institutional and resource availability in the VDC (schools, health post, road, irrigation, drinking water, cooperative, service centre, type of house, project sites, etc.). Participants then identified the areas of residence of political party leaders/community leaders/influential people (e.g. ex VDC chair and vice chair, etc).
- **Discussion of reasons for resource concentration:** This map drawn by the elites enables a discussion to be facilitated on the direct and indirect influencing factors for concentration of resources and institutions in certain wards only. This is a powerful tool that helps those who have drawn the map to recognise that the concentration of resources occurs at places where influential people are resident. This working map creates a visual representation of power centres (wards with concentration of resources, infrastructure and institutions) and marginalised communities. The majority of the poor/Dalits settlement/pockets were thus identified.
- **Identification of poverty pockets:** Following these discussions wards that are particular poverty pockets are identified which in this case were wards 3, 6, 8 and 7 as the poor and Dalit pockets in the VDC. At this stage further discussion probed the depths of poverty and exclusion to select the most poor wards – numbers 3 and 8. The discussions and map showed that the most influential people resided in wards 4, 5 and 6 and the major resource concentration was also in these wards. Interestingly, participants also realised that the poor and Dalits living in these wards were excluded from the resources that came to the ward, for example, in ward no six.
- **Selection of areas in which to start work:** Using background information collected by the team prior to the start of power mapping, a facilitated discussion helped to prioritise between wards 3 and 8 and allowed a transparent and fair selection of ward 3 as the most deprived in Paklihawa VDC.

Lessons learned:

- **Understanding and internalising processes of poverty and exclusion** The process helped participants to understand and internalise the issues of resource concentration in areas where people had power.
- **Necessity of good background preparation and skilled facilitation:** Good preparation and skilled facilitation was necessary as initially participants were biased towards their own wards in the hope that they could direct the programme to be implemented there. Background preparation is required by the team prior to facilitating these discussions to ensure that they understand the situation in the VDC to assist them to facilitate discussions to ensure that objectivity was maintained.
- **Role of political parties:** The political party leaders tried to influence the selection of wards to increase their vote bank amongst the Dalit and poor. It was finally realised by the Mushar inhabitants and other participants that ward no 3 was resource poor and had not had sufficient attention by the state or NGOs. This was partly helped by the preparation done by the project team which had secondary information about the ward. This provided the evidence for an objective selection between wards 3 and 8.
- **Time required for process:** The drawing of the power map took about four hours.

Source: Field Notes 2009

SAMANTA then develops a resource map of the poverty pockets to identify the condition of the households in the area (types of houses, facilities, sanitation), resource gaps and caste/ethnic composition of the settlement. Explicitly this process brings the elites as well as the poor into a process of discussion about the underlying causes of poverty. This creates an understanding of the existing situation with no cause for the people with privileges to oppose resources going to poor settlements. Hence this reduces the chance of conflict over targeting. In both the CARE¹¹ programme and BRAC programme in Bangladesh, an explicit process of working with elites to build understanding, acceptance and responsibility for supporting actions to move people out of extreme poverty, has proven to be highly successful. Box 3.8 describes the processes and lessons learned.

¹¹ CARE's Nijera Programmeme (Bode et al, 2006) and BRAC's Challenging the Frontiers of Chronic Poverty (Hossain and Matin, 2004)

Box 3.8 BRAC experiences of building social compacts between the elites and extreme poor and excluded**BRAC Challenging the Frontiers of Poverty Reduction (CFPR)**

For the extreme poor the forms of social capital that they possess are usually highly dependent on patronage relations, which provide them with short term livelihood security but constrain their actions to move outside these relations. This means it is particularly difficult for the extreme poor to challenge these relations even if they are exploitative (i.e. wage labour paid under the minimum wage) as they provide a minimum level of livelihood security without which the household might descend into destitution. At the early stages of the programme CFPR participants began to seek assistance directly from CFPR facilitators, effectively replacing their local patrons with BRAC staff as patrons; there were also serious problems of social jealousy due to the social transfers that extreme poor households were receiving and yet other less poor BRAC supported households were not receiving any assets. This led to serious divisions amongst the poor; and difficulties for the extreme poor in protecting their assets from theft.

Instead of challenging existing local protection systems through the patron-client structures, BRAC looked for means to work with the elites to elicit their support for the extreme poor and thus build on these systems. This resulted in the establishment of Village Poverty Alleviation Committees including representatives from respected individuals in the community, representatives from the extreme poor households, BRAC staff member and representatives from other BRAC organisations in the village. These committees are mandated to protect the extreme poor households in crisis, help them to resolve problems, and support access to services and resources.

Source: Matin et al, 2008

LWF supports connections with both the elites and the VDC by encouraging them to be members of the advisory committee of the community-based organisations set up at VDC level to support local-level activities. These five member advisory committees comprise members with political party affiliation and also the VDC secretary, a tactic that has been highly effective in building good relations with the parties and the VDC and gaining access to resources from the VDC. Interestingly one of the reasons for the formation of this advisory committee was due to the questioning by the elites and VDC officials of the capacity of the CBO's members, who were mostly from disadvantaged households. (CBO staff discussion, Keraun VDC field notes 2009).

Similarly RDF Janakpur through its support to the establishment of a Village Development Forum (VDF) successfully links political parties into the process of citizen-based planning. In the initial phase of this project there was resistance from the VDC and political parties, although there was widespread public support for the idea of a Village Development Forum, representing mainly disadvantaged citizens. This resistance was overcome through a process of governance coaching carried out by the VDF in all nine wards, focusing on issues of service delivery, primarily health and education, and services provided by the VDC. As public support grew as a result of the changes brought about by the VDF in service delivery, pressure also grew on the political parties to accept the role of the VDF and to actively support it. It was now seen as an effective instrument for change and therefore support to it would enhance the parties' potential vote banks (RDF Dhanusha, field notes, 2009).

Crucially, these processes focus on building relationships and understanding between the elites (the power holders) and the extreme poor and excluded, as the precursor to an eventual social compact between them. These tools and their processes enable the programmes to facilitate discussions with local leaders and power holders on existing power structures and the implications on the development progress of different social groups in the community. A particularly interesting approach used by CARE is to work with the political parties using their party manifestos to identify common ground between parties and their commitments to poverty reduction.

The field examples demonstrated that the combination of power analysis tools (used by SAKCHAM and SAMANTA) and REFLECT principles create possibilities of higher empowerment of the people than the more straightforward process of group formation/

revitalisation, technical and social inputs for group management, sectoral services and rights-based inputs or training. Table 3.3 provides a comparison between the two processes (termed citizen mobilisation and transactional social mobilisation¹²).

Table 3.3 Comparison between stages and processes/tools for citizen mobilisation and social mobilisation

Stage	Citizen mobilisation		Social mobilisation	
	Transformational		Transactional	
	Action	Who's involved	Action	Who's involved
Entry point	Building understanding of connections between power and resources to identify locations where there is no power and no resources	Elites and power holders; political parties, social group representatives (e.g. Dalits, women)	Identifying location to start group formation process	Elites and power holders; political parties
<i>Process/tool</i>	<i>VDC Power map, poverty pockets identification/political party manifesto discussions</i>		<i>VDC-level discussion</i>	
Location identification	Settlement-level	Issue based specific interest group (e.g. Dalits, women); Community women and men, key informants	VDC/ Ward/ Settlement level	Community women and men
<i>Process/tool</i>	<i>Transect walk, Social Mapping, Village History</i>		<i>Social map</i>	
Target group identification	Identify different households in different wellbeing groups based on locally defined criteria	Community women and men	Categorise households into different groups based on program defined areas/criteria and locally defined indicators	Community/Key informants
<i>Process/tool</i>	<i>Well-being class analysis, Caste Analysis</i>		<i>Well-being ranking/HH survey</i>	
Community/ Group based work	REFLECT/Popular Education Centres	Women and men of the area; illiterate people, members in REFLECT circles	Group formation	Group members
<i>Process/tools</i>	Weekly meetings; Issues identified through discussions (LWF, Action Aid) and use of different tools with both REFLECT participants and community people (SAMANTA, SAKCHAM) e.g. Dependency Analysis, Exploitation Analysis, Livelihood cycle, Mobility map, Wage matrix, Seasonal Calendar		Monthly meetings: Savings and Credit activities and other activities specific to the sectoral interests of the project or programme	
On-going activities	Savings and credit Local social action Training, Project services		Training, Project services	
Building higher-level structures	Building Voice, Negotiation, Bargaining Structures Cooperatives/Networks/social movements	Aggregations of group members	Cooperative formation to improve efficiency of lending and savings	

¹² Citizen mobilisation is a more holistic term and denotes mobilisation of people as citizens and not only as group members. It symbolically separates the existing process of mobilising people through group formation and saving and credit activities with a more intense and continuous process of building people's capacity to engage with issues and take appropriate action.

3.5 Higher-level structures

In many cases, projects/programmes are now focusing on establishing cooperatives/federations of the various community organisations/groups believing these will manage the different settlement level groups. These second tier organisations are growing in ability to claim rights and access services. They are generally sectorally-based e.g. agriculture, savings and credit, forestry e.g. FECOFUN and have strong links with their line agencies. Women's federations have women's groups as members and share-holders and have gained recognition in many districts. They are invited by local bodies to the councils and other meetings e.g. in Pumdri the women's federation has been part of the VDC level planning process and influenced service providers to support other women's groups. Examples of DLGSP and LFP are illustrated in Box 3.9.

Box 3.9 CMC/DLGSP and Dhankuta VDC

CMC/DLGSP: In DLGSP, a Chairperson-Manager Conference (CMC) was introduced to facilitate communications with the LDF at the district level. The Chairperson and Manager of the CO were represented in the CMC and their participation supported identification of local problems and solutions. Projects (income generation, small infrastructure, etc) were first identified at the CO level and through discussions and consensus achieved for the first level of selection in the presence of all members of the CO. After the discussion the CO forwarded the project list to CMC at the VDC level. The CMC prioritised and selected some of the projects for implementation through its own resources based on its own criteria, which were pro-poor. Those projects which were above the resource ceiling of the CMC were forwarded to the VDC. CMC is also represented in the council of the VDC.

Dhankuta VDC: In Dhankuta all the VDCs have village level federation of CFUG. These networks have helped the CFUGs to access the services of VDC level and district level government and non-government agencies. This federation has also supported the CFUGs in lobbying and in advocacy for their rights. FECOFUN, VDC, DFO, DDC, political parties have recognised the role of this network in organising the forest users group and contributing to local level development activities.

Field Notes, 2008

However, the experience with organisations set up through more transactional approaches indicates problems of losing voices of the poorer as the level of aggregation increases:

"The CMC does not have representation of DAG households because too much time is required to attend CMC meetings; the meetings take the whole day which the CO chair and manager attend. The chances of a DAG household getting to the position of CO chair or manager are very low. Although the CBO has been working with the CMC to build understanding of the demands of DAG households and has been emphasising the importance of listening to their demands – this is all that happens – they listen but cannot respond." (field notes, 2008).

Even in the transformation processes followed, the barrier of poverty is a strong constraint for the poor to participate in networks and federations at VDC/DDC levels e.g. the Kumals (MS Nepal supported project in Palpa) and the Dalits (CARE Nepal supported in Nawalparasi) group members participated in such forums but only those who had the time to spare were able to attend. This automatically limited participation of the extreme poor.

3.6 Services to groups

Social mobiliser responsibilities

The social mobilisers are generally responsible for a wide range of service provision, particularly those concerned with organisational development of the groups and in many cases offering savings and credit-related services. All programmes/projects have organised capacity building training, workshops and exposure tours for the members of the community organisations for their capacity strengthening, for group management, saving and credit, record keeping, leadership and communication and skill development.

In addition and depending on the objectives of the programme, a range of technical and economic services are also provided for example, by PAF, RWSS, MEDEP, LISP, RUPP, DLGSP, NSCFP and LFP; others, such as, DACAW, UPCA, LWF, MS Nepal, CARE, and GEEOW, focus on support to particular social groups e.g. work on rights of women, children, Dalits, Janajatis and other excluded groups. Appendix 1 describes the range of services provided by agencies. In general, most of these services are facilitated by the mobilisers.

Again these services can be grouped around the three domains of change: those services that support change in the rules of the game; build voice and agency; and those that focus on livelihood improvements through access to services and assets. In the main, and unsurprisingly, given the dominance of the transactional approaches followed, most of the programmes/projects support changes to assets and services with a few focusing on voice and agency and changes to the rules of the game, as well as changes to assets and services.

Five programmes/projects provide services that position them in the assets and services domain of our conceptual framework (discussed in Chapter 2). Six programmes are working to build voice and agency so that the people can claim such services from the service provider and four have combined service provision with rights. Thirteen programmes are working on both – building assets and voice but their primary focus is on strengthening access to assets and services (Table 3.4).

Table 3.4 Outcomes of the programmes in the different domains of change

Rights (Voice and Agency) and Rules of the Game	Combined with higher focus on Assets and Services	Assets and Services
Empowerment Project/LWF, Marginalised Community Empowerment Project/MS Nepal, SAKCHAM, SAMANTA/CARE, UPCA/Action Aid, VBG/RDF/DANIDA	DACAW, DLGSP, GEEOW, HCBO/Sahakarya, LFP, NSCFP/SDC, PARHI/UNFPA, PASRA, SAGUN/CARE, Reaching the Disadvantaged, RUPP, RHDP/SDC, VLDP/NSCFP/SDC	PAF, RWSS, LISP, MEDEP, ECD/PLAN

3.7 Effects of weak state response

Government programmes to address the needs of the public have been inadequate in scale and content; staff absenteeism is high and capacity limited. In an effort to fill the gap, programmes and projects have tried to deliver services that are essentially the government's responsibility. There are line agencies and Ilaka service centres whose responsibility is to deliver services to the people. But the experience has been frustrating for citizens because of the poor or non-existent services.

We found that the programmes which had taken a more transformational approach combining **services with rights** e.g. CARE-SAGUN and LWF had been **more effective**, even though reaching the extreme poor is still a problem for these programmes/projects. Those that follow a transactional approach just providing services are not empowering but if the scale of the service or asset provision was sufficient they assisted the people in gaining access to resources e.g. PAF with its substantial resources enabled people to achieve a certain level of economic progress, LISP with its focus on ginger production and marketing has created a good income source for its members. Other programmes supplying for example just one goat or one buffalo have been unable to achieve this. The women members of GEEOW and Reaching the Disadvantaged¹³ shared that they required “*gainful employment, drinking water facility and schools in their vicinity*”. With earlier inputs from different programmes like LWF, in Accham these women had learnt to recognise issues and

¹³ Reaching the Disadvantaged was an ADB supported programme, implemented by DWD which provided conditional cash transfer to ultra-poor women. GEEOW is a follow-up programme which has included these women into the new groups.

articulate their needs but were seeking ways to access services. *"We know our husbands and sons migrating to India will come back with HIV AIDs. But what to do – there is no option as there is no work here. We know about health posts and the schools in the area but there are no services there..."*

Whether working through a transactional or transformational approach the problem of **lack of information on what government services should be available remains a major barrier** to citizens being able to access them. This is a particularly acute problem for poor and excluded people and contributes to their sense of social exclusion (DFID 2008). Information is often controlled by elites as a means to retain power and control access to resources. From the review, even programmes/projects which work on rights are poorly linked into this information and require stronger linkages with other concerned agencies. For example, in SAMANTA, community group members were not aware of the various Government schemes for Dalits and were not updated on the VDC Grant Operation Manual provisions. Programme/project staff and social mobilisers play an important role in ensuring good information flow and must themselves be sufficiently informed. However, too there are dangers in project staff becoming the link between citizens and service delivery. A recent DAC evaluation of voice and accountability programmes in Bangladesh made the following important observation¹⁴:

"The project-driven approach of some of the NGOs, CSOs and Government in brokering the citizen-state interaction may undermine the potential sustainability of these relationships. The events bringing demand and supply side together may only happen if external persons promote them, facilitate them and external funds are available to them. ... (R)esults from these external agencies directly intervening on behalf of communities, by-passing the citizen-state relationship (e.g. exercising their clout to get public services rather than empowering the community to demand directly) further undermining sustainability... the projects justified this as their zeal to meet (often imposed) project targets and the concern with proving change over short project timelines to justify expenditure to donors" (Jupp et al, 2008:33).

Service provision to the extreme poor has in most cases been absent. NCSFP/SDC, SAGUN, SAKCHAM/CARE and the ADB funded DWD implemented "Reaching the Disadvantaged Groups in Mainstream Rural Development" programme have tried a variety of approaches to reach the extreme poor which are discussed in more detail in Chapter 5. Overall the general experience has been that the extreme poor are left out from most of the developmental services on offer by these programmes.

3.8 Organisational structures for social mobilisation

Service Provider Agency

NGOs are social mobilisation service providers in 14 programmes of the 24 reviewed. Five (LWF, SAGUN, MEDEP, SAMANTA, UPCA) have CBOs as providers while the other five have government bodies like the DDC, WDO and municipality, as service providers. DLGSP works through DDC, RUPP through Municipalities and DACAW through DDC and DWD. Two women specific programmes (Reaching the Disadvantaged and Gender Equality and Empowerment of Women) are implemented by DWD/MWCSW.

The NGO/CBO service providers recruit the social mobilisers and are responsible for building their capacity. Contractual arrangements follow programme/projects rules and are generally renewed annually over a project's life. The Women Development Office itself is the service provider for the DWD implemented programmes and has recruited a VDC level social mobiliser. The Local Development Fund (LDF) with initially 11 staff (reduced to 5 now) in the

¹⁴ Also noted in the mid-term review of the SDC-funded SHARIQUE Local Governance Programme (Hobley and Hussein, 2008)

DDC was responsible for the social mobilisation component of DLGSP. Now the Community Development Fund (CDF) has recruited one VDC level mobiliser to implement its tasks in the VDCs where the Quick Impact on Poverty and Social Inclusion (QUIPSI) intervention is ongoing.

Partner Selection Process

In the programmes and projects that work through NGOs, NGO/CBO Partners are selected through a competitive selection process of proposal review, short-listing based on identified criteria and interviews by programme staff or Programme Advisory Committee types of bodies created with representation of Government. District based NGOs are prioritised by most programmes/projects. Orientation regarding programme/project objectives and criteria are part of the process.

For those programmes/projects following transformational approaches which challenge the status quo and address some of the deep causes of poverty and exclusion, the quality of the partner selection process is critical. Box 3.10 illustrates a rigorous process followed by CARE which although time-consuming did ensure that there could be no future criticisms of political or any other form of interference in the selection.

Box 3.10 Examples of partner selection processes and criteria

SAKCHAM – Women’s Empowerment Programme/CARE: Partner Selection Criteria and Process

Process Steps

- 1) A Project Advisory Committee (PAC) was formed by the LDO who called a meeting and asked for the WDO, DFO, DISCO, representative of NGOCC and NGO Federation to sit in the Project Advisory Committee (PAC). PAC invited proposals from partner organisations with the criteria that it should be a women-led local organisation with experience in the areas of natural resource management, psycho-social wellbeing and women’s empowerment as per the project mandate. Application forms were distributed from the WDO office.
- 2) A PAC sub-committee for Partner Selection was formed with the WDO, DFO, LDO and CARE representative. Applications were screened and scoring was done with extra marks for women and excluded caste/ethnicity membership in Executive committee of the NGOs. Pressure from political parties and NGO Federation during selection was high – CARE staff had to be firm in facing the challenge.
- 3) The applicants who had received high scores were visited by the sub-committee members for financial review, discussion regarding their governance and representation. Former clients and communities in selected settlements where they had worked previously were also interviewed.

The sub-committee sent a report with recommendations to the PAC which then sent its recommendations to CARE head office. Short-listed partner organisations were asked about their particular programme policies and requirements e.g. policy on gender and inclusion, governance, financial transparency. If these were considered to be satisfactory the organisations continued in the selection process.

There were challenges to get the different partners (LDO, DFO, WDO, DISCO, NGOCC, NGO Federation) on board; to be firm against the pressure of political parties and other representative organisations (like that of Dalits) and to be true to the identified criteria and process. This led to a delay in the project implementation as it took 7 months to finalise but resulted in a process that was agreed to be fair and transparent and allowed the partner organisations to operate without further pressure.

Source: Field Notes 2009

The above example reveals that a process which brings different stakeholders on board and has appropriate criteria is necessary to ensure that the partner selected for the mobilisation of citizens has the experience to mobilise people for claiming rights and changing rules. It also underlines the difficulties faced by programmes in selection and the pressures they operate under, particularly political and otherwise to push for particular organisations to be selected over others. With limited economic opportunities in the country, such contract opportunities in the development field and jobs as social mobilisers are prized, especially in rural Nepal.

For LGCDP this provides some important lessons - the quality of the procurement process for citizen mobilisation organisations must be sufficiently assured and robust to resist these types of pressures. The activities citizen mobilisers will be undertaking in VDCs and municipalities are difficult and there must be no chance that their work can be undermined through a weak selection process. Obvious transparency in the selection stage is critical to the future robustness of the local governance processes that these people will facilitate.

Recruitment of social mobilisers

For the district level social mobiliser (called differently in different programmes e.g. Village Facilitator in DACAW, Change Agent in SAMANTA and Animator in LFP), all programmes have followed a selection process of vacancy announcement, written test, practical exercises and interviews. Most programmes/projects (e.g. SAKCHAM, LWF, LFP, DACAW, HCBO) use a combination of social mobiliser and local mobiliser or facilitators drawn from the communities in which they are working.

Some programmes ensure that communities are either responsible for the selection of social mobilisers or are involved on a selection panel. In the LWF supported programme, the social mobiliser is selected by the group themselves, based on several criteria of being a SLC-pass, local resident, Women/Dalit/Janajati and commitment for social development (e.g. through demonstrated work as volunteers in local community). In LFP the interview panel has a representative from the community. Many NGOs maintain that any external pressure (or political influence) for any candidate results in their blacklisting. For DLGSP two people per post were trained for 10 days (including field visits, case studies) and then interviewed by a team prior to the final selection.

Selection of local-level social mobilisers

The local level social mobilisers (such as Local Resource Persons, Community Facilitator, Community Mobiliser) are selected by the group members. For example in Phaparbari VDC in Mackwanpur (SACKHAM programme), members of the community were informed about the criteria (women, Class 8 to SLC pass, local and with local language skills), and women candidates submitted their applications to the group. Social Mobilisation Officers facilitated a discussion within the groups and one person was selected, based on consensus of who could best perform the job (discussion were held with all the four groups and an agreement facilitated on the selection based on who had best potential), to cover four groups in one VDC. Similarly in Plan Nepal, Sahakarya/CECI and DACAW, the group identifies a member as the community facilitator. In LFP, the Local Resource Persons are selected after a number of processes. The status of these local mobilisers is different in different programmes - in some they are paid staff (paid from NRs 3000-9000), in others they are local volunteers.

Experience of selection processes with the participation of the community group members has been good as it ensures that the person selected is locally accepted and can build the required rapport with the group. Additionally it ensures that the community has a role as a decision-maker and places the responsibility for the decision with them. Programme staff invest in discussing the issues and processes of the selection process with the partner agency but it is the group members who are responsible for the final decisions.

In discussions during the review, there was a general consensus that mobilisers from the local area were more appropriate as they could give time, be available and be responsive, were familiar with the people and the issues. It was felt that the community could share more openly

with a local person and that a mobiliser would be more committed to her/his own community's development. However, it was also raised that being local could result in an inability to challenge entrenched power relations. Transfer of experience from other places also is limited in such cases. In most programmes, this has been overcome through a combination of an external social mobiliser with local facilitators. The general approach is to transfer experience from the external mobiliser to the local facilitators and build their capabilities to continue work on their own after the programme/project is over.

We found that when the mobilisers are selected through a DDC/VDC/Municipality, her/his accountability was to the local body rather than to the people. All consultations have indicated that recruitment of NGOs/CBOs (with proper process, oversight and guidance) ensures a more responsive social mobilisation. The lines of contractual and management responsibility are critical however, to the effectiveness of the mobiliser. In many cases, concerns were expressed by stakeholders that VDC-contracted social mobilisers could become "karmchari" (government staff) and become mentally more conditioned to working as a VDC person rather than as a facilitator engaged in empowering people to recognise issues and raise their voice against injustice and inequity. Another concern expressed is that if the government bodies themselves contract the social mobilisers there is a conflict of interest as the social mobiliser will be accountable to the VDC and cannot work with the community to assist them in raising their voice against possible misuse of funds or other shortcomings of the VDC.

Criteria and qualifications

The educational qualifications required for the district level social mobiliser are consistent across programmes and include: IA or SLC pass with sometimes 4 years of experience as social mobilisers as in PAF or three years of community level experience as in LWF. Priority to women, Dalits and Janajatis was a criterion in a number of programmes. Other criteria are dependent on the project mandate e.g. local married women for DACAW, health experience in Sahakarya. A few that focus on more transformational approaches like DACAW and SACKHAM have criteria such as social commitment and sensitivity towards inclusion. There was general consensus that aptitude and competency are more important than academic qualification of social mobilisers and local resource persons. Some programmes appreciated their mobilisers as people with full-time commitment "*rahar lagiseko ko che*" (they are immersed in this now) and emphasised that it was very important for mobilisers and facilitators not to have a "*jagiri*" (job) mindset.

Other qualities a citizen mobiliser should have, as expressed in field consultations, included: ability to support groups at times and places convenient to the group and not to the mobiliser; being open and able to mix with people; an ability to work in the language of the community, their context and with skills to analyse and advocate local issues, to be able to strengthen networks, improve linkages and coordination for service provision. One of the important qualities that was mentioned by several programmes working with extreme poor and excluded households was that of empathy and not sympathy. Informants mentioned the importance of not becoming a patron to the group members by promising access to services and resources and effectively maintaining members in dependent relations rather than building their capability to claim services for themselves. Many of these same qualities emerge as critical to a good social mobiliser in Bangladesh. A number of programmes in that country have developed careful processes of facilitation for empowerment which emphasise the importance of the behaviour of the mobiliser and their sensitivity to the context in which they work (Box 3.11).

Box 3.11 Practical tips for effective mobilisation processes: experience from CARE

'Be considerate when arranging a day and time to meet, consider where the meeting is held (in front of whose house), ensure a place where there is space for everyone to be comfortable, and ensure that all neighbourhoods (kin groups) are represented. Be respectful to all, do not favour the better off through special seating arrangements or allow them to interrupt or dominate the process. Relax, and be open and transparent during facilitation letting people know the kind of support that can and cannot be provided. Do not cater to the 'dependency mentality' by feeling sorry for people or promising materials; the aim is to engage people in collective activities (analysis, planning, action) that assist them to find their own solutions. Innovate and create methods and techniques to enable analysis, generate interest and trigger action. Identify women and men with special skills and characteristics (articulate, committed) socially validated experts (in cultivation, crafts, labour leaders etc) and work with them to mobilise others'

Source: Bode, 2008:5

Tasks of social mobiliser

In almost all programmes/projects following primarily transactional approaches the tasks of the social mobiliser (Table 3.5) followed the same pattern: orientation on programme objectives to DDC, VDC and ward leaders, motivation of community members or target groups to form groups, group formation, training on group management, leadership and saving and credit, managing savings and credit activities, monthly visits and facilitation of group meetings. Skill building for sectoral issues, capacity building for group governance and coordination with local bodies and line agencies are also important responsibilities of the social mobilisers. They facilitate development of social mapping and well-being ranking in the programmes all of which do this (except for DACAW where the Village Facilitator supports as a member of the team but does not conduct the well-being ranking herself).

In transformational approaches the focus is on REFLECT-type centres. These were conducted in six programmes/projects of the 24 reviewed (UPCA/Action Aid, LWF, SAKCHAM and SAMANTA, PASRA, Value-based Governance). In these, the tasks of the social mobilisers and the community facilitators included weekly issue-based discussions, planning for advocacy and social action with women and men members. They supported the community people to discuss issues and approach service providers or power holders to identify responses. Social mobilisers of SAKCHAM and SAMANTA also facilitate discussions on discrimination and power analysis through use of different tools.

Various mobilisers had succeeded in supporting group members to access VDC funds and other public services (e.g. RHDP, Sahakarya, SAKCHAM). But only five programmes (Value-based Governance, LWF, VDLP/NSCFP, RUPP, Child Clubs/DACAW) had social mobilisers and community facilitators informing and facilitating women and men to participate in the local bodies' planning processes (refer Chapter 6 for detailed discussion on this).

Women and men, especially the ones who were still in early stages of empowerment, expressed the need for continuous mentoring by social mobilisers. "*Hami ghas, daura garda, samuha ko sikhai brisinchau*" ("doing our grass, fodder work, we forget group learnings"). They expected the social mobiliser to be their link with the local bodies and service providers.

Table 3.5 Tasks of social mobilisers

Tasks		
Orientation, Social Analysis/DAG Mapping, REFLECT, Group Formation revitalisation	Capacity building for group governance; Sectoral Support	Monitoring, Reporting, Coordination
In Transformational Approach		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Social analysis ▪ Empowerment Education Class Organising people and increasing awareness of their rights and potentials ▪ Formation of group 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Building capacity to lead their community; Saving and credit ▪ Skill training and income generating activities ▪ Social Motivation of the group members development activities. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Facilitation in decision making, ▪ Monitoring of the activities ▪ Follow up of the action plan ▪ Helping to keep record and account
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Orientation of DDC/VDC; preparatory activities for power analysis with invitation letter, self-orientation and homework regarding VDC context; Power map analysis; poverty pockets identification; political party manifesto discussion; well-being grouping; Popular Education Centre group identified ▪ SMO supports selection of CF 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ 2 hour weekly issue based-discussion; group formation for saving and credit once members expressed the need; one meeting/month for saving and credit activities; facilitate action plan preparation; back-stop and support social action; ▪ use of PRA tools like dependency analysis , seasonal calendar, mobility map to identify issues; preparation and implementation ▪ Facilitate natural resource management, economic, psycho-social services; ▪ Monthly meetings with male groups for social change 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Maintain daily diaries; monthly reflection and learning meetings; monitor progress of members; SMO monitors CF; both submit monthly reports; ▪ Coordination with VDC and line agencies ▪ public hearing and public auditing if the participation is less than 60% then PH/PA needs to be organised once again
Transformational and Transactional		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Orientation of DDC/VDC, Sensitisation and mobilisation of community to form/revitalise groups 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Training on group management, saving and credit; DAG mapping ▪ monthly meeting, Saving and credit; ▪ Record-keeping of the credit capital, seed grant and resource mobilisation Skill Transfer, Rights-based Trainings and sectoral inputs. ▪ Meetings with different coordination committees 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Monitor, Supervise and evaluate the progress and activities of the groups; report regularly; Provide necessary backstopping; Act as catalyst for group.
In Transactional Approaches		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Orientation, Social mapping and DAG identification, Group Formation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Facilitation of group meeting, Orientation to the community people, Management and other training, Skill development and Income Generating, Preparation of proposal and implementation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Networking, Monitoring and follow up, Reporting.

Coverage by social mobiliser, partner organisation

The coverage is dependent on the objective and process of mobilisation. If it is a more intensive transformational process, the time and human resource investment required from the mobilisers is much higher than if it is a transactional process focusing on savings and credit and technical service provision. In the transformational processes weekly discussions have to be facilitated and issues identified and discussed; the mobilisers need to continuously backstop and provide ideas for local social action; they work with the group to approach stakeholders and continue to support the groups until the action takes place and is brought to a logical conclusion. Similar work is done on other issues identified by the women and men.

It is difficult to get a clear picture of what the average household coverage is for one social mobiliser as there are many varying practices, again depending on whether it is a transactional or transformational approach. For example, DLGSP provides for one social mobiliser per VDC covering almost 500 to 1200 households (each social mobiliser has to cover approximately 25 to 35 COs; average households per CO is 20 to 35). In LFP and DACAW too there is one social mobiliser per VDC while there are five mobilisers in one VDC in LWF which follows a more intensive transformational process. In PAF and SRDC/MS Nepal each mobiliser generally covers 400 households. In LFP, one staff member covers about 10 groups with 1000 households. GEEOW social mobilisers have to work with 13 groups of 5-7 women each.

The coverage depends very much on the approaches to be followed - an intense empowerment/mobilisation approach requires a higher-level of facilitation and more face-to-face interaction (e.g. LWF, SAKCHAM). The social action process emerging out of REFLECT centres is facilitated by the community mobiliser and hence numerous meetings, interactions and discussions have to be held to support women and men to decide on what action to take, whom to meet in Government bodies and where to go.

A transaction based approach around savings and credit or inputs of services (PAF, DLGSP) does not require this kind of intense engagement with the people. Despite this, mobilisers state that they are over-worked going from one group to another completing the saving and credit ledgers and ensuring that the identified activities of the group are proceeding smoothly.

In the Value-based Governance programme (RDF, Janakpur/DANIDA) the responsibility of the Social Mobilisers' varies with distance - if the groups are nearby one mobiliser covers up to 3 groups while if it is at a distance then the mobiliser covers only one group of up to 35 people. This type of context specific adjustment is a sensible approach to the extreme diversity of contexts across Nepal.

Capacity building of social mobilisers

All programmes/projects invest in building capacity of the social mobilisers but for transformational approaches significantly more time is invested in building the capabilities of mobilisers to work with poor and excluded households (e.g. weekly meetings and discussions instead of monthly meetings; coaching/mentoring for social action which can take months) including competencies to deal with the psycho-social aspects of extreme poverty and exclusion. The first basic social mobilisation training ranges from 4 days to 12 days covering concepts and process of:

- social mobilisation,
- PRA tools including well-being ranking,
- community development and monitoring tools such as public audit and public hearing.

Some have conceptual sessions on gender and social inclusion, rights and empowerment training. However, as has been demonstrated by BRAC through its work with the extreme poor in Bangladesh, the skills and competencies required to work with highly excluded households are very different from those normally associated with group-based social mobilisation efforts:

'It is clear that specific skills are required to work effectively with the ultra poor. Programme Organisers need, above all, to "listen" to the priorities the selected beneficiaries themselves describe. These will often be very idiosyncratic requiring empathetic support and constructive advice. A key element of that experience will be an appreciation of the skills needed to build up the livelihood strategies of the ultra poor. A lot of the staff time will also be used counselling individuals on their livelihood strategies given their family circumstances – i.e. they will often be operating as social welfare workers dealing with their clients rather than as group facilitators' (Matin et al, 2008:19)

To ensure that a citizen mobiliser can support the engagement of all citizens in the local body planning processes, these should have skills to respond to the circumstances of the extreme poor. This will be of even greater importance in the social protection pilot VDCs.

There is a variety of training support provided to social mobilisers again dependent on the objectives of the programme. For example, a 10-days training on detailed social analysis was provided by LWF to its social mobilisers. Refresher and follow-up are also done by most programmes. Additional subject-matter related training e.g. on child health, NRM, disaster preparedness are provided. Written manuals are also provided but in very few programmes.

To analyse underlying causes of poverty, training is provided to staff by SAKCHAM and SAMANTA (Box 3.12).

Social mobilisers and community facilitators conducting REFLECT centres or similar classes are provided a training on REFLECT.

Government training providers include Social Mobilisation and Educational Learning Centre (SMELC), Rampur Campus, Chitwan, Local Development Training Agency (LDTA) and CTNET. CTNET has a 15 months accredited course on social mobilisation. It covers social mobilisation concepts and does field work for community development. But the course curriculum does not include training on rights, gender, inclusion or changing existing power relations. It does not cover the philosophy behind PRA or provide expertise in use of PRA tools.

Box 3.12 Training on underlying causes of poverty

SAMANTA and SACKHAM, CARE

These programmes provide five days training on the philosophy, process and tools of Underlying Causes of Poverty analysis. In SACKHAM, after each training event there is reflection and discussion about learning with conclusions drawn. Social Mobiliser Officers provide training to Community Facilitators (CF) in a training mode based on their own training.

The Community Facilitators participate in a 7 day training on the REFLECT process and use of PRA tools with field practice. One day is spent on developing rules and code of conduct. In a 3 monthly review meeting, resource persons are invited to provide ongoing inputs to the CFs. CARE staff participate in the training programmes and work with the participants.

Source: Bode, 2008:5

Box 3.13 Reflection and learning practices in SAKCHAM

Learning diaries are maintained by Community Facilitators (CFs) and Social Mobiliser Officers (SMOs). SMOs review the CF's diaries and prepare a report for the Programme Coordinator. In the review and reflection meeting with CFs and one SM as theme leader every three months, the experience is shared with POs and CARE staff. It is a 3-day meeting with 2 days of information sharing by CFs and one day of planning with, at times, resource persons on different issues. For CFs it is very empowering to share with other CFs, similar problems "hami matre yo samsya jhelerakeko cheyna" (we are not the only ones facing this problem) and the responses provide a great learning opportunity and motivation to do as well as the others. Personal support is provided to the SMOs and CFs by POs and CARE staff.

A thorough review is done with partner organisations every six months and lessons and challenges documented, which are also reported bi-annually to the donor.

Reflection and learning

There was little evidence of systems for reflection and learning between social mobilisers in the programmes/ projects except for a CARE-supported programme (Box 3.13). There was no coordination/sharing between service providers or even between the social mobilisers of the same agency e.g Equality Development Society, a rights based NGO in Doti doing excellent work for Dalits' rights is a partner of PAF. But the social mobilisation approaches being followed are according to the PAF programme design with no systematic social mobilisation learning exchanges between the mobilisers. One of the consequences

of the contract-based approaches to social mobilisation and their highly projectised and compartmentalised forms is that there are no incentives for cross-learning between projects or between mobilisers. In fact, if anything there is a high degree of competition and 'turf' between projects and programmes which is a major barrier to open learning approaches.

Diversity profile of social mobilisers

While all programmes/projects reviewed were requested for information regarding the diversity of their social mobilisers, only nine programmes (DACA, LFP, LDF/DLGSP, PARHI-CBP, PASRA/GTZ, RHDP/SDC, SAKCHAM, SAMANTA, SRDC/N-MS Nepal and VBG/RDF, Janakpur) provided the information. Of these three programmes/project work on women's rights and have predominantly women community mobilisers and community facilitators (DACA, PARHI/UNFPA and SAKCHAM); one works on Dalit rights (SAMANTA) and has only Dalit mobilisers; another project works in Palpa had has 90% Janajati social mobilisers (MS Nepal). The districts covered by the project/programmes also make a difference to the diversity profile. Due to this, average diversity figures of the nine programmes cannot be taken as indicative of the existing reality. These average figures are: Of 2518 social mobilisers, 59% are women, 41% men; 87% people of Hill origin; 10% Madhesis; 3% Terai Janajati; 0.2% Muslims; 2% Newars; 13% Dalits; 51% Janajati and 30% Brahman/Chettris.

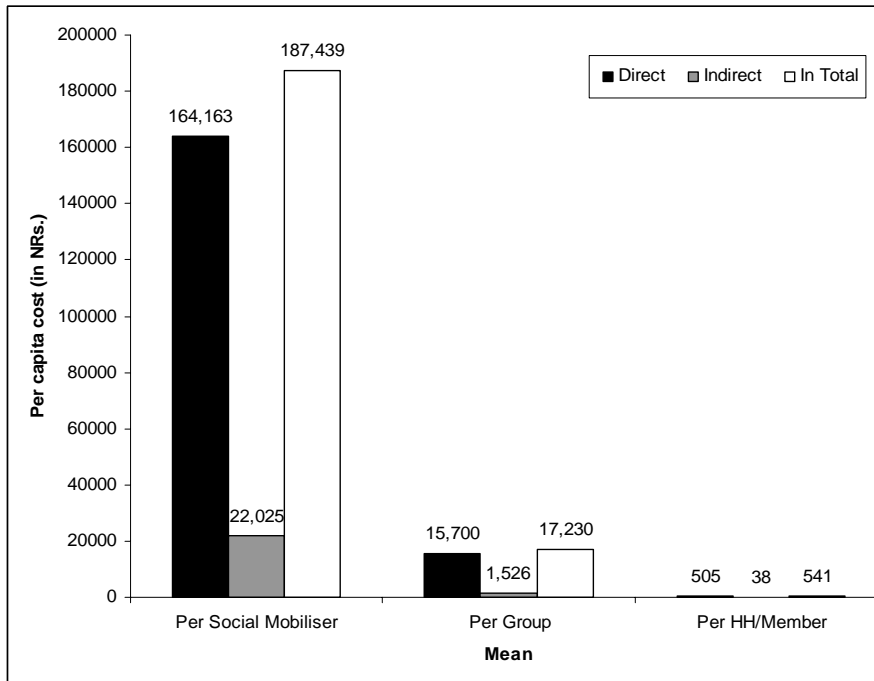
Programme/project-wise there are wide differences e.g. LDF/DLGSP has only 21% women while LFP has 44% and DACA 84%. LDF/DLGSP has 57% Brahman/Chettri (with 45% men), DACA 60% Brahman/Chettri while SAMANTA has 100% Dalits.

Operating costs of social mobilisation

The salary range of social mobilisers varies by programme/project. In some cases district level social mobilisers were paid Rs 12,000, in others Rs. 6000. For operating cost analysis of social mobilisation we received information from only seven programmes/projects (10 districts of LDF/DLGSP, LFP/DFID, PASRA/GTZ, NSCFP/SDC, Sahakarya/CECI, SRDC/MS Nepal, and UNICEF). The average annual salary/allowance of a social mobiliser comes to NRs. 86,330 with a standard deviation of NRs. 57,500. Cost analysis was done with LDF and without LDF data to ensure that one programme's practices did not dominate. The differences were minimal and hence we have not reflected it here (Refer annex 6 for details). Figure 3.1 shows that the mean

(average) cost per social mobiliser, per group and per household come to NRs. 187,439, NRs. 17,230 and NRs. 541.00 respectively, based on our sample size.

Figure 3.1 Operating cost of social mobilisation (Mean Value)



Source: Programme Staff, 2009

Programmes/projects found it difficult to supply the kind of detailed information that would have made this analysis more useful. It was difficult to separate expenses that were made for social mobilisation activities in programme/project accounting systems even if they are computerised. Most agencies which did provide data were unable to send the data clearly under all the variables we had sought.

The pattern of information indicates that there is a lack of standard database system which can generate the social mobilisation related information. It is necessary for DDCs/VDCs and Municipalities to demand social mobilisation costs information according to a prescribed format. This would enable an overall assessment of what investments are being made for what kind of outputs at the local level.

Operating cost of CARE supported REFLECT type of process: CARE was unable to provide information from which the cost analysis could be done as above. But seven of its programmes conduct REFLECT type of processes. These had covered 344 VDCs and 8 Municipalities of 27 districts to implement 751 NFE/Popular Education Centres in 2008. Total direct beneficiaries of these programmes were 23,124 including 19,699 women and 2,204 men. NRs. 30,386,800.00 was spent as direct cost to support these centres. (This figure does not include operational costs and salaries of CARE Nepal and its partners).

Unfortunately we did not receive information from Action Aid and LWF so are unable to clearly separate the costs of the transactional form of mobilisation and the transformational. But the seven programme/project sample analysed here have a combination of transactional and transformational approaches and the expenses are not too disparate.

3.9 Satisfaction and challenges of social mobilisers

Social mobilisers feel respected and satisfied when a group does well. They are accepted by the community as “*afnai chhora/chhori jastai maninche*” (“treated like own children”). If they are from the same community they experience great pride in being able to work with their own people to improve their quality of life.

Constraints of project mandates However, project mandates are a constraint at times as there is a gap between the needs/realities of people and what the project offers. “*Karyakram re samudaya ko iichha ma tal mel na mileko*” (there is imbalance between the programme and people's needs). Differing project incentives create problems also as the community’s expectations are raised and if a programme does not provide some incentive people comment “*kalo gaye, goro aunchha*” (black will go, white will come, meaning if one goes, a different programme will come). The fact that programmes/ projects are designed in Kathmandu primarily by technocrats, creates difficulties when there are differences between the needs of the community and the programme services. One of the main issues raised by social mobilisers was the difficulty of ensuring concrete, sustained benefits from social mobilisation to the community. This is distinctly different in the CARE programmes that start with power analyses and local identification of problems and constraints. These programmes do not enter with promises of assets or services but build a process of understanding that will lead to people being able to address their own constraints locally, often with impressive immediate consequences for livelihood security e.g. increasing wage labour rates through agreements between employer and employee, gaining access to public resources – land, forests etc.

Multiple group formation processes A major challenge that social mobilisers faced was motivating people to form groups as there was such a lot of duplication in group formation. For those mobilisers who come from outside the community this is even more difficult as rapport building is particularly difficult for an outsider and establishing trust can take a lot of time. A general comment was that people cannot understand the need to form different groups and resent the time they have to expend (Box 3.14) illustrates this problem drawn from Hobley and Paudyal (2008:40).

Box 3.14 Reducing project induced transaction costs

The problem of project-based community-development is clearly illustrated in one small tole in Okhrene. Here 14 households are all members of four different project groups. Each group has its own rules for savings, account-keeping and executive membership, each was meeting at different times of the month according to the need of the particular social mobiliser. The households in this tole decided this was wasting their time so they have elected to hold three of the group meetings on the same day, and the third, PAF, is held on a separate day to fit with the social mobiliser’s time-table. They proposed to the different originators of the groups (DADO, TSS, LDF, PAF) that they should merge all four into one group. However, there was no agreement on this and each has insisted on separate minutes and accounts. Each group still has its own chair but the secretary is the same for all four as he is the most literate person in the tole. Despite the lack of agreement between projects, the tole have now merged all the funds they are saving for each group into one larger revolving fund (although each still has separate accounts) and use the same interest rate (24%) which means they have more flexibility to loan money to their members.

Source: Hobley and Paudyal, 2008

Managing diverse groups, being able to respond to different attitudes and needs and finding ways to convince people that it is worth being part of a group are serious challenges for social mobilisers. This underlines again the problems of externally imposed processes that have identified solutions to local problems without effectively consulting the people who experience these problems. This is distinct from the kind of problem identification and response that occurs

through REFLECT processes. Such processes begin with helping women and men understand their own problems and find local solutions to these rather than relying only on analysis and solutions from outside the community.

Problems of inclusion of extreme poor and excluded Most social mobilisers interviewed said there was inadequate time and resources to really bring in the voice of excluded people (Box 3.15 drawn from Hobley and Paudyal). In addition, there is resistance among other groups to the increasing focus on excluded groups. This means for social mobilisers that they need to spend time in systematic explanations and discussions with both the excluded and the non-excluded to build their acceptance.

In South Asia more generally these problems are widely found. Programmes that have been successful in dealing with them have tended to focus on engaging elites and the not-so-poor households in processes that build relationships that are of value to the excluded and the elites e.g BRAC and its Poverty Advisory Committees, CARE's work with locally elected members of Union Parishads; Transparency International and its support to Concerned Citizens Committees. In CARE's Nijera project in Bangladesh changes in attitudes and behaviours of elected members and chairmen are brought about through the realisation that supporting the process will lead to development outcomes that reduce poverty and, consequently lead to a change in voting patterns' (Bode et al, 2006:12); the extreme poor remain a large and important vote bank. These types of changes need time and a process which is long-term, while most projects/programmes are bound by short project cycles and increasing demands for evidence of tangible short-term wins which tend to promote more transactional approaches to mobilisation.

Box 3.15 View from the village on the development model

"The development model is wrong for the extreme poor because the projects are focusing only on small activities; the social mobilisation model is wrong - the mobilisers do not spend any time with the extreme poor households, you have to spend time talking with them to build their confidence to raise their voices, without this they won't. For the middle class they can easily take the opportunities, the gap is widening between the extreme poor and the middle class. For the extreme poor they have to invest too much time in meetings, the small investments given to them do not pay back. Those who are poorest are getting the least and are being cheated. Higher the class the higher the benefit"

Source: Hobley and Paudyal, 2008:41

Lack of decision-making power Social mobilisers are the main interface between development programmes and people but are without real decision-making power. They do not have the authority to make decisions in front of the community. Even within the organisations that employ them, social mobilisers are considered to be low in the hierarchy and the post is considered "*halka*" (lightweight) though the work of the social mobiliser is the mainstay of the programme, without them there would be no outputs or outcomes.

Weak learning and accountability mechanisms Social mobilisers said that regular monitoring of social mobilisation was weak with no arrangements for rewards/punishment or stronger accountability towards people. What accountability there is tends to be upwards towards the contracting organisation and thence to the programme and donor. In the words of one villager (Hobley and Paudyal, 2008:38):

"The social mobilisers get Rs7,000 per month, the NGO coordinator gets Rs25,000 per month. They get their monthly payments whatever they do. The goal of the project is poverty alleviation but the poorest households get only 1-2 goats worth Rs3-5000 and that's also a loan which they have to pay back; they do not get a monthly or regular salary. It can take up to 1-1.5 years before the goats begin to pay back, if they are lucky. These poor people have their own daily difficulties to survive – the goat becomes yet another

headache, it reduces their choices, forces them to stay at home, and stops them leaving to look for regular employment. If the goat dies the insurance may pay up, but the NGO salaries continues whatever happens. The poor bear all the risks.” (Field notes February 2008)

Short-term contracts and no career path The fact that social mobilisers are project-based (rather than being staff members of their contracting organisation) and their employment is linked to renewal of contracts was a point of worry. Each time a project was completed they had to look around for other jobs. With growing realisation of the need for social mobilisation in programmes, there were more jobs but there was increasing competition also. The example of PAF illustrates the difficulties of the social mobilisers. During the field visit in November, the contracts of the social mobilisers had not been renewed and they had not been paid since August. *“I had to take a loan before going home in Dasain.... How can an earning son go home without cash and gifts during the festive season?”*

Social mobiliser gender and caste discrimination There are additional problems for social mobilisers who suffer exclusion on the basis of their gender or caste, for which there is often little provision or thought. For women overnight stays are difficult as there are rarely safe places in certain VDCs. For Dalits especially places to stay are very limited due to caste-based discrimination which makes it difficult for people of other caste groups to provide them accommodation. Such social mobilisers have to deal with their own personal exclusion whilst trying to work to overcome the exclusion of others in their working areas.

3.10 Lessons from experience

The review across this wide-range of organisations indicates that the social mobilisation process (particularly the transactional forms) is dependent on external support for survival. Groups are dependent on the host programme/project and in the absence of horizontal and vertical collaboration they tend to dissolve as the programmes/projects phase out. In cases where cooperatives have become strong, the groups have an opportunity to continue with their activities. Where a transformational approach has been taken, the capacity of people to make a choice on how to move forward after a project phase-out is higher. Even if they are unable to form a group and continue, their increased voice enables them to identify potentials and make efforts to access resources/services.

To achieve LGCDP’s aim of increasing voice and agency of citizens to influence the decisions and processes that affect their lives, social mobilisation which does not create that ability will not be effective. Hence social mobilisation processes need to be transformed into a ‘citizen engagement’ processes that focuses on the transformational aspects of mobilisation and builds the agency of people to be able to participate in their own governance and claim services for themselves. The citizen mobiliser will need to be a source of trusted information on “what’s going on”. People need to be informed well about public processes and resources to enable them to influence public decisions and access resources.

Supply versus demand-driven social mobilisation: Currently the services of the social mobilisation programmes are supply driven. The programme objectives are decided at headquarters and only the targets are fixed through community involvement using participatory methods. This has strong implications on the type of social mobilisation adopted by the programme. A key issue is the gap between the needs of the people and the programme objectives/social mobilisation objectives. Where social mobilisation has responded to people’s articulated needs raised by the process, it has been far more effective. For example, programmes

based on outputs of REFLECT seem to be more widely accepted and sustainable than those programmes which are designed at the centre and the target groups are later selected to fit the programme objectives.

Sustaining group capability beyond the intervention depends on the type of mobilisation support: Field level interactions indicate that various factors are necessary for the service providers to effectively manage the social mobilisation process and for the people to benefit from it. In examples where service providers have provided continuous support to the groups through a transformational process of REFLECT or issue-based discussion and social action e.g. by partners of Lutheran in Yangsila or Action Aid and CARE in other districts, the empowerment level of the people, including women and the excluded has been higher. In Doti, even though the project has phased out, community women and men believe that the investment made by LWF through REFLECT and other such processes (more than seven years ago) has enabled them to work with new projects like PAF.

Social mobiliser approach dependent on nature of contract: The social mobilisers play an important role as the key person for change. But they depend very much on contracts and project mandates and hence in projects where social change is not a core objective, they are unable to provide the kind of continued follow-up support to groups which is essential for real change.

The kind of tasks demanded of social mobilisers has constrained them to doing transactional forms of work of saving and credit and group facilitation for managing these transactions. Only in a few cases has the focus been on empowering group members to transform existing gender/caste/ethnicity or class based power relations. This indicates that the existing capacity of social mobilisers would need to be reframed and strengthened for them to facilitate people's empowerment for citizen's engagement with local bodies.

Professional processes for recruitment of social mobilisers need to be instituted: The practice of following a professional system of recruitment of social mobilisers is something that needs to be strengthened and replicated. Even service providers need to be recruited through such systems, based on criteria which will ensure that the organisations recruited have the potential and institutional commitment to do transformational kind of work rather than just technical.

Importance of separation of demand-side mobilisation support responsibilities from supply-side response: It is essential to separate the responsibilities of social mobilisation (i.e. the demand side) and the government responsibilities (i.e. the response side). The evidence from the field indicates that for the transformational form of citizen mobilisation that is essential for the changed context of citizen-state engagement, a very different kind of mobilisation is necessary. This will be difficult if the state itself is an implementer. As stated above, there is a strong opinion amongst stakeholders that local bodies themselves should not be the service providers. Non-governmental service providers are better placed to deliver this as they will not have to experience any conflict of interest.

Exclusion of extreme poor: What is apparent from experience of all these approaches is that the extreme poor tend to be excluded from group-based processes whether a transformational or transactional approach is followed. Even where groups are formed composed of extreme poor and excluded households, other elements of exclusion come into play. An example from the field study illustrates this:

“Non Dalits are not willing to participate in groups where Dalits are in the majority, even if they are poor. In one group three non-Dalit households joined a distant non-Dalit group rather than joining the Dalit majority group close by to their houses” (field notes, 2009)

This is also the experience from other countries in the region and remains a major criticism of many group based development or decentralisation processes (Matin et al, 2008). These created institutions tend to reproduce the existing patterns of social inequality, unless there is a serious and sustained process of facilitation to challenge power relations and to build capability and livelihood security of the extreme poor. Simply providing institutional spaces for poor and excluded to participate does not necessarily lead to benefits; ‘the agency of poor people is crucially dependent on three connected factors: their able-bodiedness, their room for manoeuvre within social relationships, and their ability to articulate their interests in fora accessible to them at lowest cost’ (Cleaver, 2003:15). From discussions with the programmes it is clear they are all struggling to find processes that can support change for the extreme poor. The condition of the extreme poor facing multiple dimensions of deprivation means that there cannot be only one channel through which to address change.

Different levels of capability to engage in groups and decision-making processes require different types of mobilisation support: The review shows that there is a continuum of voice in operation in any VDC or municipality as a result of these different levels of agency. From those households who are capable of voicing their demands and having them listened to (generally those households with high levels of social, economic and political assets), to those who have limited voice and finally those with limited social networks, few assets and low levels of capability. These different levels of capability have major implications for the approaches to mobilisation to these different groups of people.

No graduation mechanisms in place to support the movement of extreme poor and excluded into mainstream development opportunities: Without a specific mobilisation process to support the graduation of the extreme poor such that it increases their ability to manoeuvre and builds their agency to engage as full citizens in decision-making processes that affect their livelihoods, it is likely that the situation will remain as it is today in most VDCs and municipalities.

Chapter 4: Disadvantaged Household Mapping

LGCDP is explicitly concerned to ensure the 'active engagement of citizens from **all** sections of society, to ensure social inclusion and to address the structural causes of inequalities' (pp19-20). As part of this, LGCDP is to initiate a set of social protection pilots to support the extreme poor and excluded through a mixture of conditional and unconditional cash transfers. However, one of the major difficulties facing this programme is the question of targeting and how to ensure the inclusion of these target households as active citizens.

There has been significant and diverse experience of targeting disadvantaged households across Nepal. A recent study (Hobley and Paudyal 2008) illustrated some of the problems that have been faced in ensuring correct identification of disadvantaged households. Currently there are multiple and contradictory practices often operating in the same VDCs/municipalities with the same households, leading to mis-targeting of households, capture of benefits, continued exclusion, widespread confusion and suspicion about the fairness of the process.

In this chapter, we review the experience of the programmes/projects studied in their efforts to identify and target disadvantaged households and consider the implications for LGCDP.

4.1 Objectives and definition of disadvantaged households¹⁵

The main reason why programmes/projects conduct disadvantaged household mapping is to identify and then target the people to work with (e.g. LWF, MEDEP, PAF), to provide services (e.g. RWSS) or provide specific support to the extreme-poor (e.g. Reaching the Disadvantaged). There are two elements to this targeting: 1) defining which categories of people should be eligible for services and assets (setting the criteria for eligibility); and 2) establishing mechanisms for identifying those individuals within the population who are eligible for benefits. The identification becomes a monitoring tool to measure the impact of programme interventions in certain cases (e.g. DACAW). The objective of identifying disadvantaged households is thus mostly related to ensuring improved programme/project targeting and ascertaining that services reach the groups who have historically been left-out of mainstream development. However very few programmes/projects identify disadvantaged households as a part of a process of understanding the dynamics of wealth and poverty and the local power structures (except SAMANTA and LFP). Thus in most cases Disadvantaged Household Mapping remains more of a transactional rather than a transformational tool.

The identification of disadvantaged households as a means to target a programme's services or increase access to resources means that households know that being identified as 'disadvantaged', may bring benefits. This can have two distinct consequences 1) it can hinder getting an accurate picture of the existing realities as many "non-poor" may also want to be "poor" to access the resources; and 2) those who are genuinely poor, may not want to admit this as being identified as poor and excluded, carries a social stigma in some communities.

The objectives and definitions of most of the programmes and projects reveal that their primary vision is to ensure better access to resources and services to the identified households. Only

¹⁵ We prefer to use the term 'Disadvantaged Households' mapping to 'DAG Mapping' as we believe that it is more respectful. It also reduces confusion between the VDC level and the household level DAG mapping that is done in Nepal.

three programmes have indicated a link between identification of disadvantaged households with transforming existing power relationships (SAMANTA, LFP, NSCFP). SAMANTA identified poverty pockets, a process that brings together the excluded and the powerful. The process helped ensure that the powerful would recognise the reality and identify ways to change the situation. LFP and NSCFP work with the local elites to enable them to identify revisions in the CFUG Constitution, Operational plan and in the CFUG services to the extreme poor households.

Various economic and social criteria define the disadvantaged households in different programmes/projects. Households that are landless, have less than 3 months of food sufficiency, or are dependent on daily wage labour are commonly defined as disadvantaged. Many programmes and projects consider those who are socially excluded due to caste/ethnicity or single women who have no other support, as disadvantaged. For UNDP (MEDEP) and MS Nepal, being a Dalit or a Janajati automatically defines that household as disadvantaged while for PAF, it is income poverty (as indicated by food sufficiency, income level and daily wage labour) that defines the disadvantaged. While PAF has a condition that 80% of the beneficiaries should be Dalits, Janajits and women, it does not automatically categorise them as disadvantaged on the basis of their caste/ethnicity or gender.

Each programme/project has its own definition of disadvantaged households and its own terminology – in some they are called disadvantaged, abbreviated to 'DAG', in others poor and excluded or discriminated. This diversity of terms and eligibility criteria create confusion amongst the people and also for the service providers.

Annex 7 provides the objectives and definitions used by the programmes.

4.2 Criteria/indicators and categories of poor

There are a range of criteria and indicators used by the programmes/projects to identify households and differentiate between them. Again there are high levels of inconsistency and confusion in their use covering proxy indicators (such as location, assets, food sufficiency), categorical indicators aimed at specific identifiable categories (such as children, elderly, Dalits, janajatis), and community based derived from community perceptions of poverty and vulnerability. In most cases a mix of all these types of indicators are used, overlaid by a first-level geographical targeting. Table 4.1 considers some of the advantages and disadvantages of each, and the following sections look in detail at the use of some of these criteria and indicators.

Table 4.1 Advantages and disadvantages of different approaches to targeting

Approach	Description	Advantages	Disadvantages	Examples
Proxy indicators	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Based on observable proxy measures of poverty (type of house, assets, household characteristics) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reduces inclusion and exclusion errors; More objective 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Difficult to construct valid proxy indicators Introduces perverse incentives to meet proxy criteria Costly and difficult to administer 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Nepal: Application forms for secondary school grant: identifies house floor, roof, toilet, wall, lighting, cooking stove, number of children etc.
Community-based	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Based on community perceptions of poverty and vulnerability 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reflects local understanding of poverty and vulnerability 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Significant inclusion and exclusion errors Perpetuates local patronage structures and gender bias Can be divisive and lead to greater social stigma Can lead to elite capture and political manipulation Creates extra unpaid work for community members in meetings to identify households Where poverty is widespread may be more appropriate to have an affluence test to screen out the better-off 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Most of the programmes/projects reviewed use community-based approaches through well-being ranking to target priority households for programme interventions
Categorical	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Aimed at specific identifiable categories of the population associated with poverty (e.g. children, Dalits, women-headed households) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Easy to administer Objective 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Inclusion and exclusion errors Can be divisive particularly in singling out particular social groups, and excluding poverty variables 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Dalit Nepal Federation focus their support to Dalit households
Geographical	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Aimed at specific geographical areas of poverty 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Easy to administer Useful as a first-level targeting approach Good for identifying poverty pockets and focusing inputs 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Inclusion and exclusion errors are high, particularly as it directs away from poverty pockets in areas of apparent lesser poverty 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Most of the programmes/projects reviewed use this targeting as a first sift for identifying areas in which to work. CARE use this process within VDCs to identify poverty pockets

Source: Field notes, CPRC 2007; Mkandawire, 2006; Wahenga, 2006

Food sufficiency

Of 20 programme/projects for which detailed information is available, 14 have used food sufficiency as the main criterion. Eleven have linked their categorisation of poor people to food sufficiency months (Table 4.2). These assessments do not appear to be related to the numbers of years a household has experienced a particular level of food sufficiency (unlike assessments in Ethiopia for example, which require, among other criteria, households to have been chronically food insecure and facing food shortages for three years or more (DFID 2006)).

Due to the differences in use of food sufficiency criteria, the categorisations followed by programme/projects are different, causing confusion and contradiction e.g. a well-being ranking process done by DLGSP would categorise a household with more than 6 and less than 12 months of food sufficiency as 'medium poor' while the same household would be categorised as well-off by DACAW. For LISP-Helvetas 'medium' households are those with food sufficiency of more than 9 to 12 months, while for LWF and SAKCHAM, these households are well-off.

The highest degree of consistency is for the 'ultra-poor' category with less than 3 months of food sufficiency. But in SAMANTA/CARE this level of food sufficiency categorises the 'poor', not the 'ultra-poor', who are identified not through food sufficiency criteria but through lack of land and dependence on wage labour (a more robust set of indicators for identifying the most extreme¹⁶ poor when combined with proxy indicators about nature of shelter etc.). Table 4.2 compares programmes/projects use of food sufficiency criteria to categorise levels of poor.

Table 4.2 Differentiation of poor and food sufficiency categorisation

Food Sufficiency Months/Categorisation			No. of reviewed Programmes
1	Ultra poor	Up to 3 months	10
		SAMANTA: Landless, daily wage labour dependent	1
2	Medium Poor	Lisp-Helvetas: HHs with more than 3 and less than 6 months of food sufficiency	1
3	Poor	upto 6 months	9
		Lisp-Helvetas: above 6 below 9 months	1
		SAMANTA: Upto 3 months	1
4	Medium	DLGSP, PAF and Sahakarya: more than 6 and less than 12 months of food sufficiency	3
		RWSS: 6 months of food sufficiency	1
		LWF, SACKSHAM/CARE, PASRA-GTZ and MS Nepal: more than 6 and less than 9 months of food sufficiency	4
		LISP-HELVETAS: food sufficiency of more than 9 to 12 months.	1
		SAMANTA: Up to 6 months	1
5	Well-Off	PAF and LISP- Helvetas: HHs with more than 12 months of food sufficiency	2
		LWF and SAKCHAM/CARE: HHs with more than 9 months of food sufficiency	2
		DACAW: HHs with more than 6 months of food sufficiency	1

The food sufficiency criteria and indicators used by different programmes/projects are presented in Table 4.3 below:

¹⁶ We use the term "extreme poor" instead of "ultra or very" poor since it is a global practice to use such terminology for the very poor in the community

Table 4.3 Food sufficiency criteria and poverty categorisation

Project	Category (and Terminology)	Food Sufficiency criteria (months)												
		1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	12+
Ultra Poor														
DACAW	Most disadvantaged													
DLGSP	Ultra poor 'C'/ disadvantaged group													
EP-LWF	Ultra poor/ disadvantaged group													
LISP-Helvetas	Ultra poor/ disadvantaged group													
PAF	Ultra poor 'ka'/ poor and excluded													
PASRA-GTZ	'Ka' poor and excluded													
MS Nepal	Ultra poor													
RWSC-Care	Ultra poor													
RWSS	Ultra poor 'ka'/ target group													
Sahakarya	Ultra poor													
SAMANTA	Ultra poor													
Medium Poor														
LISP Helvetas														
Poor														
DACAW	Disadvantaged													
DLGSP	Poor'B'													
EP-LWF	Poor/ disadvantaged group													
LISP-Helvetas	Poor/ disadvantaged group													
PAF	Poor 'kha'/ poor and excluded													
PASRA-GTZ	'kha'													
MS Nepal	Poor													
RWSC-Care	Poor													
RWSS	Poor 'kha'/ target group													
Sahakarya	Poor													
SAMANTA	Poor													
Medium														
DLGSP	Medium Poor'C'													
EP-LWF	Medium													
LISP-Helvetas	Medium													
PAF	Medium 'ga'/poor and excluded													
PASRA-GTZ	'ga'													
MS Nepal	Medium													
RWSC-Care	Medium													
RWSS	Medium 'ga'													
Sahakarya	Medium													
SAMANTA	Medium													
Well Off														
PAF	Well Off													
EP-LWF	Well Off													
SAKCHAM-Care	Well Off													
LISP-Helvetas	Well Off													
DACAW	Non disadvantaged													

Figure 4.1¹⁷ provides an illustration of how multiple processes of overlapping and contradictory targeting, for the same household covered by several projects, leads to confusion and mis-targeting of project services. A non-poor household, for example, has been categorised as very poor by two programmes and moderate poor by another, thus ensuring eligibility to a range of services that as a non-poor household they could not access.

Figure 4.1 Group membership of one poor household in Okhrene

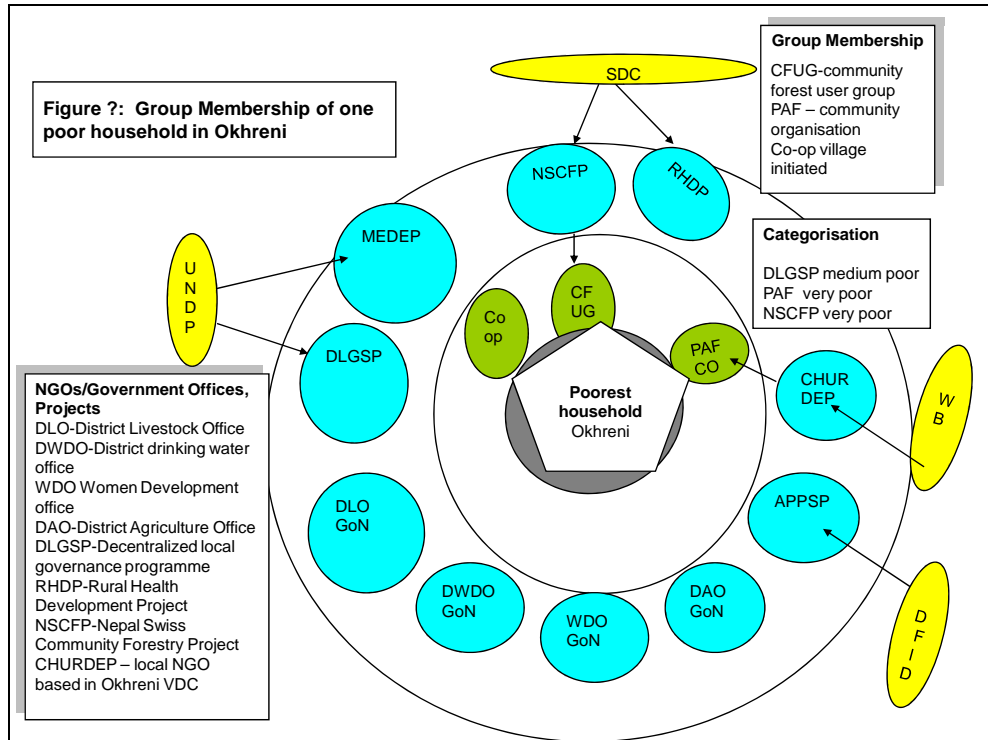
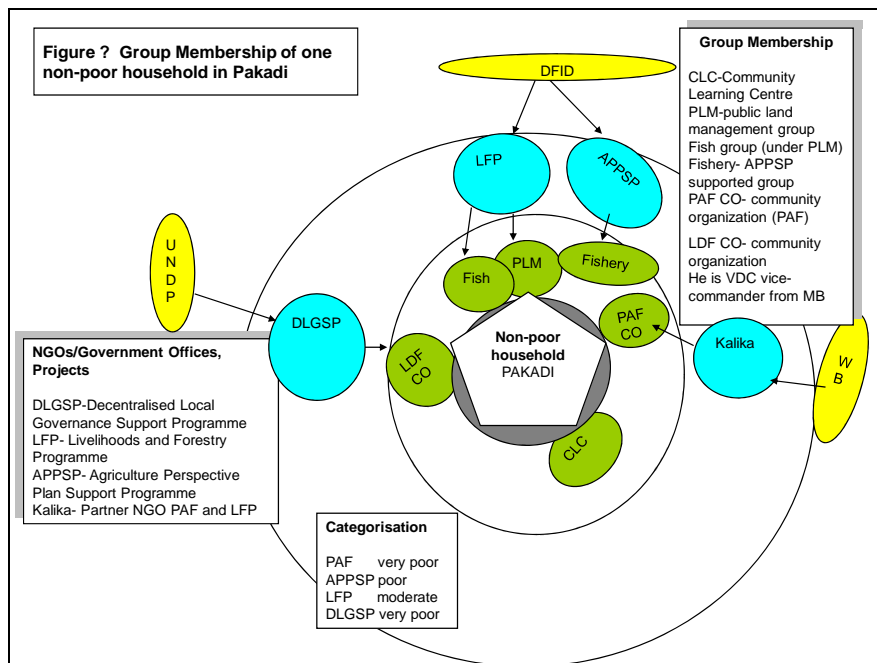
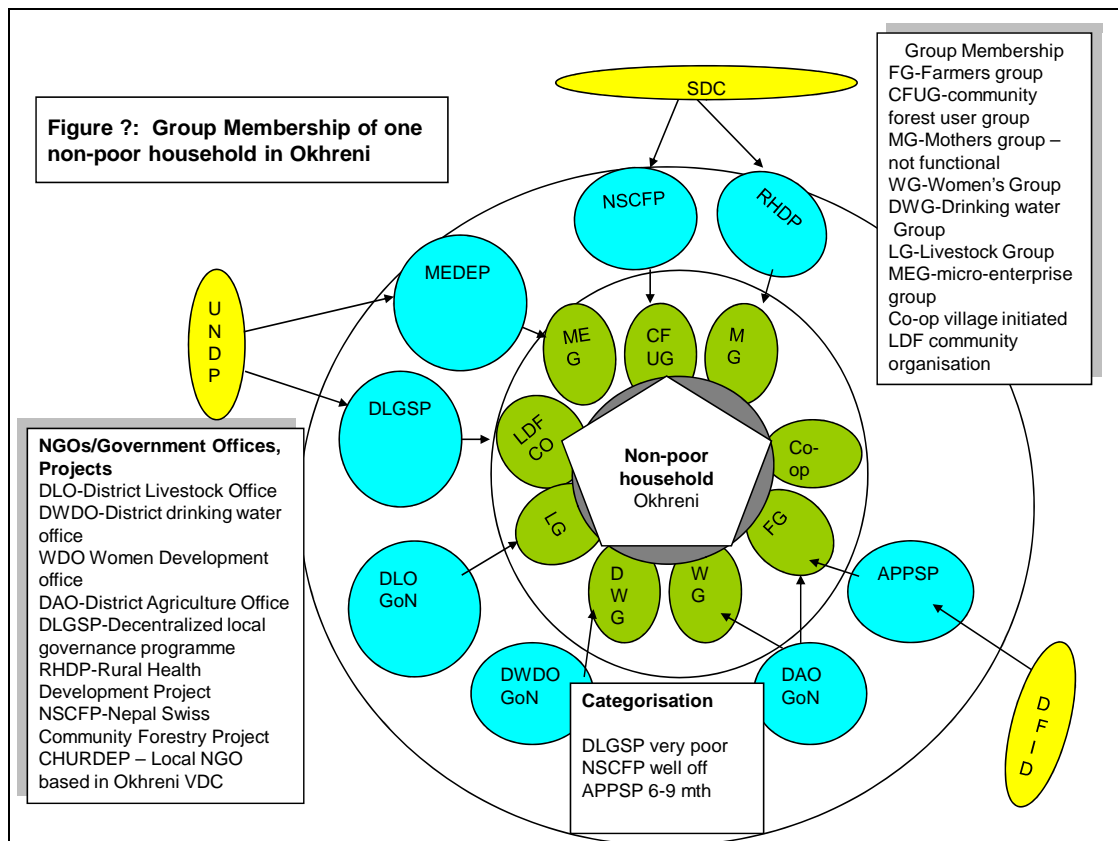


Figure 4.2 Group membership of one non-poor household in Pakadi



¹⁷ Drawn from Hobley and Paudyal (2008) study that looked in detail at different categories of households, how they were categorised and their group membership.

Figure 4.3 Group membership of one non-poor household in Okhreni



Other criteria

16 projects/programmes use, apart from food sufficiency, other **economic** indicators such as: dependency on daily wage, size of landholding, presence of income-earning household members, employment, quantity and types of livestock, type of house. These are discussed during the ranking processes by the people present. In addition, DACAW uses leading questions such as inability to afford basic needs, homelessness, shelter-less and residing on encroached land or land without title. These questions have sometimes been mis-characterised as 'criteria' or 'indicators' but they are actually triggers to stimulate discussion and internalisation regarding poverty and disadvantage. There are a wide variety of **social criteria/categories** used such as lack of confidence to voice legitimate demands, poor single women, landlessness, lack of social prestige, levels of education, family size and dependency, socially and culturally oppressed. Annex 8 provides the details of criteria and indicators.

Of the 88 indicators being used by 17 programmes, 50 (i.e. 58%) indicators are economic and 38 (43%) are social. **Additional indicators** covering geographic, political party representation/political capital based issues are used by LFP, NSCFP, Sagun and PASRA.

NSCFP uses the sustainable livelihoods capitals¹⁸ with 8 criteria (including one covering the effect of development programmes, policies, laws, rules etc) and has six categories used to differentiate households, the highest amongst the programmes reviewed.

Locally defined criteria and indicators ensure there is high local ownership and legitimacy of the results. But the subjectivity and the possibility of manipulation were concerns voiced by

¹⁸ Sustainable Livelihoods Capitals include human, physical, social, financial, natural and political capital

many practitioners. It is a serious challenge when these criteria become the basis for government-provided social protection benefits with variation between VDCs and DDCs. Additionally most programmes/projects do not have any weighting attached to the indicators e.g. DACAW has eight indicators with a mark of 1 or 2 or 3, with 1 as the worst-off and 3 as the best. If a household gets a score of 3 for 2 indicators and 1 for others what will be its position in comparison to a household which gets the opposite – it is not clear on what basis this assessment can be made. Only two projects, SAGUN/CARE in their community adaptation in Banke (Box 4.1) and NSCFP score the different well-being criteria. This provides a more robust means of identifying the poor but requires more time and skilled facilitation.

None of the programmes/projects identify existing gender relations and its implications for the poverty levels of the community women and men (SAKCHAM does women’s mobility maps and activity profiles but does not link it to a gender-based understanding of poverty; DACAW has an indicator about poor single women but this is not linked to any power

Box 4.1 Example of scoring method used by SAGUN

On the basis of the five capitals, the community selected 11 indicators and provided weightage to each indicator in consultation with the facilitators. For each household of the 268 households in the CFUG, the criteria were discussed and marks provided. The highest and lowest mark obtained by households was noted.

analysis). Also there is confusion with inclusion of criteria such as “inability of women to speak publicly” (DACAW) – as the interpretation of “inability” and “publicly” varies with context. It is important to clarify and identify gender disaggregated division of labour, access to resources and decision making power in the community as they impact on gendered power relations at the community level and determine women’s access to opportunities and benefits. The team did not find any example of this being done systematically in Nepal but there are numerous examples in India (Udyogini, India) where this has been done regularly as part of a programme.

4.3 Tools and process used

Most of the programmes and projects use similar methods and tools. Only four programmes/projects (RDF, VLDP, HCBO/Sahakarya and PARHI) do not do household mapping: RDF and VLDP because they support inclusion of all households in planning processes; PARHI because it does settlement level mapping; and HCBO/Sahakarya covers all households in one group. Out of 20 projects which do household mapping, 18 projects/programmes have used **Wealth/Well Being Ranking (WBR)** methods (together with other tools such as social mapping). RUPP did not adopt a specific tool for household identification while UPCA uses a household survey and does not do well-being ranking. Over the years, programmes/projects have moved from wealth ranking to well-being ranking based on their learning.

Almost all programmes/projects follow a similar process for doing **social mapping** and **well-being ranking**. Mobilisers and facilitators conduct VDC or ward level orientations to provide information about the programme/project through a public forum and to invite people to a mass meeting at which to identify disadvantaged households. At these public meetings mobilisers facilitate the drawing of social maps representing the settlement and the location of all households through use of PRA tools. This forms the basis for subsequent discussions on well-being ranking and identification of households for programme/project services and support.

Well-being ranking

Two processes are in use for **well-being ranking**: group based (used by 12 programmes/projects) and key informant based (adopted by six) (see Table 4.4 for comparison of the two approaches). Group-based processes discuss criteria and indicators in a mass meeting where representatives of all households are invited to categorise the households. Based on consensus between the people present, the households are put in different levels of categories of 'ultra-poor, poor, medium, well-off' (according to the programme/project's mandate) based on locally defined indicators.

Key informants, either separately (as in NSCFP) or together (as in LFP or DACAW) categorise the households according to their assessment of the household situation. In DACAW prior information is sent to respective communities regarding the criteria for selection of key informants and careful attention is paid to including Dalits, women, children and conflict displaced households as key informants for DAG mapping. These key informants are then oriented on both the social and economic dimensions of deprivation prior to doing the actual mapping in the community.

NSCFP, working with key informants to identify the most discriminated, uses the list of forest users and identifies discriminated members (male members from only Janajati and Dalit community and all female members) first. From the list of discriminated members, they further identify economically poor members using SDC's criteria (food sufficiency for less than six months or income less than NRs. 1800 per month). Finally, DAG members are identified considering both social and economic criteria.

Each programme adds its own level of depth to this process. Discussions can be carried over a period of days, depending on the time availability of the people or completed in one sitting.

The time taken by agencies differs according to the geographical context, the level of understanding of the people and the depth of the process discussion e.g. in DACAW 40-60 households are categorised in one day and approximately 15 days in Hill VDCs and 10 days in a Terai VDC is required to cover the mapping of the whole VDC; for LFP approximately one day for every 100 households, one day in one community for LWF, 4-5 days for one CFUG in NSCFP while in DLGSP it took one group meeting of about 3 hours to categorise the group members of one CO.

While the terminology in use in most programmes is well-being ranking (indicating the inclusion of social criteria), consultations reveal that the focus on economic indicators is strong. Unless facilitated in the community, only economic indicators of poverty are discussed and other issues like caste/ethnicity, discrimination, inability to claim rights, are not raised. Facilitators have to empower people through discussions to recognise that there are other dimensions of poverty.

A key strength of the community-based well-being ranking is the acceptability and legitimacy of its results as the community accepts it as its own. However, its vulnerability to manipulation is also admitted by most practitioners. *"Community people now ask us – when are you going to do well-being ranking? They don't want anything else. Now only in the areas where there has been no intervention before can we claim that the results of such well-being ranking are not influenced by the expectation of receiving project benefits."* (Programme Staff, INGO, Banke).

UPCA does a detailed **household survey** and social analysis with both husband and wife. Household surveys are also done by DLGSP and PAF to get detailed information regarding the families in the project.

Table 4.4 Comparison between group-based and key informant approaches

Well-being ranking approaches	Advantages	Disadvantages
Group-based well-being ranking	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Builds a broader based understanding of the well-being ranking process through group involvement ▪ Higher-levels of legitimacy among the group of participants because they were involved in the ranking exercise 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Highly dependent on who is present as to the ranking results and whether there is any challenge if households left out or wrongly ranked ▪ Households unwilling to be identified as disadvantaged because of the social stigma ▪ During the conflict period exposed wealthier households to potentially damaging consequences if they were formally ranked as such ▪ Requires small number of criteria because it is otherwise difficult to manage in a group, this leads to a general reduction in the assessment criteria to levels of food sufficiency and income and less emphasis on other elements of poverty, exclusion and vulnerability
Key informant well-being ranking and ratified in wider group	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Conflict sensitive as discussions about wealth are held in private rather than in public and more likely to produce a comprehensive and robust list ▪ Allows for a more refined approach using more criteria to understand poverty and exclusion and categorise accordingly ▪ Uses five livelihood assets to derive local criteria which are then used to classify households ▪ Individual key informant interviews allows for triangulation between informants and more reliable outcomes ▪ Process carried out in private means that it is easier to identify both rich and very poor 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Is a complicated and time-consuming process that requires significant facilitation by well trained social mobilisers ▪ Does not develop wide group-based understanding as the ranking process is carried out by a few key informants although ratified in a public meeting ▪ Difficult for households (particularly disadvantaged) to challenge the ranking when it is presented in a public forum

Source: *Hobley and Paudyal 2008 plus field notes*

Well-being ranking provides a powerful baseline and could be actively used by programmes to assess changes in well-being, to provide the basis for adjusting targeting and to assess which households are improving, which are static and which are declining¹⁹. BRAC's programme for targeting the extreme-poor has used such an approach to look at household level change as a basis for understanding small-scale poverty dynamics rather than the broader poverty trends that obscure the reality of small change at the household level particularly for the poorest. The results from this longitudinal assessment of community-based change ranking were useful. They indicated the need for different approaches to reducing extreme poverty built on a more nuanced understanding of change in the livelihoods of the poorest (Sulaiman and Matin, 2006); without this type of small-scale understanding it is unlikely that the BRAC approach would have been as responsive to meet the particular needs of those in extreme poverty. The review found that only a few programmes use the well-being rankings as a basis for monitoring change. In the main the rankings are carried out once as an entry-point activity and then not used again. There are

¹⁹ See Hobley and Paudyal 2008 for use of change ranking to assess livelihood changes

examples where such information has been better used e.g. in Terathum, supported by LFP, CFUG data was compiled, analysed and used by DDC to provide social safety nets. The DDC issued ID cards for the most poor identified by well-being exercises and provided subsidies on travel, education and health facilities.

4.4 Use of information

Consultations for the review indicated that well-being ranking information is mostly used by programmes to target their project services and to refine their strategies for reaching the poor at the outset of an intervention. In addition, it is sometimes used to link extreme poor and poor households to line agencies for services. While a wide range of criteria and indicators are used by programmes/projects to identify the households, the services provided are limited to the programme/project's mandate and in particular its focus on transactional or transformational approaches. For example, PAF provides economic support and cannot provide any specific support in response to the social criteria; similarly DACAW collects data regarding food sufficiency, indebtedness and other economic criteria for which it cannot directly provide support. While the assumption is that the other service providers will provide the required services, the coordination required between agencies and local bodies to enable that, is absent.

Additionally, often even the resources for responding in the areas projects themselves can provide is limited and hence the service or asset that actually reaches the identified households in the end is either minimal (e.g. a few livestock, some vocational training) or reaches a very limited number of households (e.g. Reaching the Disadvantaged which provided US\$350 to each household but reached only 32 households in a ward out of about 120 of whom most experienced the same level of poverty). Moreover, without further support and guidance, the women beneficiaries of the Reaching the Disadvantaged were unable to move beyond using the cash grant for purchasing livestock. They could not even recall who was categorised as extreme poor, poor or medium. This was true in some other cases (e.g. SAKCHAM and SAMANTA) – the group members could not recall the categorisations since there is no follow-up on the information collected.

An additional problem and an area of frustration for households is that the well-being ranking of one programme/project is not used by another e.g. in Banke SAGUN had done well-being ranking but when PLAN started work they did it again. This is yet another facet of the extreme effects of projectisation across Nepal. In Silgadi Municipality Doti, RWSS and PAF have done separate well-being rankings with the same people in the same community, despite being funded by the same donor!

There were few instances of local bodies using well-being ranking information. The local bodies may use these programme/project generated information but it is not recorded and maintained as authorised data of DDC/VDC. Hence each time a new project enters a VDC, it generates its own ranking, resulting in repeated processes with the community, unnecessary use of staff time, recurring costs, confusing and often contradictory information (as demonstrated in Figures 4.1, 4.2 and 4.3).

The absence of a credible and disaggregated household ranking database with the local body has allowed this confusion of multiple practices. With no authorised data available, programmes/projects are forced to conduct independent exercises to generate information according to their mandates.

4.5 Lessons from experience

The excluded extreme poor and processes for inclusion

The effort of programmes to direct their services to the extreme-poor and poor is necessary. National level data reveal the wide disparities between different groups of people in Nepal establishing the need for appropriate strategies to reach the excluded, especially the extreme-poor. The existing use of PRA tools such as social maps and well-being ranking are also an empowering process for the people involved in the analysis. But unless these tools become part of an ongoing process focused on continued empowerment and building of capability of people to secure their livelihoods, these tools remain just that: tools to fulfil project needs rather than as a fundamental part of a transformation process. Where programmes have taken an overtly transformational approach to mobilisation there has been an accompanying use of processes that support people to develop their own capabilities to understand their context and take action. The use of power analyses, REFLECT and other approaches appears to provide an important basis for this type of mobilisation support.

Contradictory and conflicting indicators for well-being

While there is some consistency in the use of the tool (well-being ranking) and the process (participatory based on consensus of the people present), there are contradictions in the indicators and the categorisation of poor. These contradictions have resulted in the confusion and inconsistencies identified by the Hogley and Paudyal (2008) report.

A number of key concerns emerge from the existing practices of identification of disadvantaged households: i) the high level of subjectivity since the results of the categorisation depend very much on the people participating in the discussion; ii) the vulnerability of the process to manipulation due to its linkage with project/programme benefits; iii) the confusion and contradictions resulting from use of different indicators and categorisations; iv) the multiple and repetitious processes by different projects resulting in huge transaction costs; v) absence of official VDC/municipality/DDC owned data and the limited use of information to ensure coordinated access of the poor to services; and very importantly, vi) the minimal practice of analysis and reflection about local power structures in the process of identifying the disadvantaged households. The necessary linkage of the mapping with a broader approach to transform the structural issues that lead to poverty and of changing the existing relationships of power, is mostly missing (except in the case of selected CARE-supported programmes, LFP and in some practices of NSCFP).

Coordination and harmonisation at local body level

The above issues indicate the need for a more coordinated approach with the local body taking the lead in developing a disaggregated database on households in its constituency. Projects and programmes have to harmonise their processes as their failure to do so has created confusion for community women and men. Conceptually there has to be a shift to position such mapping within a broader framework that builds understanding of the power structures causing poverty and disadvantage.

Perverse effects of targeting

Evidence from elsewhere and our findings from the field reveal some perverse effects of targeting. These include family fragmentation, where separation of joint households occurs to

enable the two separated households to each become eligible to access potential benefits. In Bangladesh, there is also some evidence of in-migration of households with some connection to the community in the hope of accessing the benefits on offer (Hodson, 2009). In the review there were cases cited of multiple categorisations of one household to enable it to access a range of projects and their services. These point to low levels of accountability within communities for the outcomes of these processes and also the possibility of high levels of manipulation where there are weak systems of verification in place.

Building compacts with the elites

Several programmes have developed some interesting processes and mechanisms to build relationships and responsibility between the elites and poor. These appear to have been successful in beginning to address some of the consequences of the deeper structures of inequality. These processes based on transformational approaches provide evidence to show that it is possible to begin to change relationships and build a more sustained engagement of all citizens in the development process.

Chapter 5: LGCDP Social Protection and Processes of Mobilisation

As part of LGCDP, a series of social protection pilots are to be established to test the role of VDCs in social transfers (refer Social Protection Pilot Design Document, 2009). In this chapter we consider the relationships between social protection, building the capabilities of the extreme poor and excluded and wider citizen engagement. We draw on national and international evidence and lessons, including a recent study by Samson (2008).

5.1 The purpose of social protection

Social protection is a broad term describing 'all forms of support to communities, households and individuals, in their efforts to prevent, manage and overcome vulnerability' (CPRC, 2008:39). The purpose of social protection is four-fold.

- To prevent, mitigate and enhance the ability to cope with and recover from the major hazards faced particularly by all poor people;
- To help poor people build assets primarily physical and human through cash or in-kind transfers
- To contribute to extreme poor people's ability to emerge from poverty, deprivation and insecurity and to challenge the oppressive socio-economic relationships which could be keeping them poor, by increasing livelihood security and linking such increases to promoting enhanced livelihoods less dependent on coercive relationships
- To enable the less active or dependent extreme poor to live a dignified life with an adequate standard of living, such that poverty is not passed from one generation to the next

Social assistance or social transfers is a component of social protection that 'addresses poverty and vulnerability directly, through transfers, in cash or in kind, to poor households' (CPRC, 2008:39). The use of asset (food and livestock) and cash transfers (or social transfers as they are broadly referred to) has been a key part of recent and not-so recent approaches to poverty alleviation. Asset and cash transfers, if well targeted and integrated into broader programmes of change are clearly an important element of any strategy to reduce extreme poverty; they are however, only one part. Their use raises a series of interesting questions about 1) the institutional arrangements for their delivery; 2) the nature of targeting and political control over this; 3) the dependency they create or the opportunities for exit from extreme poverty; 4) those they exclude either through the perversity of the incentives they create or because of the way they are applied; 5) the means for integrating them into broader programmes of social protection, promotion and prevention which together bring people out of extreme poverty; and 6) the relative merits of asset versus cash and the options cash provides to households to respond to their needs (Table 5.1).

Table 5.1 Comparing cash, conditional and in-kind transfers

	Advantages	Disadvantages
Cash transfers Suitable when: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ costs are main barriers to service uptake ▪ Basic services are of low quality ▪ Administrative capacity is low to verify conditionalities 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ beneficiaries are free to use transfers to meet their priorities ▪ evidence that they increase poor people's agency to improve their livelihoods ▪ less demanding in terms of administration ▪ unlikely to generate large distortions in economy ▪ multiplier effects on the local economy when money spent ▪ increase certainty and security for consumptive and productive purposes ▪ maintain very vulnerable in dignity ▪ easy to monitor by recipients unlike food transfers 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ wasted if poor money management by poor people ▪ may generate moral hazard i.e. leads to undesirable changes in behaviours – reduce savings, take risks in investments that can't be supported ▪ skewed resource distribution in households to those with power generally male adults ▪ security issues of transfer of large amounts of cash ▪ difficulties of ensuring transfers are regular and predictable
Conditional cash transfers Suitable when: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Opportunity costs of basic service use are high (e.g. child labour) ▪ Discrimination against certain groups' service use (e.g. girls) ▪ Capacity exists to verify conditions 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ link cash benefits to a set of development outcomes usually for children - education and health ▪ attempt to break inter-generational transfer of poverty by focusing on improving children's education and health outcomes 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ can set up perverse incentives e.g. only girl children going to school because they get scholarships boy children withdrawn early and sent to work ▪ require good coordination with health and education providers to ensure access to good quality services ▪ costly to deliver compared to unconditional cash transfers
In-kind transfers Suitable when: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ There are opportunities to improve productive assets e.g. there are markets available for sale of in-kind transfers after (e.g. livestock) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ guarantee consumption of key goods and services ▪ facilitate political support by the non-poor- who often say the poor will just fritter away cash ▪ can be used as the basis for income-generation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ open to capture by producers ▪ may introduce large price or output distortions in the economy ▪ demanding in terms of administration ▪ without adequate support may increase household risk where for example livestock assets die

Source: Barrientos and DeJong 2004:11; DFID 2005; Britto, 2006; Marcus 2007; Holmes et al, 2008

5.2 Social protection in the LGCDP

Extreme poor households experience multiple barriers in accessing services. For them, specific social security/social protection related interventions are required on a scale large enough to create a difference in their lives. LGCDP has identified the need to include processes that support people to move out of extreme poverty into more mainstream development opportunities. The social protection pilot draft design document for LGCDP already has suggested a two pronged approach using both conditional cash and unconditional cash transfers for households experiencing different degrees of extreme poverty and vulnerability. From the review and the experience from other countries, this is a sound strategy.

The form of support that is provided with these transfers is critical to building the capability of individual households to engage in wider processes of development and to access group-based and other opportunities.

There are several examples in Nepal and elsewhere that lessons can be drawn from (Box 5.1).

Box 5.1 Examples of different approaches to asset and cash transfers in Nepal

Nepal: Reaching the Most Disadvantaged Groups in Mainstream Rural Development: Household Development Grants of US\$350 were provided to identified households in 4 districts in Nepal. This grant was composed of three elements 1) basic needs 25% of the grant in either cash or kind; 2) opportunity cost (25% of total grant) for participating in community activities and skill training; and 3) livelihood promotion (50% of grant in cash or kind) for purchase of assets such as livestock or starting a micro-enterprise. As part of this process each household produced a Household Development Plan describing where the household's vision for itself in four years time plus a detailed set of activities and budgets for the first year that was financed by the Household Development Grant. These processes were all accompanied by lengthy and complicated bureaucratic procedures including 28 separate steps to get fund release.

Unfortunately the project was only able to operate for one out of the two years for which funds were allocated, so one of the most important issues of providing sustained follow-up to the households could not be achieved. In addition, the project due to its design and limited funds was able to target a very limited number of households causing problems of social jealousy with other equally poor households that were not selected to be beneficiaries.

Bangladesh: Challenging the Frontiers of Poverty Reduction (CFPR) – a BRAC programme - transfers productive assets worth Taka 8,000 to 13,000 (US\$117-191) to the poorest households. It provides intensive training and support in managing these assets and a daily stipend until income is generated from the assets (about Tk300 per month (US\$4)). This runs over a 24 month cycle with close support and follow-up. The stipend is transferred at weekly cluster meetings providing an incentive to attend with the added benefits of supporting members to discuss problems they face and seek solutions from each other and from BRAC facilitators. These meetings also include an element of weekly saving further encouraged by the giving of a weekly stipend. Other support includes subsidised health and legal services; the provision of water and sanitation; and the development of supportive community networks via Village Poverty Reduction Committees which particularly focus work with the elites to build their support for the extreme poor.

Bangladesh: Chars Livelihood Programme beneficiary households receive income or income-generating assets (value Taka 13,000 (US\$191)) and a monthly stipend of Tk 300 (US\$4), paid through a passbook, for 18 months. This is designed to support family consumption and contribute toward recurrent expenditure during the period when the asset will not, by itself, yield sufficient income. In addition, those beneficiaries receiving assets in kind are provided with a further monthly cash allowance to cover feed and vaccination costs, the size of which varies according to the type of livestock selected. They are also provided with one day of training in livestock rearing at the time of distribution.

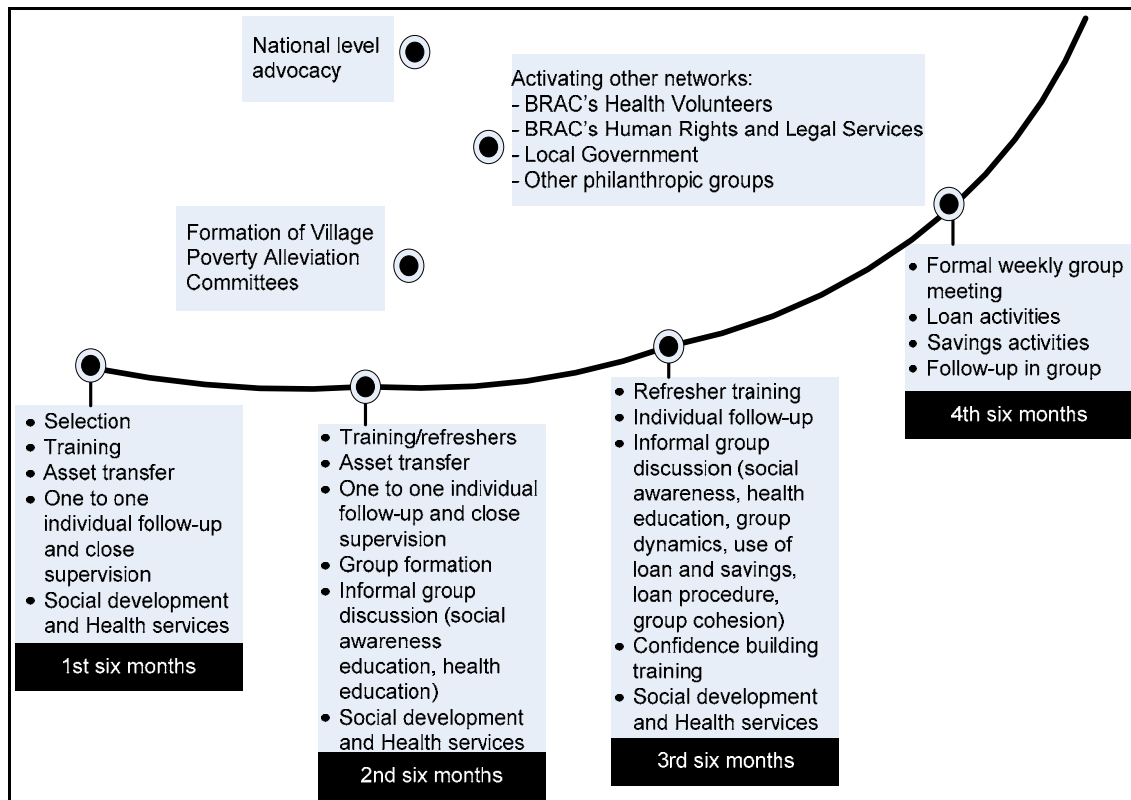
The CLP is also developing a Community Safety Net. Under this scheme groups of 25 households that have received assistance from CLP will contribute Tk2 per week to create a locally-funded equivalent of the Government of Bangladesh old age pension. This will be given by the group to a household living in their community who is not receiving investment capital from the CLP or benefiting from any government social protection programme.

Source: Chars Livelihood Programme website (<http://www.clp-bangladesh.org>); Scott et al 2007, Howes 2006; Holmes et al, 2008; IIDS, 2008; CPRC 2008; Matin et al 2008

In all cases, the need for sustained and predictable support to extreme poor households is recognised. As Figure 5.1 illustrates for BRAC, in Bangladesh, already well-advanced in delivering this type of connected programme (Challenging the Frontiers of Poverty Reduction) there is a phased process of support operating at different levels including direct support to extreme poor households and at the same time building solidarity and acceptance with the elites – through Village Poverty Alleviation Committees and advocacy at national level.

In Chile for example, conditional cash transfers are based on a graduation process where financial support is provided for 5 years or until all eligible children in the household have graduated from high school (Marcus, 2007). This is also accompanied with a dedicated social worker for each household who helps them to identify their particular areas of deficit. The work of public agencies is then coordinated to respond to these deficits. Once these deficits have been overcome, the household continues to be supported with income transfers to prevent their decline back into extreme poverty (CPRC, 2008:46). In cases where this sustained support is not available, it is not clear that there can be any sustained gains or effective graduation. Figure 5.1 details some different asset transfer programme approaches for extreme poor in Nepal and Bangladesh.

Figure 5.1 BRAC staged model of support for securing livelihoods of extreme poor



Source: *Matin et al 2008*

5.3 Examples of efforts to reach the extreme poor

NSCFP, SAGUN/CARE and SAKCHAM/CARE have a specific intervention for the extreme poor called Livelihood Improvement Programme (LIP) (Box 5.2).

Box 5.2 Livelihood Programmes

Local initiatives for livelihoods improvement of extreme poor in Yangsila VDC, Morang district: LWF, DLGSP have been working in the VDC for the poor and the disadvantaged since the last 7-8 years. However, both the programmes could not reach the extreme-poor households although the programmes were also meant for them. Majority of the extreme poor did not become CO members as they did not have time and were not interested – the support provided to group members was unsuitable for them e.g. the IGAs or sanitation measures offered were beyond their means, the group meetings and functions did not suit their daily routine. The VDC level CBO, recognising that the development approach itself was a barrier to the participation of the extreme poor, initiated a study to understand the real conditions of these households. The CBO has representation of the local elites and politicians. They decided to conduct door to door visits on a voluntary basis and prepared individual household profiles. "Children were eating the waste from alcohol processing from the same bowl along with a dog. What can be more awful than this?" "They do not trust the outsiders and are not ready to share their feelings or give time." Kumar Bishokarma, CBO member

The CBO being a local organisation, visited the households repeatedly in the evening and even at night to discuss and establish a feeling of trust. It realised that a separate group of the extreme poor had to be formed with a specific package of support. Separate plots of public land were provided on lease for vegetable cultivation. Individual households were supported with a two-year grant, skill-based training and IG activities which would provide immediate returns. The CBO identified the local economic potentials that fit the requirements of these groups. The VDC has allocated Rs. 30,000 for support to the extreme poor. The CBO is planning to conduct this type of household survey for all households in the VDC and submit proposals for financial support to the VDC (Source: Field notes, Yangsila VDC, January 2009)

Livelihoods Improvement Programme SAGUN: SAGUN is a governance focused programme in community forestry management but realised that individual intervention was necessary to include extremely poor households in their programme. Each household has different needs, constraints, capacity and uniqueness. A blanket programme would not address the individual needs of these extremely poor households and so SAGUN started its Livelihoods Improvement Programme for the extreme poor. It conducted a score-based well being ranking and planned to support the poorest six households annually. SAGUN provided cash support to the individual household, of which 50 percent was grant and 50 percent had to be returned on an installment basis without interest over a period of three years. However, some of the poorest households did not accept the support because they needed social security and were unable to take on the responsibility of managing an income generating activity. Those who had family members to take on the responsibility of doing the IGA, accepted and have been successful.

Lessons:

- Extreme poor prefer activities with immediate rather than long-term returns
- Blanket support does not work for the extreme poor. They require individual support according to their capacity and condition
- Long term and intensive (package) support is necessary for them
- Social security/protection kind of support is necessary for some households (e.g., older widower or disabled) rather than livelihood options
- Follow-up needs to be intensive based on individual household requirements

LIP Nepal Swiss Community Forestry Programme: The Livelihoods Improvement Programme (identification and intensive support to extreme poor) was initiated three years ago. Well-being ranking exercise was conducted in the CFUG group and 20 poorest households were identified for support. Two days orientation was given to the CFUG Executive Committee on the use of fund, linkages and support to the extreme poor. This followed an intensive period of governance coaching with the CFUG to build understanding about the need to support extreme poor households. A household level plan of the 20 households was developed. Rs. 100,000 revolving fund was allocated for support to the extreme poor and Rs. 5,000 was provided to each household for IG activities. Among the 20 beneficiaries who received IG support, 16 were successful while 4 failed. In the absence of follow-up and backstopping support from NSCFP, the programme faltered after two and half years. Till now no review has been done on the individual Livelihood Improvement Plan. The new Executive Committee of the CFUG is not convinced about supporting the 20 households and so the rationale and objective of the LIP has not been achieved.

The lessons of NSCFP have been

- LIP is a very effective approach to reach the extreme poor but needs continued and not one-off support
- Household level plans should be prepared for each household
- Grants rather than loans are essential for the extreme poor
- The funds available were insufficient to address the number of extreme poor households
- Intensive package support is necessary to unlift these groups

Field Notes: Gumpha, Mahabhir, Litta CFUG, Suspa VDC, Dolakha, 2008

Neither SAGUN/CARE nor NSCFP/SDC are continuing with the LIP approach at the individual level.

SAKCHAM: Livelihood Improvement Programme started in Nov-Dec 2008. Well-being ranking identified two members who were most in need of assistance. 218 women are doing LIP. Group enterprise has also been tried with Rs. 10,000 per group. The programme staff support the individual to prepare their plan with family members. Negotiation regarding labour and access to decision-making about earned money is done at that time within the family. Indicators to include progress regarding change in gender roles and decision making about money is developed.

Field Notes 2008-09

5.4 Lessons from experience

Targeting problems: A common view from VDCs that have had these extreme poor projects/programmes operating is that they need to work across the whole VDC instead of working in a small area with a limited number of extreme poor. However, due to the limited money available only a few households can generally be supported. For example in Reaching the Disadvantaged this contentious process took up to 3-4 days to identify the most poor households leading to high levels of jealousy by those left out who were also extremely poor.

Insufficient money to reach all the extreme poor households This caused some difficulties when equally deserving households were left out of projects. If these social transfer

programmes are to be successful the amounts of money available should meet a sufficient number of households that are categorised as extreme poor and excluded otherwise it leads to high levels of social tension and sense of injustice.

High levels of mistrust: There was hesitation by the extreme poor at the beginning of the processes due to high levels of mistrust that the projects would not bring any benefits and so they were reluctant to participate. This cause for mistrust was confirmed for households in the Reaching the Disadvantaged project where insufficient amounts of money meant that very few households could benefit from the project.

High costs of reaching the most disadvantaged who often live in extremely remote areas, fieldwork is difficult and takes a lot of time both to locate the households and to work with them individually and to provide sufficient levels of follow-up support. There are particular difficulties of working with extreme poor, many of whom are chronically ill and are limited in what they can do.

Household planning In all cases from the review, programme/project staff highlighted the importance of household planning to work with the household to identify their constraints and demands, to help them move beyond often very fatalistic thinking to seeing the opportunities they can access through their own endeavours. But according to the WDO staff who were implementing Reaching the Disadvantaged programme, there is no need for elaborate forms and visionary exercises – it is best to keep it simple since it takes a long time for the poor people to understand and articulate.

Ensuring sufficient levels of facilitator/mobiliser support and a need for a combination of external mobiliser and local facilitator support- because of the particularly difficult conditions of some remote areas of Nepal ensuring an adequate level of support to extreme poor households was difficult. This points to the need to have facilitators based in these remote VDCs who are able to continue the work of coaching support to extreme poor households, in the absence of the external mobiliser.

Skills and competencies working with the extreme poor and excluded requires different skill sets than those required for households who are already capable and are able to take up opportunities when offered.

Mixture of conditional and cash transfers has been important. For example, the conditional transfer element of the grant in the Reaching the Disadvantaged encouraged families to immunise their children and send them to school; an important tactic to break the inter-generational transfer of poverty. Other elements of conditionality include linking into community development groups, attending training courses, and regular savings were also in operation but since the project had only worked for one year it was difficult to see if these types of conditions were helpful or not.

Predictable and sustained support in all cases the need for predictable - regular cash transfers and coaching support - as well as provision of this support for sufficient amounts of time with a clear focus on graduation have been important experiences of these programmes.

Graduation mechanisms - ensuring pathways and opportunities to enable extreme poor households to move out of social transfer arrangements to being able to access mainstream development opportunities is necessary and in all the examples reviewed in Nepal, was absent.

Importance of working with the elites - the experience in South Asia shows the importance of working with the elites to build their support and acceptance for the targeted support to the extreme poor and excluded. Without this support there is a high risk of resistance to and undermining of the programme.

Implications for LGCDP - the social protection framework should include processes that support people to move out of extreme poverty into more mainstream development opportunities. Thus there should be a clear and sustained relationship between the mobilisation support provided to extreme poor households through the social transfer process and the mobilisation processes for wider citizen engagement in LGDCP.

The question remains whether **the same mobiliser** can be used for support to individual extreme poor households as well as supporting these wider processes of citizen engagement (we return to this in Chapter 7). Other possible approaches include the use of existing networks within VDCs to implement social protection support. Box 5.3 illustrates an example from Kerala where an advanced form of social network exists that enables reach to the poorest households.

Box 5.3 Using community-based networks to reach the extreme poor: Kerala

Asraya in Kerala provides an interesting example of the relationship between community-based organisations and local government. Asraya is an Anti-poverty Sub-Plan for all local governments implemented through participatory micro-planning focused on destitute households. It is implemented through a pre-existing community organisation formed as part of a previous state government poverty eradication programme.

Every family below the poverty line is organised into Neighbourhood Groups (NHG) represented by one woman from each household, each group comprises 15-40 households. These groups are federated into Area Development Societies (ADS) at the ward-level and further networked into a registered Community Development Society at the Panchayat/Municipal level. The local government uses this network of poor families to identify and target. A preliminary identification of extreme poor households is carried out by trained volunteers from each NHG under the leadership of the ADS. A shortlist of households is determined and then visited again by volunteers to ensure they fall within the criteria of extreme poverty. A household plan is developed with support from the NHG volunteers which identifies where the household needs support including asset transfers, psychological support, employment, upgrading of household facilities etc.

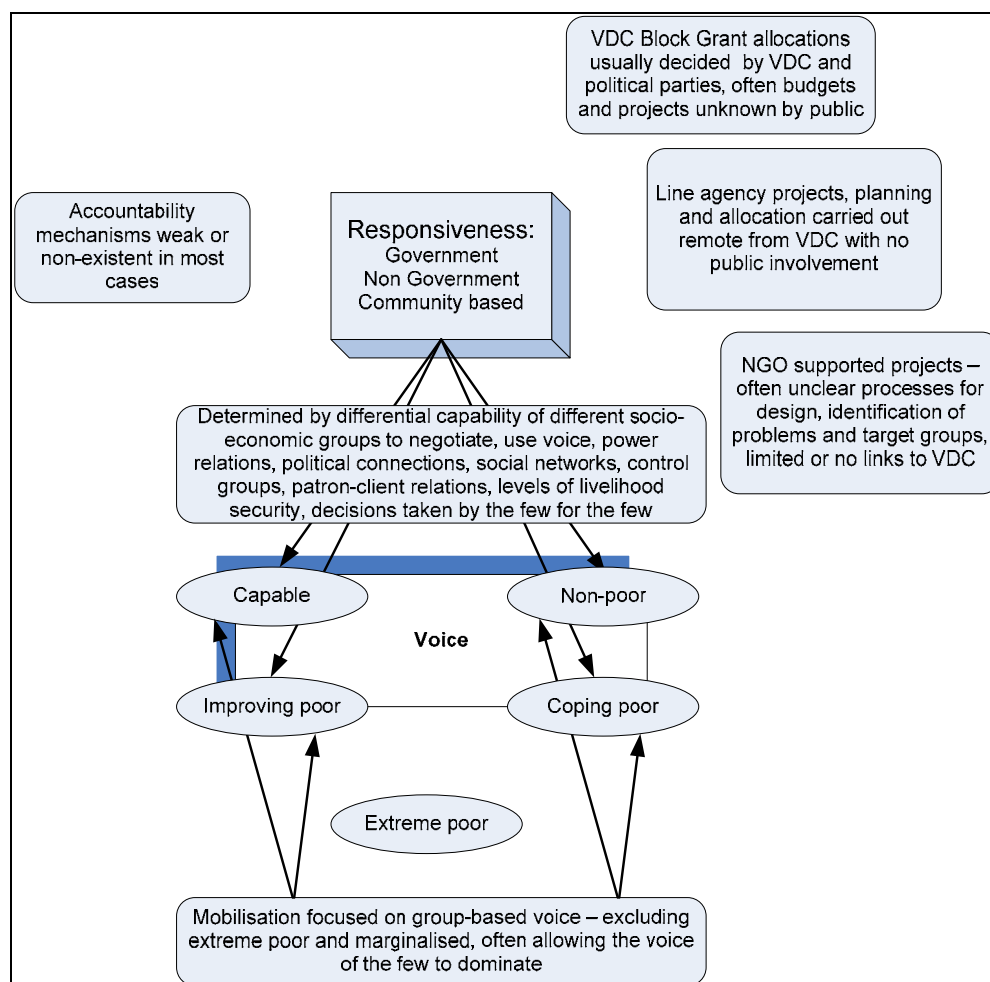
Source: Vijayanand, 2006

Chapter 6: Linkages with Local Body Planning

6.1 Linkage with local body planning, resource allocation and oversight

The citizen-based planning process is the local mechanism linking voice (developed through citizen mobilisation activities) and responsiveness (developed through local government capacity building). In this section, we look at the degree to which programmes and projects are already building connections between community groups, citizens and the local bodies, the issues arising from these experiences and the implications for LGCDP. As the previous chapters have illustrated, there are at present significant gaps in the linkage between citizens and the state in Nepal. Figure 6.1 depicts some of the current problems, which some programmes/projects are trying to resolve.

Figure 6.1 Linking voice to responsiveness to accountability: current scenario



6.2 Social mobilisation approaches for connections with local bodies

Only five examples of links with local body planning processes were found amongst the programmes/projects reviewed. Within these, there were three examples of clear connections

with local body planning: Village Level Development Planning (VLDP - NSCFP), Value based Governance (RDF/DANIDA) and RUPP (UNDP). Two others, DLGSP (Box 6.1) and the Empowerment Project of LWF have done considerable work in this area too. Others have claimed and accessed resources from the local bodies but have not really engaged with them in the whole cycle. Examples of organisations being invited to the village or district council have increased. Some are also invited for meetings held during the planning process.

Box 6.1 Engagement with planning of Chairperson Manager Conference (CMC)

In Ghachok VDC, Kaski district, the VDC Secretary has successfully mobilised CMC (DLGSP) for planning purposes. The CMC has played an important role in collaboration and in coordinating support of different agencies in the VDC level planning and project implementation. Other agencies consult the CMC about site selection and project implementation. CMC has also supported the VDC in users' group formation. The projects implemented through COs have been highly transparent and successful. The representation of all political parties in the CMC has allowed political consensus even in the absence of elected members. The role of CMC has become crucial mainly because of the vacuum of elected members in the VDC, time pressure in planning, and due to limited human resources available at the VDC level with only the VDC secretary and one technical person as staff. The Dalit men and women who were present in the discussion appreciated the role of CMC and COs in community infrastructure development, income generation activities and leadership development initiatives.

Source: Field notes, 2008

Through the establishment of local structures such as the coordination committee at VDC and District levels, DACAW supports strengthening of local governance and responsive service delivery institutions (such as DEO, DEO, DWD etc) which create an environment for the communities to claim their rights and have made the local bodies and the service delivery institutions more accountable to the communities. There were a number of examples of linkages with line agencies, DDCs and VDC to mobilise resources and to access services (Table 6.1).

Table 6.1 Services received from VDCs/DDCs/Line agencies: some examples

Project	Services		Others
	Health/ Education/ Energy/Livestock	VDC	
DACAW		Rs 142,000 (for women, Dalit and paralegal committee); 32000/- for Early Childhood Development Centre	
LFP	refer Box 6.2 below	leasehold for 40 years with VDC	Representative from the community groups are involved in the ward level meeting in the VDC planning
EP-LWF	rural electrification project; solar project with Rural Electrification office	Land on lease for 2 years for collective vegetable farming	users committees are formed by VDC
UPCA		citizenship, marriage certificate, birth registration	Funds received from municipality for drinking water and roads through TLOs
RHDP	Matching fund from VDC for the arrangement of additional room to check up pregnant women at HP and SHP		
NSCFP	Livestock programme to ultra-poor		
SAKCHAM		Rs. 30,000 in 63-64 (06-07), Rs. 78,000 in 64-65 (07-08) has been allocated for women and a women's network formed for decisions regarding these funds	DFO was approached for "Amriso" and banana seeds which were used for afforestation in landslide area.
MS Nepal	Toilet and water tank construction, community hall roof		area committee invited to VDC council meeting
HCBO/ Sahakarya	Monthly visit by health worker for weighing of children, iron tablets to women		

Box 6.2 Planning processes and CFUG federation

LFP/Dhankuta Ghorlikharka VDC level CFUG federation: One of the objectives of the network is to work in close collaboration with VDC, line agencies, FECOFUN, and NGOs. There are two representatives of the federation in the VDC council. They have created a forest environment fund at the VDC level and the VDC has allocated Rs. 20,000 for this year. The CFUG forward their plans through this network to the VDC after discussion at the ward level. The network prioritises through consensus one or two projects and places the others on the general list. VDC level development activities and mediation work was done by the network during the conflict period, when the VDC was almost defunct. The network also does the monitoring of the development activities jointly with the VDC. Representation of political parties is considered while forming the network. The WDO, SMC, HFMC, etc., also work in close coordination with this network. It mediates in cases of conflict between two or more parties during project implementation phase. This network supports the VDC in vital registration and distribution of allowance of senior citizen.

Source: Field notes, 2009

LFP Terai has been promoting multistakeholders' forums at district and VDC level for strategic and long term planning, decision making and effective co-ordination and collaboration amongst various stakeholders. Nawalparasi and Rupandehi districts have prepared five year long term District Forest Sector Plan (DFSP) and recently updated this also in consensus with multi-stakeholders forums, followed by series of workshops at the district and field level. VDC level FUGs networks and Village Forest Coordination Committees (VFCCs) have also been established in more than 23% of VDCs and municipalities (52 VDCs out of 223) across three districts. Community Facilitators/Social Mobilisers (Sahajkartas) are regularly facilitating/supporting VDC level FUGs' networks and VFCCs to increase their effectiveness and linkages with the Village Development Committee's regular planning process.

Source: Programme Staff, 2009

However, the advent of the recent VDC Grant Operation Manual has had a major effect in some VDCs in giving permission for more open participatory processes to determine the allocation of resources. So although formally there are few programmes that have direct linkages with the planning processes, it is likely that there are more attempting this with the manual now in place (see section 6.5 for further discussion about the manual).

6.3 Experience of local planning processes

The three examples of direct linkage with local body planning demonstrate different objectives and process (Box 6.3, Box 6.4 and Box 6.5). They range from transactional approaches to engagement in local planning - RUPP and NSCFP to a more transformational approach followed by RDF focused on mobilising local capabilities for challenging and holding to account service providers.

The Rural-Urban Partnership Programme

RUPP is focused on a more transactional approach to engagement but has through its tole-lane organisations had success in integrating tole-level demands into the municipality planning processes (Box 6.3).

Box 6.3 RUPP planning processes

Objective:

- Livelihoods of rural and urban poor secured through social mobilisation (with special emphasis on vulnerable groups – Dalits, occupational castes, traditional tribes, indigenous groups and women)
- Economic and planning linkages between rural and urban areas strengthened
- Urban governance improved to provide efficient basic service delivery
- National level government and civil society institutions strengthened to implement the issues of Urban Section chapter of the 10th Five Year Plan.

Process

- Tole-lane organisations (TLOs) are formed. These are based on a geographical area identified by local people and cover all households living in that locality.
- The TLOs are informed about municipality plans, provided credit facility, training and technology by the programme. Savings and credit activities are also conducted.
- The municipality ward-office invites all the TLOs to ward-level meetings each year to formulate a plan for ward development based on identification of the TLOs needs and priorities. Each ward has a budget from the municipality of Rs1 lakh, sufficient for small infrastructure projects and maintenance.
- Priority is given to the demands of poor and excluded households.

Source: Tansen Municipality, field notes 2008; RUPP website <http://www.RUPP.org.np/aboutus.asp>

The lessons learnt from RUPP for LGCDP are:

- Its programme and activities were integrated into the municipality's regular programme and were designed with members and staff of the municipality from the outset. Since the municipalities do not have their own outreach organisation below ward-level, the TLOs have been highly effective in mobilising the resources of the municipality for their own development. This was aided by the funds supplied through RUPP by UNDP.
- The focus of RUPP has been on developing the economic livelihood security of TLO residents. There has been less focus on building their individual capability for voice and agency to demand from the municipality and other service providers. It has however, built their collective capacity to demand services effectively.
- Although RUPP has phased out, the TLOs remain strong bargaining bodies used to working within the municipality planning structures to access and use development services and resources; it also means that municipalities cannot bypass these organisations when taking important decisions that affect the TLO local area.

Value-Based Governance Project, RDF/DANIDA

The Value-based Governance (RDF-DANIDA) project has attempted to build people's capacity to engage with the local bodies and influence them as partners. It has followed an interesting approach based on mobilising people's own capacities to challenge the access to and provision of services. It has focused on clarifying roles and responsibilities and the relationships between citizens and service providers, including political parties in helping to build these relationships. Box 6.4 describes the processes followed.

Box 6.4 Value Based Governance (RDF-DANIDA)

Objective: the project aimed to change the manner in which local bodies and line agencies deliver their services and was focused on making them more accountable, transparent, inclusive and responsive to the needs of the public.

Extreme poor VDCs are identified as the working area for this programme. The process focuses on establishing a Village Development Forum with representation from Dalits, Janajatis and women. This is done through a VDC-level meeting including representatives of political parties and people from all wards. The purpose of this Forum is to build understanding and mobilisation around local governance in a VDC, and in particular to build a process for demanding better services from service providers within and outside the VDC.

Steps followed:

From the VDF members, an 11 member executive committee is formed with an advisory committee of representatives from political parties and civil society. Discussions are held on the role of the VDC, civil society, communities and their rights to develop the VDC. Training is provided to the VDF, including VDC members, political parties and the local elites. This focuses on planning processes, prioritisation and ways to develop partnerships between service providers (particularly the VDC), political parties and communities.

VDF surveys the assets and resources of the VDC and the social conditions (including caste discrimination, participation in governance). Issues are identified based on the survey especially regarding the understanding about governance in the VDC. The survey data are also used by the VDC to support the planning process.

Governance classes are conducted on a weekly basis for 6 months in several locations in each VDC with particular focus on participation of women, Dalits and Janajatis.

The VDF is responsible for monthly meetings to discuss issues of resource transparency, VDC planning, implementation and participation, social issues including domestic violence and social discrimination. Issues to be addressed are discussed in these monthly meetings and action-plans developed.

The project has phased out but VDF remains a central citizen-based body for support to the VDC functions and in planning processes. It is strong and capable now in advocating about rights and responsibilities, developed with support of RDF in a two-year process; it oriented the Integrated Planning Committee about the provisions of the new VDC Grant Operational Manual. It has helped the VDC to map and now coordinate the activities of the multiple community organisations including coordinating the work of new organisations entering the VDC.

Source: RDF Dhanusha, field notes 2009

The experience from this project has some important lessons for LGCDP:

- The process does not involve any additional funds from the project to the people but instead works to develop people's capabilities to improve their access to services. At the beginning of the process there was resistance to the VDF but as it expanded its governance activities and built understanding in all the wards of how to participate in local governance, the resistance decreased. The role of the VDF and the value of its approach was accepted.
- The focus on working with political parties, training them in their roles and responsibilities, building understanding of the legal framework under which they operate (LSGA) were all important elements of building the eventual support of the parties for these processes. The VDF also lobbies political parties to follow their manifesto commitments.
- The VDF is a central element to the success of this programme and its composition of generally poor and excluded households is critical to this, as is the role of the advisory committee comprising both political parties and civil society, ensuring that there is engagement and ownership of the organisation. This citizen-based organisation has taken responsibility for checking the quality of service provision, advocating and ensuring delivery of better services and has through use of voice and accountability mechanisms led to improvements in livelihood security of particularly poorer households in the VDC.
- VDF was able to reach all households and provide regular backstopping as it collaborated with mothers' groups which organise sub-groups at small household cluster levels. This illustrates the importance of building networks of connection through the VDC and between community groups. However, the extent to which extreme poor and excluded households were reached through these processes is not clear.

Village Level Development Planning (NSCFP)

The SDC-funded NSCFP has been piloting new approaches to local planning as part of its own transition from a project focused on community forestry user groups to a wider development programme looking at issues of local governance beyond forests. It based its approach on the LSGA. We look at these experiences for the lessons to be learnt about the role of political parties in planning processes, as well as the high costs of transaction for low and uncertain benefits.

NSCFP in supporting local planning processes was responding to an increasing level of frustration expressed by people, in particular in Suspa and Magapauwa VDCs, about multiple groups and mobilisation processes, overlapping development processes, lack of coordination between projects and a complete bypassing of local government structures²⁰. In response to this, several people in both these VDCs had decided to start a strategic planning process as a way to bring together these disparate and often competing development efforts. In Magapauwa a strategic plan had been developed and presented to the VDC three years ago by a UML member but was not accepted or followed-up.

The steps and process followed are described in Box 6.5.

Box 6.5 Village-Level Development Planning (NSCFP-SDC)

Objective: to develop a process for long-term planning in the VDC based on good governance principles learned through development of Community Forestry User groups

Experience: the programme focused on developing an inclusive and long-term plan centred on local-level identification of the key development areas necessary for the future of the whole VDC. Operational guideline establishing the principles for the plan were developed through the same consultation processes.

Working with a facilitator supported by NSCFP a new process for long-term planning was developed to build a picture of the constraints and opportunities within the VDC and the areas where particular support is required. It included the following steps:

1. Mass meeting called at VDC-level to discuss ideas and identify members of a task-force to lead the process (including women, Janajatis, Dalits and political party representatives)
2. Following training from NSCFP on processes to be followed, the task-force called another meeting at VDC-level for all political parties, representatives of different community groups from which a list of key issues to be addressed in the planning process were identified. Nine issues including agriculture, forestry, health were suggested as priority areas for the VDC's future development
3. Nine separate committees were formed to address each of these issues with experts selected from the VDC for each area, party political representation on these committees was also important
4. Each committee then followed a separate process at tole-level to identify in depth people's opinions about these issues, the constraints and what needed to be done. These discussions were guided by a list of questions prepared by the committees prior to the meetings. There was an assumption that the excluded households would come to these meetings but no actual attempt to ensure this happened.
5. On the basis of this information a plan was prepared by 9 people, one from each committee, with a chapter on each issue. (This took 7-10 days). These nine chapters were discussed again at two meetings held in two locations in a ward where the information on the problem analysis and possible solutions was shared for feedback, about 25-30% was amended. About 25-30 people attended these meetings and they took 2-3 hours. From this feedback the plan was further revised which took another 3-4 days. The plan was presented to the VDC for feedback where a further set of revisions were made. The plan was then presented at a mass meeting of the village council of about 150 people.
6. After VLDP approval by the VDC Council and development of an annual plan picking –up the priority actions from the VLDP, subject matter committees were re-established (with new members) for implementation together with a coordination committee, advisory and monitoring committees

Unfortunately, the process became mired in politics and was halted until after the Constituent Assembly elections due to fears that it could allow one party to have an undue advantage over another. Following the elections the plans drawn up were ratified by the VDCs and in some cases at the Ilaka level too. In one case the current VDC plan is entirely derived from the priorities set in the Village-Level Development Plan. In another case because the political party problems had been so extreme the Village-Level Development Plan was not overtly used to decide the current year's VDC budget allocation but instead participants in the decision-making process said they used their knowledge of the plan to inform their decisions. In all cases, there was disappointment that line agencies were not interested in the plan or guided by it in terms of their activities.

Although special provision was made in the plan for supporting the extreme poor and money was allocated in the VDC budget there is no-one in the VDC able to support the implementation of a programme that reaches the extreme poor so the money has not been used.

Source: Discussions in Suspa and Magapauwa VDCs field notes, 2009

²⁰ In Suspa, for example, there are 172 groups operating, including community-based groups, NGOs and INGOs, of which 60 are agriculture groups.

These local planning processes provide interesting experience of the issues around politicisation. Table 6.2 details the political affiliations of the members of different planning structures involved in the village development plan process; it shows the dominance of the UML party both in the key positions and also in terms of numbers of members. This had the unfortunate consequence of bringing the process and the approval of the village development plan to a halt prior to the Constituent Assembly elections, when there were fears expressed by the Maoists that if it had gone ahead it could have been used to the political advantage of one party over another.

Table 6.2 Political and gender representation in key planning structures

Decision-making structure & key positions	Party representation						Gender representation	
	NC	Maoist	UML	No affiliation	RPP	NM	Female	Male
Suspa								
VDC Strategic Plan Coordination Committee	2	2	4	1			3	6
Coordinator			√					√
Secretary			√					√
Integrated Planning Committee	3	5	8		1	2	4	19
Monitoring Committee	1	3	4	2			3	6
Total	6	10	16	3	1	2	10	31
Magapauwa								
VDC Strategic Plan Coordination Committee	1	0	5	2			1	8
Coordinator			√					√
Secretary			√				√	
Integrated Planning Committee	1	3	4	1			2	7
Monitoring Committee			4					4
Total	1	3	17	1			3	19

Emerging lessons from the NSCFP process:

- Each of these VDC plans presumes there will be coordination with line agencies. However, despite attempts to build their interest from the start there was no active involvement. There is significant resistance to being 'told what to do' by a village-level plan; and they have limited flexibility in budgets, planning or staff time to respond to specific demands from particular VDCs.
- The incentives for line agencies are not to respond to bottom-up planning but their accountability is upwards to their departments/ministries and not downwards to people using services
- Since there has been limited implementation of the plan (in which so much time was invested) there is a high level of frustration and dissatisfaction
- The enthusiasm generated through the process, working with subject matter committees is now difficult to sustain; and members of these committees are concerned that they will now collapse
- The role of political parties in this process has had a series of consequences. For the Maoists in particular there was a high degree of suspicion of the motivation behind the village planning process with comments that it was simply a foreign inspired idea and not appropriate to the context. They cited the lack of government directive to give permission for these sorts of processes and suggested if there were such a guideline, only then would it be possible to continue with these processes

6.4 Social accountability mechanisms

An essential part of effective demand is the accountability mechanisms. These can be used to expose corruption, expose poor service and identify good practices. Through such mechanisms citizens can ensure that the provision and quality of services are adequate and reaching those entitled to them. These are important as voice alone without the means to ensure that the response obtained is the right one is a meaningless process. They should not just be about checking government and other service providers but also ensure that community organisations are responding fairly to members, and other community-level decision-making structures are accountable to citizens. Social accountability needs to be downward towards groups, organisations and individuals.

Programmes/projects have supported the development of effective accountability mechanisms and this is an area of responsibility of the social mobilisers. Most programmes/projects have conducted regular public hearing and public audit for transparency and accountability. Good examples of its use are provided by Value-based Governance (VBG) (RDF-DANIDA) SAGUN-CARE and also LFP/DFID, SDC, UPCA/Action Aid, all have effectively used this tool for the improvement of local governance (Box 6.6). The experience of VBG in developing public fora for choice of user committee members is another important mechanism that LGCDP can learn from. A recent study commissioned by DFID into transparency and accountability in construction has highlighted some of the major problems with user group and CBO use and their control by elites (Flanary pers.comm). The VBG approach is one means to reduce the occurrence of such practices.²¹

Many practices of tokenistic use of accountability mechanisms, not as a key process for transformation and challenge to structural inequality, were also found.

Box 6.6 The Village Development Forum – building accountability

The VDF conducts monthly meetings focused on governance issues in each ward (these classes include women, Dalits and Janajatis); it looks at the quality of service delivery provided by the VDC and other service delivery agencies; it includes in these discussions issues of resource transparency, the VDC planning process, implementation of projects by the VDC, the degree of people's participation. It develops its own workplan on the basis of the issues identified in these monthly discussions. The VDF, for example, acquired a copy of the audit report of the VDC and organised a public hearing on this report. This helped to inform the public of what had been recorded but also provided an opportunity to identify what had really happened. The results revealed the misappropriation of funds by the VDC and political parties and compelled them to assure the public that this would not happen again. It was also revealed during this process that very few people and party cadres were informed either of the projects chosen by the VDC or the budget allocation.

Another critical area in terms of ensuring transparent and effective processes is in the choice of membership of user committees for project implementation. The VDF has established a process for selection of committee members in a public meeting of all the project beneficiaries as well as political party representatives. In addition to this, a separate monitoring committee has also been established for each project with representation from political parties and civil society.

Source: RDF, Janakpur, Dhanusha field notes, 2009

SAGUN-CARE Nepal: The CFUGs have a provision of internal audit by accounts committee which is discussed in the public meeting. Public hearing of progress and achievement, lessons, public inquiry, income and expenditure, etc. of the CFUG is done in the general assembly held every 6 months. Public audit is done for community infrastructure projects on a project basis. The audit is on income and expenditure and corruption issues if any. All the users and CFUG committee members are present in the public audit. Public hearing and public audit have greatly helped to make the CFUG transparent and accountable to the users and citizens. This has helped to improve governance of the CFUG. (Based on field notes, Gijara CFUG, Udharapur Puraina VDC, Banke district, 2008)

²¹ This study is one of the outputs from a Study commissioned by the Department for International Development (DFID) to analyse the constraints and opportunities for enhancing the transparency and accountability of public sector construction in Nepal. The report is forthcoming.

Public audit²², as a process, has become distorted in many places. The real objective of an audit for all stakeholders to listen, discuss and question has been degraded with either false signatures of participation or cursory practice without sufficient information dissemination. Community groups in Banke, Dolakha, Kailali, and Morang districts shared about the misuse of public audit. In particular households commented that they were not called to the public audits organised by user committees in the VDC (Magapauwa VDC, Dolakha, Haraicha VDC, Morang, Mahadevpuri VDC of Banke, Thapapur VDC of Kailali). These audit meetings were attended only by the allies of the concerned user committee members, practically defeating the purpose of this accountability mechanism.

The distortion in practice of public audit means that there is no proper oversight mechanism particularly for the user committees responsible for infrastructure implementation. Current practices indicate that audits that are supposed to be conducted within one month of the end of the completion of the project are in fact not organised until 3-4 months after completion. Although the requirement has been fulfilled the purpose has not after such a delay. By this time the possible problems of implementation cannot be corrected and the exercise is effectively worthless.

Currently the focus of public audit is on the financial aspects only, for the purposes of accountability this is very limited and needs to be expanded to include audit of the process, including an assessment of who has been involved and who has benefited. Public hearing and public audit as accountability tools are mixed up by the VDC and other agencies. The programme staff and social mobilisers are not clear that public hearing is a governance monitoring tool (e.g. for accountability, staff behaviour, service provision) while public audit is more specific to project delivery. The concept of public hearing is not clear to the general public and the officials concerned. It is used without understanding about the preparation required, the objectives and the process necessary for it to enable people to raise issues and for others to clarify; therefore implementation in most cases is weak or non-existent.

Another accountability tool that has become distorted in its practice is the citizen charter. This instrument to make the service agency transparent and accountable towards the citizen has become toothless as there are no repercussions if it is not enforced. For example, most of the VDCs have a citizen charter which specifies the duty of a VDC secretary. In many of the VDCs visited the secretary was absent, was in district headquarters and not delivering his duties. The people were unable to ensure that he would be accountable for fulfilling his responsibilities. In the absence of ways to enforce the charter, its use at present is just for informing the general public but not to really make the service providers accountable.

These tools without processes to support their implementation remain simply tools and not mechanisms for accountability to citizens. This kind of accountability can be developed only when there are processes in place: a) to build citizen capability; b) that regularise and institutionalise mechanisms of accountability; and c) where poor practice is sanctioned. In the absence of political accountability with no elected political representation, civil society mechanisms become even more important for building the acceptance for and implementation of social accountability mechanisms.

However, despite the increasing distortion, there are several programmes/projects using these mechanisms as effective tools of accountability supported through their mobilisation process (RDF/DANIDA, SAGUN/CARE Nepal, LFP/DFID, UPCA/Action Aid).

²² This is separate from the formal financial audits which local bodies undertake through auditors for their next fiscal year grant release.

Experience from other countries in the region also provides some examples of good practice. In Bangladesh there has been some interesting work supported by Transparency International to develop accountability mechanisms that directly connect the elites to the extreme poor, and use the skills and leverage of the elites to the benefit of those with lesser voice and agency. Concerned Citizens Committees have been established and these are central to reducing corruption in service delivery and also in improving the quality and targeting of delivery to poorer citizens (Box 6.7).

Box 6.7 Concerned Citizens Committees-accountability mechanisms engaging the elites on behalf of citizens with limited voice

‘The key rationale is to develop a countrywide mechanism capable of mobilising people to demand and secure greater openness and honesty within government, among NGOs and the private sector. The report card surveys, on sectors identified locally as most in need of reform, are the main instrument with which Concerned Citizens Committees (CCC)s challenge existing institutional responses to citizen demand.

CCCs are formed from the local elites through a rigorous peer review process aimed at identifying a group of politically neutral, committed and influential local citizens who can question and challenge service providers on behalf of poorer citizens who often cannot take the risks of challenging those who hold the power to give or take away services.

Source: Brocklesby and Crawford 2005:34; Transparency International Bangladesh, website: www.ti-bangladesh.org

6.5 Issues emerging from existing practices

Inclusion in the planning and budget allocation process

In discussions in the VDCs about local planning processes there have been some interesting differences reported between the practice last year and this year. The issuance of the draft VDC Operation Grant Manual by MLD has made a huge difference to practice in those VDCs where the communities are organised or where there are active NGOs working in the area of livelihoods, planning and governance. However, where programmes are not connecting into the local planning process, there is no knowledge about these new planning guidelines and their implications and no action has been taken (e.g. CARE-SAMANTA where neither project staff nor community groups knew about the Manual).

VDCs working with CBOs have tried to implement a basic participatory consultative process using ward-level meetings to derive project proposals. Box 6.8 illustrates the experience in Yangsila VDC – a highly mobilised VDC where LWF and DLGSP have been working, the lessons from this process are important for future action:

1. The importance and mobilising effects of government guidelines/directives
2. The importance of the content of these guidelines in terms of providing permission for VDCs and CSOs to implement consultative approaches
3. The difficulty of ensuring that poor and excluded households get fair access to the decision-making processes
4. The difficulty of planning in the absence of knowledge of the potential budget available
5. The huge expectations raised by these processes and the difficulties of responding with just the VDC block grant without looking more widely at all the resources available within the geographical boundaries of the VDC
6. The relative success obtained in this VDC as a result of its high levels of mobilisation where there is good connection between the CBO and the VDC with high levels of trust
7. The need for different long-term processes to build the capability of poor and excluded households to access these decision-making fora.

Box 6.8 The effects of Government guidelines on VDC planning in a highly mobilised VDC

The VDC secretary was called to a meeting at the LGCDP regional cluster office to discuss the new guidelines. There were no copies available. He made a photocopy of the guidelines and brought these back to the village for discussion. There had been no orientation about the guidelines and so people had read selectively the sections that appeared relevant to them.

An integrated planning committee of 17 people was formed on the basis of the criteria suggested in the guidelines. They asked the Dalits and Janajati groups to send their own representatives. For the Dalits it was easy because they had already formed their own network at VDC-level of 150 households. A meeting of the Dalit network was called and they selected their representatives and the projects they thought were priorities. Within the Dalit networks the most marginalised asked for IGA support, tailoring, shoe-making and blacksmithing support.

Following the guidelines ward-level planning meetings were conducted using the CMCs and COs to ensure there was good participation at the ward-level. The CMC was informed at a meeting about the provisions of the VDC guidelines and asked to inform the COs to plan, collect demands from their members and to ensure that all the COs came to the ward-level meetings. The social mobiliser also visited the COs to inform them of the planning process but did not visit the disadvantaged households separately; as a result there was very weak representation of disadvantaged households. In one week the ward-level meetings were completed; in one day up to two meetings were held if the ward centres were close to each other. Demands were collected through two processes: 1) from the ward to the VDC-level; and 2) from the networks and federations direct to the VDC.

At the ward-level meeting CO representatives and other interested people (about 60% households in one case but not the extreme poor and excluded) attended including CFUGs, cooperatives, school representatives, COs and political parties. For this year, following the guidelines, they decided that 6 remote wards should be targeted for budget allocation. After discussion 1-3 projects were prioritised. The basis for prioritisation was which project is common to all ward people and in other cases if there are only a few users for the project but it is essential to them – such as drinking water. From the ward level there were projects proposed of Rs80 lakh for infrastructure but since the budget amount available was not clear, projects were identified that could not be funded within the budget allocation. The VDC level meeting suggested they look for matching funding from the DDC given the VDC budget was insufficient.

The Integrated Planning Committee (IPC) allocated the budget to two types of projects – those common to all such as roads, bridges, schools, drinking water. They also considered projects that would benefit remote areas and in particular those that are IGA focused. The IPC firstly allocated money to those projects that will benefit the whole VDC and then the remainder was allocated to the ward-level projects. People shared that the real problem was the inability of the VDC to easily respond to the demands made by the ward particularly for income-generating activities for poor and excluded households.

The IPC made the decision about budget allocation and it was approved by the council of three people (VDC secretary, health post in charge, and the agriculture service centre). The process followed this year was better than the previous when there had been none of this process at the VDC-level. Previously the political parties had just sat together and decided the budget allocation amongst themselves. In the past there had been huge political influence over the decision-making but this time the demands from the ward-level and networks were respected and there were no projects through the backdoor. What was crucial was the development of understanding amongst political parties before starting the process.

The respondents indicated that the process was participatory and has helped to increase transparency; it has meant that for the resources allocated by government there is now a clear decision-making process. The respondents appreciated the role of the SMs and the COs and said these processes would not have been possible without them as the VDC has no capacity to support these kinds of discussions.

The VDC Grant Operational manual made a more open process possible; the guideline was followed as otherwise there would be no block grant funds available. The CBO explained that such processes were not followed previously because the earlier VDC secretary had not been active or easy to work with, and there were no government guidelines which gave a legitimate basis to them to facilitate such a process. Now there is a more active secretary and the CBO is also more organised.

Source: Field Notes 2009

Building clarity in the VDC Block Grant Operational Manual 2008

The importance of the VDC Grant Operational Manual has already been demonstrated above but this emphasises the importance of ensuring consistency and clarity regarding the provision of support to citizen-based engagement in local governance. There are a number of major inconsistencies and ambiguities in the Manual that need to be clarified. Table 6.3 details these.

Table 6.3 Issues arising from the Village Development Committee Grant Operation Manual, 2008

Issue	Statement in Operational Manual*	Comment and action
Community Organisations lack of clarity in definition	(3f: p.5) Definition: "Community Organisations" means the organisations that have been established under the prevailing laws by adopting the set procedures with an aim to have awareness related training, orientation, skill development, saving and credit mobilisation, inclusive development and empowerment and the community based organisations that have been listed at the Local Body.	Does this mean that they can have one of these attributes, all of them? What if they are exclusive bodies i.e. Dalits, PAF focusing only on poor etc); does not mention organisations that manage resources such as forests, water. This needs to be defined more carefully
Provision of social mobilisation funds to VDC in top-up grant (under the administrative allocation element)	(7.2:p8.) 'In those districts where LGCDP programme has been implemented, separate additional amount for social mobilisation shall be provided to the VDCs that fall into the category four and three from the DAG mapping.'	This provision for funds for social mobilisation (in this report, Citizen Mobilisation) to the VDC implies that the VDC will be able to hire their own mobilisers for the mobilisation of citizens in the participatory planning processes. As with the point below, this creates a conflict of interest between building the capacity of citizens to demand and hold accountable the VDC and the VDC controlling the people responsible for facilitating process of citizen demand and oversight. Funds for mobilisation should not be held by the VDC, the citizen mobilisation process should be separately funded through an independent mechanism.
Conflict of interest in implementation of mobilisation	(7.2: p8) 'The social mobilisation activities to be conducted in the Village Development Committee area shall be conducted through Local Development Fund, Village Development Committee itself, Community Development fund, Non-governmental Organisations and Community Organisations.	By leaving the option to use LDF, CDF or VDC itself for social mobilisation (Citizen Mobilisation), this guideline has created space for a conflict of interest, where citizen mobilisers will be fully accountable to the VDC rather than to the citizens. It is essential that this separation of the mobilisation process from the local government bodies and structures is retained. It should remain a fully independent process contracted outside local government.
Manual for social mobilisation	(7.2:p.8) Such social mobilisation activities shall be conducted in accordance with the Social Mobilisation Manual approved by the Ministry of Local Development.	It is essential that both the VDC Grant Operation Guideline and the Social/Citizen Mobilisation Guidelines are harmonised so that both reflect the decision of MLD and the DPs on the various recommendations presented in the Citizen Mobilisation Review. Consistency between the various guiding documents of LGCDP is critical to effective and accountable implementation of this national programme.
Safety net allocations 'to disadvantaged and targeted communities' out of 'top-up' block grant	(7.3:p.8) Out of the topping up block grant obtained by the Village Development Committee under the Bullet 7 from the Local Governance and Community Development Programme (LGCDP) at least 33 percent amount shall have to be allocated to those projects demanded by the groups for such activities.	This sentence is unclear in terms of intent and process a) what is understood by safety nets; b) who are they going to be provided to; c) who are the 'targeted communities'; d) what is the process through which individuals/groups are identified; e) what are the criteria for selection; f) what is the basis for the suggested percentage allocation of the top-up block grant; The DAG mapping information must be used by all the GOs and NGOs in the VDC for their planning and regularly updated is not clarified in the guideline.

Issue	Statement in Operational Manual*	Comment and action
Project Prioritisation criteria	(8.3.p.9) provisions mentioned in Sub-sections 3 and 6 of Section 43 of the Local Self-Governance Act, projects shall have to be prioritised considering 11 aspects. Sample form regarding prioritisation is in annex-12.	The indicators (with score) are inclusive but the criteria are vague and overlap. The format is not practical for prioritisation at ward level.
Nomination by VDC of representatives in Integrated Plan Formulation Committee	(8.5.a.p.8) Representative nominated by the VDC out of the non-governmental organisations (NGOs) working in the VDC (one person); Representatives of Community Organisations, nominated by the VDC (two persons); one person out of <i>dalits</i> , nominated by the VDC; Representatives Women's Organisations in the VDC, nominated by the VDC (two persons); Representatives of Indigenous Nationalities, nominated by the VDC (two persons); one person from among the chairpersons of the Management Committees of the Primary Schools in the Village Development Area, nominated by the VDC	The VDC should not nominate representatives to the Integrated Plan Committee. Instead the respective groups, COs and networks should select their representatives to the IPC (expanded to become Integrated Planning and Coordination Committee (IPCC) in this report and by the GESI strategy).
15 percent budget allocation for demand-based projects	(8.6.1: p.13). "Out of the capital budget, at least 15 percent amount shall have to be allocated in order to run the demand based projects in the following targeted sectors and the programs shall have to be conducted accordingly"	This clause encourages equal division of resources among various groups (more than 10 groups and about 59 sub-groups in Janajati, population; at least 4 or 5 Janajati groups will be there in each VDC). This makes the funds available to the groups very small. Each VDC must identify who in their population is the most excluded and the cause of their exclusion.
Proposed contracting by VDC of social mobilisers	(8.6.2: p.14). 'In the case of remuneration to the social mobilisation related facilitator, the VDC may verify and fix the tenure and remuneration, and bear the matching expenditure or remuneration while getting the service through contract. But the social mobilisers cannot be appointed by creating a long-term liability.'	This clearly places responsibility for funding, contracting with the VDC leading to a serious conflict of interest over the citizen mobilisation functions. The mobilisation of citizens to participate in VDC planning processes and voice their demands should be separated from the VDC response to these demands.
Highly detailed and prescriptive allocation of funds for capacity development (in recurrent expenditure element of VDC Block Grant)	(8.6.2b7: 14) 'Promotional programmes for the Capacity Development: Control of Violence against Women (Conflict mediating groups, e.g., paralegal committee); Collective Procurement of equipment and tools for the ante and post natal care; Mobilisation of Child Clubs, Peer Groups, Mothers Groups, etc.; Abolition of Child labour, domestic violence control and human trafficking control; Control of epidemic diseases such as diarrhoea and cholera and dissemination activities; National Campaign related activities (e.g., Vitamin 'A' and Polio immunisation programmes); Activities related to the development of language, literature and folk literature.'	This leaves little room for response to demand and does appear to be overly focused on women and child-health related programmes
Compulsory People's participation	(8.7c: p.15) 'There shall have to be a compulsory participation of socially and economically backward persons/communities.'	The use of the word 'compulsory' may be a problem of translation but there should be no element of compulsion to participate. Participation must be voluntary, informed and without risk to the individual involved.'

Issue	Statement in Operational Manual*	Comment and action
Public Audit	(10.1h: p. 21) "After the implementation of the project, public audit shall have to be conducted. The frame of the public audit shall be in accordance with Annex 11."	The process mentioned in annex 11 is not sufficient for public audit. The Social Audit Guidelines 2065 of MLD needs to be followed. These audits must be conducted before the release of the second installment and the final audit should be done within one month of the completion of the project in the presence of VDC secretary, users group, civil societies and political parties.
Monitoring and reporting	(15: p 27) Monitoring, Review and Progress Reporting of the Programme at different levels (15.2c: p 27) "VDC shall have to submit the programme's physical and financial progress report including its trimester and annual review in accordance with the format of Annex-8 and the monthly progress report in accordance with Annex-8(a) before the Office of the DDC."	The guideline does not clarify about representation of networks, women, groups and representatives of political parties in the regular monitoring committee. The reporting format does not ask for gender and caste/ethnicity, location disaggregation or even disaggregation by ward
Lack of clarity about representation in Village Council, the most important decision-making body	(5: p.5) Plan implementation after approval by Village Council (8.1b: p.7) Programme Formulation on basis of profile approval by Council (8.2c: p.7) Project proposal and its approval (8.4a: p.8) Approval of List of Projects and Feasibility Study (8.6.1c & d: p.10) Expenditure allocation - decision-making powers (8.7: p.13) Decisions on degree of people's participation in projects (8.8a: p.13) Approval of programme and budget by Village Council (15.2d: p.21) Monitoring by the VDC to be carried out by Village Council (17.2: p.23) Auditing: The VDC shall have to compulsorily submit the internal and final audit reports before the concerned Village Council	The Village Council is the ultimate decision-making body but there is no clear guidance in the Cabinet of Aug 2006 to indicate representation and the relationships between the IPC and the Council is not clarified in the VDC Grant Operational Guideline. After the non-extension of tenure of VDC members, a three member committee formed by the cabinet as a VDC executive body (VDC secretary-Chairperson, (sub)/health-post in charge – member, agriculture/livestock service centre in charge – member). The MLD provisioned for an all party committee with the authority resting with the above three members. The all party committee has more of an advisory role than any legal authoritative role. The cabinet further gave the authority of the council to the above three members of VDC body. In practice all party members, representatives of CBOs and networks and social workers are invited in the council meeting. The members invite those persons who can be helpful in the VDC activities based on the context and power dynamics of the VDC. But this all party mechanism has no legal authority and has advisory role only. There is no guideline as to who should be invited in the council meeting. However, the decisions are formalised by the three government nominees as a VDC Council. The lack of elected representatives has lessened the accountability of the VDC and the Village Council.

* Village Development Committee Grant Operation Manual, 2065; Ministry of Local Development Government of Nepal, 2008; Translation in English (version supported by UNFPA)

Contradictions of the current local government context and the LGCDP Programme Document

The LGCDP has clear intent to develop a citizen-based governance system, with regular and open engagement in decision-making by citizens. However, the amendments to local government representation made in the Cabinet Decision of August 2006 do not ensure adequate provision for inclusive citizen engagement particularly for the extreme poor and excluded. In Chapter 7 we recommend a new citizen-engagement structure at ward and VDC-levels.

VDC-level: After the non-extension of tenure of VDC members, a three member committee was formed by the Cabinet Decision of August 2006 regarding Interim Local Body arrangements as a VDC executive body (VDC secretary-Chairperson, (sub)/health-post in charge - member, agriculture/livestock service centre in charge - member). The MLD provisioned for an all party committee with the authority resting with the above three members. The all party committee has more of an advisory role than any legal authoritative role.

The cabinet further gave the authority of the village council to the above three members of the VDC body. In practice all party members, representatives of CBOs and networks and social workers are invited to the council meeting. The members invite those persons who can be helpful in the VDC activities based on the context and power dynamics of the VDC. But this all-party mechanism has no legal authority and has an advisory role only. There is no guideline as to who should be invited in the council meeting. The decision-making power rests with the three government nominees as a VDC council.

Ward-Level: There are even more serious constraints to public participation as a consequence of the changes to local government. Under the LSGA there is a provision for a Ward Committee in each ward which convenes a meeting once a month. There is a provision of five elected members including a ward chair-person. The major role of the Ward Committee is to oversee and supervise the ongoing and completed development activities within the ward; to protect and support livelihood activities of the marginalised Janajati, disabled and orphans; to support the health facility and school management committee etc.

However, the Ward Committee is not currently functional and there is no provision for such a committee in the Cabinet Decision regarding Interim Local Body arrangements.

District-level: Building citizen engagement and accountability practices at the District-level is even more difficult. Under current practice the Cabinet has given all the authority of the DDC body and council to the Local Development Officer alone. MLD, however decided that there should be an all party mechanism (party representative who secured 10 percent vote in the general assembly) in DDC body. But this all-party mechanism has no legal authority and has an advisory role only.

Dealing with multiple groups and parallel structures

There are significant issues to be addressed in building an effective interface between citizens, the state and groups. Over the last two decades the flourishing of group-based development usually as a consequence of donor agency funding has led to increased voice and influence over the provision of development services but at the same time has led to a proliferation of interest groups where those who are members have voice but those who are not, don't! These groups have tended to occupy the space that should belong to representative politics (Grant and

Hulme, 2008). In the absence of elected local government, decision-making over resource allocation has tended to occur through vertical lines drawn between project-supported groups and the projects. Currently the proliferation of groups has tended to fragment and divide popular voice and enabled those who have power and capability to capture services and resources to the detriment of those who cannot, especially the poor in particular.

For LGCDP, the relationships between these groups and the local government planning process are critical. For some groups and cooperatives, the quantum of benefits available to their members through the group is significantly greater than that available through the VDC block grants. The incentives therefore for engaging in planning processes for limited benefits (all of which are related to public goods) are very weak. As the LGCDP Appraisal Document noted: "The LGCDP provides modest additional funds to the LBs, which pale in comparison to the funds now spent for basic service provision through line units" (2008:18). This highlights the need for careful attention to a planning process that engages citizens in the mobilisation of all forms of resources within a VDC and not just those restricted to the VDC block grant.

There are several ways in which **over time** these different types of groups and interests can be brought together into a more coherent local governance framework. Some experience from India illustrates one way: 'in Madhya Pradesh the government has turned user committees that deal with single sectors into single-subject subcommittees of village governments' (Manor, 2004:209). More recently in Karnataka, a similar approach has been adopted:

"Multilateral agencies that have created implementing structures through parallel agencies that did not have any connection with Panchayati Raj Institutions (PRIs), are realising that better and faster results could be achieved through PRIs. The linkage between Grama Panchayats and CBOs are being designed by positioning the CBOs as standing sub-committees of the Grama Panchayats. These sub-committees unlike other sub-committees that are supposed to have representation only of sitting members, have wide discretion in co-opting and including citizens in them" (Solution Exchange, 2005).

However, a clear distinction needs to be made between those organisations that are effectively performing the local level functions of line agencies and those that are independent community based organisations. These latter derive their legitimacy from their members and perform an important advocacy/lobbying role for their members with VDCs/municipalities. These should not be brought under the ambit of the VDC or municipality but should retain their independence to challenge and advocate.

Inclusion and empowerment through local governance

A number of major decentralisation processes are underway in South Asia which provide a rich source of experience for Nepal in addition to its own many decades of decentralisation efforts. Box 6.9 provides some guidance for how to open up space for different voices to participate in planning but there is little evidence to demonstrate that just providing opportunities for particularly poor and excluded households to participate leads to their meaningful inclusion. Table 6.3 derived from the local governance project SHARIQUE (SDC) outlines the technical steps of local government planning process from Bangladesh which details ways in which inclusion is built into the process but as Box 6.9 illustrates provision for the presence of the extreme poor and excluded does not mean either that they attend or if they do that they are able to voice their demands or influence decisions.

Box 6.9 Mechanisms for citizen voice in local governance

Empowerment of women in Kerala: A pyramidal organisation has been established at the base of which are Neighbourhood Groups consisting of 15-40 families where each family is represented by a woman. These are federated into an Area Development Society at the ward-level and further integrated into a Community Development Society at the Village Panchayat or Urban Local Government level. There is active representation of women's voice through these organisations in the decision-making and planning of local budget allocations.

Project selection processes Indonesia KDP: The Kecamatan Development Programme (KDP) is not a local government programme but works through a community-driven process to identify demand and build responsive service provision. In the planning process, women have separate women-facilitated meetings and their projects are given equal weighting to those proposals that come through the village process (men and women); there is separate fund allocation for women's proposals.

Voices of women and the poor in Bangladesh, Sharique: During ward-level planning meetings for proposal development, separate male and female community facilitators work with separate men and women's groups to support their identification of priority proposals, these are presented in separate men and women's plenaries and finally after prioritisation in these plenaries brought together into a joint plenary. In this process, each group of men and women also identify a specific project for extreme poor households. However, although this process is relatively robust for ensuring that sufficient priority is accorded to women's proposals as discussed by women, it is not so robust in terms of ensuring that these proposals represent the particular demands of extreme poor women for example. Generally the representation of the extreme poor (men and women) in these events is low. At the Union Parishad level there have to be equal numbers of proposals from men and women in each ward, and one proposal exclusively for the extreme poor. (Hobley and Hussein, 2008)

VBG/RDF Nepal: A Village Development Forum is established comprising 9-15 members representing women, Dalits and Janajatis as well as representatives from each of the nine wards. An eleven member executive committee is selected from this wider group; and an advisory committee formed from representatives from political parties and civil society. The VDF covers every household in a VDC through mothers' groups. It works in two ways: 1) to engage in the VDC planning process and to propose projects for funding; and 2) through the VDF members lobbying with service providers to get services into the VDC. It works both with line agencies but also mobilising existing resources within the VDC, such as resources held by the DLGSP supported CMC. The VDF has been highly successful in ensuring that health services are being delivered as well as scholarships for Dalit children, 90% of Dalit children are now enrolled in schools. (Field notes, 2009)

Indeed the experience from the fieldwork for this study underlines the problems of exclusion from groups for extreme poor: we had requested to meet with excluded households who are not members of any groups. However, when we arrived to meet with them, they were not of course present. In the words of one household who was present (who was a member of one of the groups) *"these households are not here because they never attend any public meetings, whoever requests them, this is why they are not members of groups"*.

Who is involved in the collective choice decision-making process?

One of the major issues to be addressed is the issue of how collective choices are made during these planning processes, whose voices are heard and recorded and become the dominant decision and whose are not, who is present and who is not. In the recent round of planning for the VDC block grant in Yangsila VDC, members of a CBO indicated there had been a series of problems around the voices of the most disadvantaged:

"Decisions are made on the basis of the majority vote – this is causing problems as in some cases disadvantaged households are in the minority, so their voices which are already marginalised are further blocked by being in a minority. They will not raise their voices when they are in the minority so their demands do not get heard or acted upon." (field notes 2009)

Evidence of success in transforming the simple presence of people at meetings into influence is provided where there have been processes of citizen mobilisation that work across the whole community - focusing explicitly on building the capabilities of poor and excluded but at the same time working with political parties and powerful individuals to build their role in supporting the voices of the extreme poor (see section 3.5 on power analysis for further

discussion). This has enabled extreme poor people to express their demands, but more importantly for these demands to be listened to and action taken by those who previously would have had little interest. Without such processes the existing patterns of engagement continue: “some men participate in ward assembly meetings but women are not involved – ‘hamro jivan ta bhari bhokene, khana pakahune, gai bastu herne matre chhe’” (“our role in life is to carry, cook, and look after livestock only”) DLGSP group Dadeldhura field notes 2008); and in another group the women observed “women should not come to such meetings that is what people say and our husbands don’t share the information from these meetings with us” (Doti, field notes 2008).

Table 6.4 Example of local government planning process Bangladesh (SHARIQUE)

Planning steps	Activities	Responsibilities
Preparation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ All citizens in the ward are informed about forthcoming meetings – purpose, venue, date and time. Different methods of communication are used including microphones/loudspeakers, posters as well as through community organisations ▪ CBOs are encouraged to conduct meetings prior to the open public ward meeting to gather members’ views of priority projects 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Union Parishad (UP) is responsible for making sure this happens – use community facilitators
Analysis, information, demand identification	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Open Public Ward Planning Meeting to which all citizens in the respective ward are invited to analyse situation and propose projects to be undertaken in their ward. ▪ Hamlet-wise gender segregated groups are set up to carry out a situation analysis including identification of critical problems and potentials. This is followed by suggestions of projects to address this analysis. ▪ The groups each prioritise 3-4 project ideas (one of which must be exclusively for extreme poor) ▪ Each project idea should indicate location and beneficiaries ▪ These are first presented in gender separated plenaries where prioritisation of 3-4 gender-based priorities are made ▪ Finally women and men present their priorities to a single mixed plenary ▪ Final selection of priority projects must include one exclusively for the extreme poor ▪ At the end of the session next steps are outlined with an indication of which require public involvement 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Meeting is chaired by the respective UP member and UP woman member ▪ Group discussions are facilitated by community facilitators – male and female
Project proposals (drafting)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Basic Scheme Description by Union Parishad ward member and women member including potential beneficiaries. ▪ Scheme description includes: location, beneficiaries, simple drawings or design (where appropriate), rough costings, local community contributions, description of scheme implementation, and social and environmental screening ▪ These scheme outlines are forwarded to the UP Chairman/Secretary 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ UP ward member and UP woman member, plus representatives from beneficiary groups for proposed projects
Screening	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Initial administrative screening of ward project proposals to exclude ineligible ones 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The Standing Committee Finance and Establishment with support of UP Secretary

Planning steps	Activities	Responsibilities
Matching proposals to budgets	Projectisation meeting: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Expected available budget for development proposals announced by UP Secretary ▪ Ward proposals are screened and based on available budget decided which to be taken up (prioritisation on basis of benefit to poorest, women, maximum number of beneficiaries); final ward selected projects must cover two sectors (social, economic, infrastructure, environment); there should be an equal number of projects suggested by women and men; one project per ward must exclusively target extreme poor ▪ Additional project proposals developed that cover whole UP, not yet covered by ward proposals, and fulfil Union and national priorities 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Full Union Parishad, Standing Committees and civil society representatives ▪ Meeting is open to the public
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Preparation of project summary sheets and full draft plan and budget 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Standing Committee Finance and Establishment with UP Secretary support
Approval process	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Review and approval of draft UP plan and budget by UP 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Whole Union Parishad
Public budget meeting – tradeoffs & prioritisation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Open Public Budget Sharing Meeting at UP level to present and discuss draft UP plan and budget. ▪ Presentation of UP 5 year plan, UP development plan and overall budget for the coming fiscal year ▪ Ward by ward presentation by male and female ward members and discussion of agreed and finalised projects; discussion in ward-based groups facilitated by community facilitators ▪ Open discussion / questions and answers from citizens concerning decisions about which ward proposals have been accepted ▪ Issues recorded for discussion by UP prior to finalisation of plan ▪ Presentation of next steps in planning process 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Open to all citizens, CBOs, beneficiaries of projects, led by Chairman of Union Parishad, moderated by Secretary or other skilled person ▪ Line agencies
Final Plan preparation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Preparation of final UP plan after considering the recommendations of the UP level public meeting 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Standing Committee Finance and Establishment with support of UP secretary
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Approval of the final plan and budget by the UP ▪ Requires a majority vote in the Union Parishad 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Whole Union Parishad
Approval process	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Discussion of the UP plan in the Upazila Parishad Coordination Committee (UDCC) ▪ UP Chairman presents UP plan in UDCC to inform other UP chairmen and Upazila administration and for technical feedback 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Upazila Nirbahi Officer(UNO), UP Chairmen, line agencies
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Submission of the UP plan to the Deputy Commissioner ▪ Approved UP plan submitted for procedural and technical scrutiny and inclusion in higher level plans 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Upazila Nirbahi Officer(UNO) submits to Deputy Commissioner
Public sharing of budget and plan	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Open Public Ward Meeting to share approved UP budget and plan and select volunteers to be included in Project Implementation and Project Supervision Committees. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪
Review process	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Open Public Budget Review Meeting at UP level to present and discuss progress of plan and budget implementation. Occurs twice a year – once for the first half of the financial year and the second review for the whole year ▪ First internal review carried out ▪ Then a public open meeting is held to present UP budget implementation progress and the proposed changes to the budget ▪ Includes ward-wise presentations of progress on implementation of projects; feedback from citizens included in budget revisions 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ All elected UP representatives ▪ Co-opted UP Standing Committee members ▪ UP secretary ▪ All citizens in the Union ▪ UP officials ▪ Line agency officials ▪ Community facilitators for ward presentations and discussions

6.6 Lack of connection between planning processes of local bodies, line agencies and programmes

In all cases, there are clear problems in building responsive service provision to citizen-based planning processes as a consequence of the lack of coherence between the diverse planning processes. This calls into question the incentives for citizens to participate in any planning process where the potential for services to respond to their demands is so weak. In the following sections, we consider the problems in the current planning process and the experiences that were common prior to 2058 (2002).

The past experience of local body planning and response and effects on inclusion

Past experience of local body planning provides some important lessons for the LGCDP particularly with respect to how the implementation of the process led to the effective exclusion of many poor and excluded households.

Elite domination in delayed and conflicting planning time-frames

The regulations for the LSGA provide a broad outline for local body planning which has a separate timeline from that of the line ministries. MLD has developed a 14 step planning process for the local bodies under the LSGA/R framework. The process was intensively followed in the past in districts where Participatory District Development Programme (PDDP), Local Governance Programme (LGP) (UNDP) and SNV had extended governance support to the respective DDCs. Although there was a provision for wide scale participation of the excluded in the process, participation was too general (elite dominated, not responsive to the poor, women and to people of different caste/ethnic groups) in the initial phase and it did not directly benefit the poor and the excluded. This resulted in their disenchantment with the process and subsequently led to weak and in some cases non-existent participation of the poor and the excluded.

The length of the process is another disincentive for engagement by the extreme poor. The planning timeline from settlement level processes to VDC council is two months and from Illaka level to district council is another two months. As this planning process extends over a period from November (Kartik) until March (Falgun/Chaitra), it is too long and tiring for those who are involved. The whole process was dominated by the elite and the influential as the process moved up the planning ladder. After 2058, when the local bodies were dissolved, the planning process became just a necessary condition to be completed by the bureaucrats and there was limited participation beyond the VDC.

The 14 step process starts when the DDC receives directives and budget ceiling from the NPC. However, the receipt of the budget ceiling is often late delaying the start of the consultation and the planning is conducted in a rush in order to finish it by the end of March. This results in ad-hoc planning without proper representation of the poor and excluded, and without proper coordination between line agencies and the donors working in the district.

Influence of the powerful in project prioritisation

The sixth step in the 14 step process is one of the most important – the ward level planning meeting where prioritisation of the settlement level projects are supposed to be conducted. However, since the meeting is dominated by the elite and the influential of the ward, the projects are mostly elite focused infrastructure which does not serve the interests of the poor and the excluded. These projects are like a shopping list rather than systematically prioritised through use of standard tools like pair-wise ranking or using a scoring format. This list is forwarded to the VDC where those who have political clout influence the prioritisation and

selection of projects. Thus the selection is subjective rather than based on any objective criteria and highly influenced by political concerns.

After the VDC level prioritisation, the projects are forwarded to the Illaka level planning meeting where the projects are supposed to be selected on a sectoral prioritisation basis. However, this step is also highly influenced by those who are powerful as hardly any objective criteria are used for prioritisation. The Illaka level meeting is just a formality and since 2058 (2002) even more so, as there are no elected peoples' representatives in the local bodies.

Additionally, the goal of 'capital investments' can be undermined by a community mentality which seeks to boost family income (e.g. through a public works labour wage) rather than prioritise a sustainable capital investment in local infrastructure. This problem is compounded by the LSGA guidance that encourages VDCs to prioritise projects that are 'income generating'. In an emerging democracy, the trade-off is particularly difficult because what people need in the medium-to-long term may not be what they want immediately.

Lack of convergence between line agencies and bottom-up planning process

The line agency representatives are present in the Illaka level planning and the line agencies (LAs) projects are supposed to converge with the needs and demand of the local people at this step. However, since the line agencies have their own planning steps set by sectoral ministries which set their sectoral priorities, the Illaka level meeting of the local bodies and the line agencies does not result in any meaningful sectoral coordination. The line agencies cannot commit any projects or budget ceiling in this meeting, so this potential opportunity for coordination is lost. As such these Illaka level meetings do not provide a meaningful interface between the local bodies and line agencies and are in effect a waste of time. The line agencies do not have any budget allocated for their own sectoral development by Illaka or VDC. VDCs have no leverage over the line agencies so it is difficult to have any meaningful participation in the Illaka level meeting. The only way to change these relationships is to change the incentives for cooperation, for example the line agencies' budgets should be allocated either by Illaka level or by VDC level, so that it would be easier to negotiate the project at Illaka/VDC level.

Planning and budgeting cycles on different time-frames

There is lack of coordination in planning between the local bodies and the line agencies (Table 6.5). The budget ceiling and government guidelines are provided by NPC to the ministries and line agencies (but for example for this year's planning, the ceiling and guidelines have been circulated by NPC in mid-March instead of January). The line agencies need to start their planning process from October-November (Kartik), complete and send the proposed programme and budget for the coming fiscal year latest by end of Feb-March (Falgun). The process involves service centre/field level meeting and district level planning workshops. After the district level workshops most of the line agencies organise regional level planning workshops. This workshop finalises the district level programme and budget and which are then sent to the Ministry. Thus the line agencies have already forwarded their plans to the respective ministries, but the local level planning process has not yet ended, so the demand coming from the citizens cannot be included into the plans of the line agencies.

This means that the local bodies start their council meeting when the line agencies have already sent their programme and budget to the ministries. As such there is no integrated planning process and the DDC council just rubber stamps the programme and budget submitted by the line agencies.

The planning process for the DDC, VDC and Municipality starts from November (Kartik) and they submit the programme and budget to the DDC council by the end of March (Falgun) for the coming fiscal year in accordance with LSGA. In practice, the planning process does not start in November as the government does not circulate the budget ceiling on time. To add to the confusion, the line agencies and DDC plan for the next fiscal year while the VDCs and municipalities only plan for the current year based on the available budget. To address this problem, the government has started enforcing a practice of planning for the next fiscal year through Minimum Condition and Performance Measures (MCPM).

Table 6.5 Existing contradictions in planning timelines

Months/ Activities	July	August	Sept	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	March	April	May	June
	Asar-Shrawan-	Shrawan-Bhado	Bhado-Asoj	Asoj-Kartik	Kartik-Mangsir	Mangsir-Poush	Poush-Magh	Magh-Phalgun	Phalgun-Chaitra	Chaitra-Baisakh	Baisakh-Jestha	Jestha-Asar
LSGA*					Directives and Budget Ceiling#, pre-planning workshop	Preplanning workshop, settlement. Ward, VDC planning	VDC meeting, Council	Ilaka level Meeting, Sectoral Meeting, Integrated Planning, DDC meeting	DDC meeting, DDC Council, Forward to NPC/MLD			
MoHP**		Service centre demand collection/needs assessment					Draft Planning Framework	<i>Regional Workshop to finalise plans</i>	Plans sent to Ministry and discussion in Department and Ministry		Discussion with NPC and MOF	Finalisation by Jestha end
MoAC**		Service centre demand collection/needs assessment					Draft Planning Framework		<i>Regional Workshop to finalise plans</i>	Plans sent to Ministry	Central level discussion	Finalisation by Jestha end;
Actual process and time line of VDC planning						VDC Grant amount information		VDC Meeting to review directives and budget ceiling	VDC level meeting for planning, VDC Council, Budget release			
Actual process and time line of municipality planning								Meeting to review directives and budget ceiling	Ward level planning meeting, Planning committee meeting, Municipal council, Budget release			
Actual process and time line of DDC planning								DDC Meeting to review directives and budget ceiling	Ilaka level planning workshop at district head quarter, Sectoral planning committee meeting, IPC meeting, DDC executive body meeting, DDC Council, Budget release			

*Planning timeline stated by LSGA; #many steps are delayed in reality- Budget ceiling in reality not sent till Jan, ** Actual planning timeline of FY 2066/67 as shared by Ministry Officials; source: field notes, meetings, 2009

In addition, to the confusion of planning time-frames between central and local government agencies, most of the donor agencies also have their own objectives, targets and planning processes. They too have their own time-frames for planning and do not fund projects emerging from a demand-based planning system at VDC/municipality or district-level. The notion of local budget support by donors following a robust and agreed local planning process is not in place. The LGCDP is in part a response to this.

Because of all these different approaches to planning, the selection of projects at Illaka level to be forwarded to the district is also haphazard and uncoordinated.

Coordination functions of local bodies

Although the local bodies have the mandate to coordinate the activities of donors and line agencies, this has not happened. The line ministries do not follow the LSGA/R and the local bodies do not have the authority to enforce the LSGA/R. Similarly, I/NGOs and projects mainly work through direct connections with groups and local people and rarely have a policy to coordinate with the local bodies. If the VDC and DDC are sufficiently assertive, I/NGOs and projects as a minimum, notify them of their plans. However, it is very much informing the local bodies what they have decided rather than responding to demands articulated through a planning process from the citizens. A number of reasons have created this situation: the long period of conflict and the absence of elected local government and decent bottom-up planning processes de-motivated many actors and there is a lack of interest on the part of line agencies and projects to be coordinated. But even prior to the conflict there was little evidence of effective response by programmes and donors to the demands emerging from the local planning process and there is a lack of interest on the part of line agencies and projects to be coordinated.

Programmes and projects confessed that they did not work through local bodies due to their belief that the local bodies would control the programme/project funds; there was suspicion regarding accountability of these bodies and their ability to respond with fairness and transparency to demands coming from citizens.

These problems will continue until an agreed decentralisation framework, obligating line agencies, donors and other providers to work through a local governance planning approach, is in place. LGCDP needs to formally recognise and respond actively to this problem through its work to achieve Outcome 3.

In the absence of coordination of planning processes, local bodies will continue to have to plan within the grant fund provided by the government and its own meagre resources. These are not substantial enough to respond to the demands identified through local planning. This implies that there will be very limited incentive for citizen engagement in a process that will from the start be prevented from being responsive to their demands.

6.7 Lessons from experience

Politicisation

In the absence of elected local government, politics becomes an important but less clear player in decision-making processes at the local level. As the experience of NSCFP shows, the role of politics cannot be underestimated or the importance attached by political parties, to key

decision-making structures. Each of these structures affords opportunities to influence decisions about resource allocation and targeting and therefore can influence the build up of vote banks (a similar experience has been documented in the construction sector and control over CBOs and user groups (Flanary pers.comm.). Understanding these dynamics and working with political parties to ensure fair access to resources will be a major challenge for citizen mobilisers.

Equally the experience from VBG/RDF shows that it is possible to build broad-based political support for a citizen engagement process through active engagement with political parties from the beginning of the process.

Additionally in Nepal, the line between NGOs and politics, as in many conflict contexts, is difficult to draw. Across the country, political 'labels' tend to be attached to national and local NGOs. Given the livelihoods and prestige that are derived from donor-funding, new tensions can now be seen to be emerging in a number of districts and VDCs. These come from the hostility of newly emerged political forces, that don't have their own long-established NGOs, to the older 'opposition' NGOs that qualify for funding. The PAF, for example, has experienced local hostility from Maoists because its 'five years of NGO activity' selection criterion is seen to favour UML- and Congress-affiliated organisations. A disagreement on the choice of the NGO for one VDC in Rasuwa district has paralysed work for two years.

Inclusion

All the programmes/projects considered in this study failed to address the problems of exclusion of extreme poor households and other excluded households in planning. Even establishing fora that appear to allow opportunities for these households to participate have failed to provide them with a real voice. Without an effective citizen mobilisation process that builds their capability to have a voice and at the same time provides support to secure their livelihoods (through social transfer type programmes), it is clear that these households will continue to be both excluded as well as self-exclude from decision-making citizen fora. In a recent study for DFID (2008) 'Citizens vision for the New Nepal' a key finding was that the poor and excluded place a particularly high value on the VDCs, highlighting the importance of getting this level of local governance right. In all cases, it was reported that people felt the powers of a VDC should be increased (ibid:13).

Moreover, the planning process may actually take place at a time when much of the active working population are not able to attend the discussions either because they have left for the winter to seek work in India or the Terai or because they are hard at work in their fields. During certain months, many people (particularly women and the poor) are harvesting from dawn until dusk and have little time in the day for participating in planning meetings.

Lack of disaggregated data too constrains substantive inclusion since the existing situation of women and men of different social groups and the status of different wards is unavailable for good planning.

The incomplete decentralisation process

The lack of coordinated planning and budgeting processes across line agencies, local bodies and development partners reflects the wider problem of an incomplete decentralisation process. The recent DFID study on transparency and accountability in construction describes the consequences of this inability to respond to demands from below (due to a lack of resources) resulting in higher levels of corrupt practice and discretionary use of powers (Flanary

pers.comm.) Until this is tackled at a higher political level it is going to be very difficult to get the necessary levels of coordination and response to a citizen-based planning process. The risks of failing to do this mean that the time invested by citizens, particularly poorer and excluded households, could be wasted in terms of the quantum of benefits they receive from the time expended in participatory processes. Where there has been some success in countering this problem of high transaction costs for low benefits is where transformational processes of mobilisation have focused on mobilising existing resources within a VDC and making sure they reach the people who need them, rather than hoping to transform a system that is largely unresponsive and is too difficult to influence from the level of an extreme poor household.

Building effective demand-side mechanisms: For effective demand-side processes, it is essential that the mechanisms for supporting voice and accountability in LGCDP are brought together in a coherent conceptual and operational framework. This includes the important role of information and ensuring that there are diverse channels through which information can be received by the poor and excluded in particular, to reduce the capture of income resources and opportunities. The organisational options for this are discussed in Chapter 7.

Mobilising the elites to build accountability: Mobilising the elites to support accountability mechanisms has two advantages: 1) their networks, ability to articulate, take risks and challenge can be used to support those who cannot; 2) building acceptance and understanding of the elites for inclusion of all citizens particularly the extreme poor and excluded is an important part of beginning to change mindsets and the basis for decision-making and resource allocation.

Moving from tools for accountability to mechanisms for accountability: Public audit, public hearing and citizen charters are effective tools for social accountability but remain tools unless citizens understand their function, use them and see some response from their use. e.g. the public audit guideline published by the government is focused on financial audit and does not capture other processes. This needs to be amended to include audit practices for process as well as finance.

Mechanisms are necessary to investigate allegations of malpractice and enforce sanctions where complaints and concerns are backed by evidence. For citizens to believe that contractors or community groups are being scrutinised, and held to account, transparent enforcement processes are key.

Building capability for accountability: The role of the citizen mobiliser to support the formation of effective accountability mechanisms will be critical. They will also need to support the extreme poor and excluded to be able to access these mechanisms and also provide follow-up support to ensure redress where there is a grievance. Development of innovative approaches to social accountability will be supported by the LG(V)AF but the local focal point for any such initiatives should be with the citizen mobiliser. Building knowledge and understanding amongst citizens on the services they should expect from service providers will be part of the role of the citizen mobiliser and will form an important basis to the active use of the citizen charter. The institutional mechanisms for this are described in Chapter 7.

Chapter 7: Recommendations for Citizen Mobilisation in LGCDP

In this chapter we bring the experience from this review together to propose an approach to citizen mobilisation for LGCDP. We make a series of recommendations aimed at enabling LGCDP to build for effective citizen engagement. These recommendations cover the form of citizen mobilisation to be put in place; the approaches to disadvantaged household identification; the type of mobilisation approaches necessary for working with the extreme poor and excluded; accountability mechanisms; the community structures for engagement with a local body planning process; and the management structure necessary for LGCDP to deliver on citizen engagement, including monitoring and learning processes.

7.1 Harmonising around LGCDP's framework

But first, we believe it is necessary for MLD and the Development Partners (DPs) to address the issue of the interdependence between the three components of LGCDP and the need for better harmonisation of the efforts related to each of these components (Figure 2.1, Chapter 2). LGCDP is a major opportunity to address inequitable development (a key cause of the 11 year insurgency in Nepal) but there is a huge risk of exacerbating conditions for conflict if the three outcomes are not addressed effectively. Outcome 1 builds voice and demand but Outcomes 2 and 3 must provide the response and the enabling environment for this voice.

No matter how well it is conceptualised and implemented, the citizen mobilisation process designed to achieve Outcome 1 will not lead to the achievement of LGCDP's goal of contributing towards poverty reduction in Nepal nor its vision of building peoples' capacity and confidence to actively participate in their own governance, unless Outcomes 2 and 3 are also delivered. Indeed, the review team feels that unless local governments are enabled to respond effectively through Component 2, the demand created by citizen mobilisation, will only lead to increased frustration with government on the part of ordinary citizens and greater likelihood of violent conflict over perceived injustice in the allocation of public resources and lack of transparency and effectiveness in their use. Yet it is also clear that local governments on their own do not have the resources or technical capacity needed to respond to the full range of citizen demand. Local body efforts must be coordinated with those of the line ministries and this in turn, depends on policy action at the central level through Component 3 of LGCDP.

At present there does not appear to be the kind of common vision and shared understanding for LGCDP implementation that is needed to ensure the three critical, interdependent components are delivered and can begin supporting each other. There exists a lack of consistency and linkage between outputs, no clear sequencing of key activities and links, ambiguity and contradictions between programme document, strategies, guidelines and the M&E framework. The team has observed serious inconsistencies and contradictions between different guidelines and core documents that have been prepared. Many definitions, procedures and criteria for prioritisation and decision making, remain ambiguous. MLD, officials within MLD and DPs have different visions of what LGCDP should be and these surface in the inconsistencies between documents. Unless MLD and the DPs take the core decisions about which vision is to prevail and undertake to harmonise the various guiding

documents, successful implementation of LGCDP, including effective citizen mobilisation, will be a challenge.

Although LGCDP is a programme and not a project and therefore it should be part of the core business of the MLD, currently the Output Managers responsible for specific outputs hold this responsibility in addition to their usual workload. This creates a problem of full-time work around the components of LGCDP.

The team has the following specific suggestions (Table 7.1) for the incorporation of citizen engagement in the other outputs of the LGCDP.

Table 7.1 Incorporating citizen engagement across LGCDP

Outcome and output	Citizen engagement suggestion
Outcome 2	
Output 3: Fiscal system for local government	Develop incentives through MCPM for districts that demonstrate effective coordination and response to citizen-based planning
Output 4: Capacity development for local government	Link citizen mobilisation capacity development to capacity strategy for LGCDP; ensure reflected in capacity development grants
Output 5: Local government service delivery processes	Pilot sector conditional grants, social protection & citizen mobilisation in same districts and VDCs
Outcome 3	
Output 6: Policy framework for decentralisation	Priority to ensuring coordination of planning and budgeting processes for line agencies, local government Development Partners to respond to citizen-based planning processes
Output 7: Capacity of central govt & national NGO enhanced	Capacity building strategy for national-level (GO/NGO) based on understanding of citizen mobilisation (demand) policy implications

Recommendation 1:

For LGCDP to be able to achieve its outcomes it requires both the DPs and MLD to have clarity regarding the vision of the programme, to recognise and address inconsistencies in the different elements of ongoing work and to ensure effective coordination between its three components/outcomes (refer Figure 2.1 in Chapter 2 and Table 7.1).

To facilitate this process the study team recommends the establishment of a core MLD team structured around LGDCP's three components. It is expected that these staff should remain in post for the duration of LGCDP.

7.2 What is citizen mobilisation in LGCDP?

This review of experience of mobilisation approaches provides the basis for defining what citizen mobilisation for engagement in citizen-centred local governance means within the LGCDP. It includes the following dimensions:

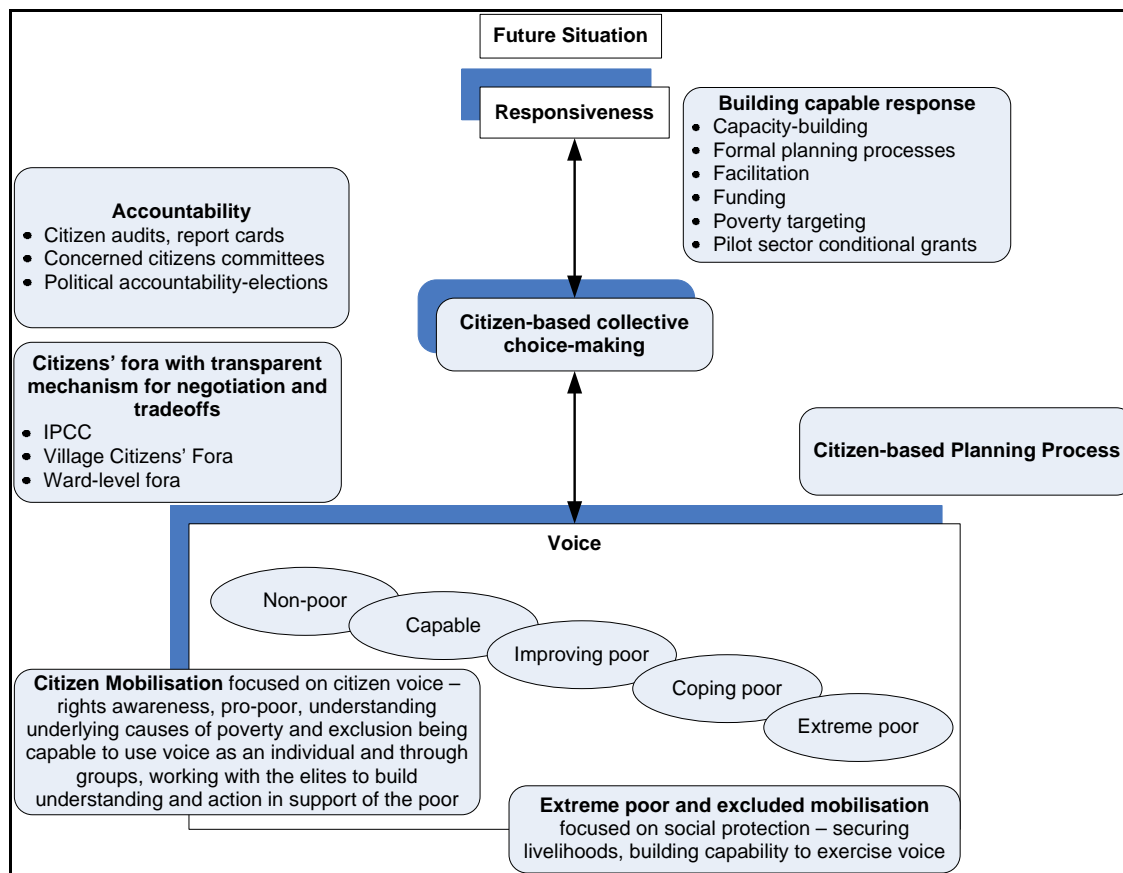
- Promoting citizenship by enabling all, including poor and excluded women and men, to have more influence on local affairs, with representation of their interests in local institutions (both local bodies and community groups) and decision-making.
- Developing the capacity of poor and excluded citizens to understand and claim their rights.
- Developing the capability of all Nepalis to become active and responsible citizens: to think in terms of public goods as well as private goods, to bargain and negotiate with others, to prioritise within hard budget constraints and to be able to accept compromise.
- Promoting gender and social equity in the representation of interests and allocation of resources in local institutions and decision-making.

Figure 7.1 illustrates the future scenario under LGCDP reflecting these principles. We have called the mechanism for doing this "the **citizen-based engagement process**" which links the ability to use voice to express demands to responsive and accountable delivery systems developed through local government capacity-building (Outcome 2 of LGCDP). In the pilot districts for sector conditional grants this will include demonstrated improved responsiveness to citizen-based planning from the already devolved sectors: health, education and agriculture.

Accountability includes institutional oversight, checks and balances internal to the state and external mechanisms - non-state actors who can hold power-holders to account (O'Donnell cited in Goetz and Gaventa, 2001: 10). The crucial characteristics of this engagement process are that it:

- works within existing political spaces but at the same time opens up possibilities for new relationships and allows for a diversity of voices;
- focuses on all citizens through deliberate inclusion of the socially excluded e.g. women, extreme poor, landless, disadvantaged groups;
- uses modified planning tools to identify the excluded and understand the barriers to their involvement;
- provides a focus around which to build capacity for voice and agency;
- provides a strong incentive for service providers to reform and be more responsive;
- places funding sources (the VDC/municipality block grants and other resources) linked to transparent and fair processes for negotiation, decision-making and allocation close to citizens;
- links citizen and small group demands to the broader planning process through the provision of citizen fora at ward, VDC/municipality levels;
- provides mechanisms for oversight, with clearly defined and agreed procedures for accountability, transparency and citizen-based monitoring (using techniques such as report cards documenting efficiency and effectiveness of service delivery);
- recognises that beneath the apparently simple flow of decisions and resource allocations lies a set of power relations which determines access to and control over public resources. Simply imposing a new planning regime without attention to power relations will not change the structural relationships which keep women and men of different social identities in poverty or exclusion.

Figure 7.1 Linking voice to responsiveness to accountability: future scenario – citizen-based engagement in LGCDP



7.3 Recommendations for delivering citizen engagement in LGCDP

7.3.1 Citizen mobilisation process

□ Transformational mobilisation processes for citizen engagement

To achieve Outcome 1, LGCDP should support a mobilisation process that delivers wider citizen engagement through a transformational approach by building citizen capacity to engage, on an on-going basis, with local bodies both formally and informally.

In the context of LGCDP, citizen mobilisation is intended to strengthen the ability of citizens to i) influence the resource allocation decisions of local bodies and ii) hold local bodies – and line agencies -- accountable for the use of public funds. Using PRA and other tools, a good citizen mobiliser will be able to facilitate negotiation between diverse members of a community – women and men, the well off and powerful and the poor and those with low social status – to establish their individual and collective priorities for the use of public funds. S/he will also be able to organise the citizens and the community to choose and apply appropriate types of social accountability mechanisms (such as public audit, report cards, expenditure tracking, etc.) to ensure that those funds are used properly.

This process should enable all citizens – including poor and excluded women and men of different social groups – to actively participate in their own governance by:

- Exercising greater influence over local body decision-making and the planning and allocation of Block Grants, other public funds and resources
- Oversight of the use of these funds and the quality and inclusiveness of public services

LGCDP will not achieve its stated outcomes if the transformational approach is not followed and if a more transactional model is taken. Transactional approaches do not tackle issues of inequality or empowerment directly and are more likely to sustain structures of inequality and heighten the sense of injustice felt amongst many.

Recommendation 2: LGCDP develops and supports a programme of citizen engagement based on a transformational mobilisation approach.

□ What's in a name - citizen or social mobilisation?

As discussed above, a very different kind of mobilisation is necessary for effective citizen-state engagement envisioned in LGCDP. To distinguish this new practice from what we have commonly known as “social mobilisation” we have used the term "citizen mobilisation". Rather than being responsible primarily for forming groups for savings and credit or sectoral inputs, "Citizen Mobilisers" are responsible for bringing information to citizens and communities on resources and services available from the state and building the capabilities of citizens, as individuals and in groups, to claim those services and resources. Importantly, it focuses on the citizen and her/his ability to claim as an individual directly through the planning process and also through groups.

The tasks to be performed by citizen mobilisers are different from the tasks that social mobilisers have performed in the past. In the LGCDP process there is less focus on improving individual access to private goods through group participation and more emphasis on influencing the allocation of public funds and services and oversight of the use of these funds.

Recommendation 3: The mobilisers supported by LGCDP should be called 'citizen mobilisers'. The proposed social mobilisation guidelines for LGCDP should be named the 'citizen mobilisation' guidelines to underline the change in process and focus required for LGCDP.

□ Citizen mobiliser tasks

The broad responsibilities of the citizen mobiliser should be:

- Facilitating engagement of all citizens, in particular the poor and excluded, with the local bodies in planning and resource allocation
- Supporting citizen oversight of public resources through facilitating their involvement in the choice and application of social accountability mechanisms
- Locating citizens outside groups to solicit their priorities
- In-depth mentoring and coaching for extreme poor and excluded households to prepare them to join the wider ward and VDC-processes

Citizen mobilisers will be responsible for building the capabilities of individuals and groups to engage with local government, identify, negotiate and prioritise between different demands within a fixed budget envelope. They will facilitate a fair and transparent process that allows citizens to make choices between different needs that can be met with the limited resources and services available. This will include facilitation to support citizens to contribute their own

resources to the production of public goods (through donations of labour, time etc) and through negotiation with other sources of funds, services, assets available either within the VDC/municipality or outside. The citizen mobiliser will work with community facilitators to ensure the necessary breadth and depth of engagement. Citizen mobilisers will not be primarily responsible for forming groups (unless to facilitate participation of non-group members) nor for providing sectoral or livelihood inputs (such as savings and credit). Appendix 2a presents a detailed outline of the types of tasks foreseen. Appendix 2b details the tasks of the community facilitator.

It is envisaged that it will be necessary to appoint one citizen mobiliser for each VDC with a number of local community facilitators engaged, depending on the population and existing level of mobilisation in the VDC. For example, in a highly mobilised VDC where most households are members of groups, the level of additional facilitation necessary to build effective collective voice will be lower than in VDCs where there have been fewer previous efforts at mobilisation. However, in all situations the citizen mobiliser's responsibilities are focused on building citizen capability to engage either in public decision-making processes directly and/or through groups.

Recommendation 4: implementation of a programme of citizen mobilisation with personnel skilled in citizen-engagement techniques and not only in group formation and saving and credit. These personnel are to be known as citizen mobilisers and will require development of capacity for citizen mobilisation.

❑ **Required competencies and skills of citizen mobilisers and community facilitators**

It will be necessary to have recruitment and selection processes of citizen mobilisers that focus on aptitude, attitude and understanding of transformational approaches to mobilisation combined with an understanding of extreme poverty and exclusion. Capacity building programmes need to be commissioned by LGCDP that can train citizen mobilisers in the transformational mobilisation approaches as well as focusing on the skills and competencies required to work with the extreme poor and excluded. These programmes must draw on national and international good practice and experience.

It will be necessary to put in place a careful recruitment process that selects individuals who, where possible, have experience in transformational approaches (e.g. REFLECT, power analyses, appreciative inquiry) and also have an understanding of government's processes and have the ability to inform and motivate community women and men to access public services. Training for all citizen mobilisers will need to include building skills in REFLECT type of processes, in the use of Underlying Causes of Poverty analysis tools/process, and building capacity to understand and use a range of social accountability mechanisms.

The study experience indicates that a combination of an external citizen mobiliser (external to the VDC but not to the district) combined with community facilitators (local to the VDC) selected for their ability to work with extreme poor as well as with other citizens is the most effective way of operating.

Great care must be taken in the recruitment, training and accompaniment of the people who will be responsible for facilitating the process of strengthening 'voice' and accountability'.²³ Very particular skills and good local reputations will be needed for this work to succeed among diverse interest groups. Performance criteria must rapidly be put in place to ensure that those contracted are continuously motivated to develop and exercise those skills as they go about their work.

Recommendation 5: it will be necessary to establish recruitment and selection processes that focus on aptitude, attitude and understanding of transformational approaches to mobilisation combined with an understanding of extreme poverty and exclusion (see Recommendation 14). Capacity development programmes need to be developed by the LGCDP that can train citizen mobilisers in the transformational mobilisation approaches.

❑ Numbers and salary of citizen mobilisers and community facilitators

The salary range (based on the review of salaries from this study) of the citizen mobiliser could be from Rs 8,000 to Rs. 10,000 dependent on number of groups, distance, geographic conditions and level of empowerment of the community women and men.

It is recommended that one citizen mobiliser is recruited for each VDC but in some cases where the levels of mobilisation are low, or the VDC is large and communities scattered and remote, additional support may be required.

It is expected that a minimum of one community facilitator will provide support to each Ward Citizens' Forum. However, in VDCs/Municipalities where travel is easier between wards, it may be possible to reduce this number. They will be volunteers, paid an honorarium and fees on a daily basis when they facilitate particular events (e.g. REFLECT classes).

Recommendation 6: A final decision on numbers and payment for citizen mobilisers and community facilitators should be taken after MLD and the Development Partners agree on the approach to mobilisation to be taken by LGCDP and the management structure for it.

❑ Taking the citizen mobilisation process to scale

Building a citizen engagement process around transformational mobilisation approaches combining elements of REFLECT and other empowerment approaches does mean that careful consideration must be given to the extent to which there are service providers and existing experience of these approaches.

Systematic and complete information is limited about the coverage of REFLECT and other such centres run by different programme/projects over the last few decades. By 2005, REFLECT centres had been organised in 56 districts²⁴. Information²⁵ from CARE, GTZ and LWF indicates that almost 2300 centres covering 57,000 people in around 400 VDCs has been run in recent years (Table 7.2).

²³ The people involved include the community facilitators, VDC-level 'citizen mobilisers', district and regional service providers as well as those on the national-level body

²⁴ The Forum for Popular Education, Education Network Nepal, an organised network of popular educators, working since 1998 has attempted to organise human and institutional resources and has mapped which districts have REFLECT and similar centres. This was published in 2062 (in 2005)

²⁵ Unfortunately despite follow-up we have not yet received detailed information from Action Aid.

Table 7.2 REFLECT, Popular Education Centres coverage across Nepal

(excluding detailed information of Action Aid)

No of Districts	58
No of VDCs/ Municipalities	510 VDCs ²⁶ (344 (CARE), 52 (LWF), 114 (PASRA/GTZ) 8 Municipalities
No of Centres	2271 (CARE: 751; LWF: 1219, PLC/GTZ: 301)
No of beneficiaries	52,800 (CARE: 23,124 including 19,699 women and 2,204 men; LWF: 23,074; PLC/PASRA: 6602 including 2681 Dalit women, 133 Dalit men; 79 Janajati men and 1881 Janajati women)

There are many other innovative Non-Formal Education (NFE) programmes being implemented but the government does not have a proper mechanism of monitoring, consolidating and sharing this valuable learning and innovation taking place in the country. Because of the lack of a systematic database and coordination, it is difficult to assess the progress made in the field of NFE. It does appear that there is significant experience in these approaches with trained facilitators and service providers that could be drawn on by LGCDP.

Given the difficulty of going to scale in a short period of time and the need to test and learn, LGCDP could follow transformational citizen mobilisation approaches in those VDCs/municipalities where the sector conditional grant pilots and social protection pilots are to be developed, build best practice learning from these approaches and build a training programme with service providers to support training of transformational citizen mobilisers.

The existing social mobilisers cannot take on the role of citizen mobilisers without going through a selection process and a training/reorientation programme. If they are asked to take on this responsibility without proper capacity building, the mobilisation efforts will be distorted. Their skills as citizen mobilisers to facilitate engagement of citizens in the VDC/municipality planning processes need to be built up before they can take on this responsibility. This would require a separate process of reselection and retraining with its own time schedule. MLD and the DP partners will need to discuss this and identify ways of addressing the issue of the existing mobilisers.

Recommendation 7: the decision as to whether LGCDP phases in the citizen mobilisation approach or goes to scale as quickly as possible must be taken at a joint meeting between MLD and its development partners.

There are two approaches to be followed: 1) a piloting process for new forms of citizen mobilisation in the same pilot districts and VDCs as the other LGCDP pilots; 2) for other VDCs/municipalities not covered under these pilots but supported under the top-up grants a programme of selection, recruitment and training of citizen mobilisers to which existing social mobilisers can apply.

In either case, a major capacity building/training effort will be required.

²⁶ VDC level Information not available of REFLECT centres in the 56 districts identified in the 2005 publication

❑ Moving towards harmonisation of mobilisation practice and people working with citizen fora

The study shows that there are many overlapping processes of disadvantaged household mapping and for group formation which cause confusion and high transactions costs for villagers. But the process of citizen mobilisation for LGCDP cannot replace the work of the many on-going group-based efforts. While there is duplication, existing groups cannot be asked to merge into one as all are in their own process cycle and many have formed strong collective identities. The duplication can be reduced through agreements between donors and government to support a common framework of working through the Ward Citizen and Village Citizen Fora and through the Integrated Planning and Coordination Committee (IPCC). This provides linkage between the groups and citizens and provides a means to pool all public resources within VDCs and municipalities and jointly plan for their best use.

Thus citizens and the various groups that operate in each ward will be helped to select representatives to participate in a Ward Citizens Forum (WCF). In addition to other responsibilities, the WCFs will select representatives for the Village Citizens' Forum, will develop a list of the development priorities of that ward and negotiate those priorities with the lists of the other wards to articulate the overall priorities of the VDC.

This should reduce the need to form new groups and provide alternative options of service provision to specific interest groups or in sectors.

Recommendation 8: Citizen mobilisation must facilitate establishment of representative and inclusive Ward and Village Citizen Forums which will negotiate, prioritise and coordinate according to needs of the women and men in the wards. New groups should not be organised where existing groups can be built upon.

7.4 Recommendations for disadvantaged household identification

❑ Harmonisation of terminology

Harmonisation of terminology is required for referring to the disadvantaged households, the extreme poor and excluded, as well as agreement on the number of categories into which households will be classified and terms to be used for them (eg, ultra poor, poor, medium poor, etc.). The study team suggests the use of the term "disadvantaged" while referring to households with the explicit understanding that this term encompasses both economic and social disadvantage and "poor and excluded" while referring to people. Local bodies must have a list of the disadvantaged households and who the poor and excluded are in their population, based on GoN's definition, and the key causes of their exclusion.

Recommendation 9: The study team suggests the term 'disadvantaged households' be explicitly defined as households that are either poor or that have suffered exclusion on the basis of their social identity. MLD and DPs must decide on the number of categories (extreme poor, poor, etc) into which households will be classified and their names. We suggest four categories for differentiating the poor. It will also be necessary for GoN to develop a more robust and measurable set of indicators for economic deprivation.

❑ Standardised approach to well-being ranking indicators

A simple and independently facilitated process for identifying disadvantaged households should be developed by LGCDP that can operate across all VDCs/municipalities. This should be based on the process to be piloted in the LGCDP social protection pilots.

Food sufficiency as a basic indicator for differentiation has created confusion in Nepal but it is widely accepted. To improve the objectivity of the identification, **Proxy Means Testing (PMT)** indicators (e.g. type of roof, kind of lighting) from the NLSS should be added to the well-being ranking criteria. This would assist in improving the objectivity and consistency of the process across different locations and its replicability when applied by different practitioners.

Other clear economic (e.g. dependence on wage labour, no or minimal landholding, etc.) and social criteria (caste/ethnicity, women-headed households with no outside earners), which cannot be interpreted differently by different people, need to be established. This may reduce manipulation of the results.

The suggested approach in the social protection pilot (a combination of a few robust indicators, community-based identification process, and verification through use of PMTs) once tested, should be adopted as the basis for identifying and targeting disadvantaged households.

Recommendation 10: The major change that needs to be introduced through LGCDP in agreement with MLD and the donors is to move from depending solely on a community based well-being ranking process to a process based on a combination of Proxy Means Testing and a community-based process. The ranking should be undertaken by service providers experienced in these approaches. LGCDP also needs to institute a verification process that will assure fairness in the targeting process.

❑ Well-being ranking process

Well-being ranking must be done by the VDC through a qualified NGO or a private sector service provider, collaborating with the citizen mobiliser. The IPCC should monitor the process. Funds for such work may be arranged through capacity building grants for the first year. Updating in following years must be done by the citizen mobiliser and the Ward and Village Citizens' Fora. For this process to have credibility it is essential that careful verification is conducted²⁷. This data will need to be updated periodically (the social protection pilot design suggests every 2 years) as households move in and out of poverty. It must be stored in the local bodies in a manner that is easily accessible such as on a computer or in registers which can be referred to easily. All households should be informed about the final result of the ranking. No other organisation must do this basic well-being ranking. They may do additional rankings according to their own requirements.

Verification processes need to be robust and independent to ensure that there is fair targeting.

²⁷ In Bangladesh, programmes focused on targeting the extreme poor use a range of verification measures to reduce the incidence of mis-targeting. These include: 1) outsourced independent verification of those identified through participatory well-being assessments; 2) programme staff members involved in door-to-door visits of a 5% sample of those who have been identified through the targeting process for physical observation of household conditions; 3) spot-checks by senior programme staff; and 4) combinations of independent verification and community-based verification including the involvement of locally elected representatives (this is similar to the IPCC suggestion). Investment in verification processes are costly but considered to be important to reduce the capture of programme benefits by the non-target population and reducing the incidence of local-level conflicts due to poor processes (Shiree, 2008; Hodson, 2008).

Recommendation 11: a simple independently facilitated process for identifying disadvantaged households should be developed by LGCDP that can operate across all VDCs/municipalities. This should be based on the process to be piloted in the LGCDP social protection pilots.

❑ Gender Analysis

A separate process should be carried out in each VDC to develop a profile of existing patterns of gender differentiated labour, access and control. Adding gender related variables to a household level analysis has created confusion at the field level (as discussed in section 4.2). Hence it would be best to do a separate exercise to map the existing gender power relations²⁸ in the district/VDC/municipality. There can be 2-3 participatory exercises with 10-15 women and men who should be facilitated by the citizen mobiliser to identify who does the labour (e.g. in agriculture, household management, different programmes/projects activities), who has access to available resources in the district (e.g. primary/secondary school, college education, health services, skill training, information regarding public offices/processes, and employment opportunities) and who makes the decisions regarding issues which affect people's lives (e.g. in wards/VDCs/municipalities/district, line agency offices, in programmes/projects being implemented in districts, in schools, hospitals, etc). What discriminatory practices exist and how they affect women and men needs to be identified too. Caste/ethnicity differences in the relative powers and status of women will emerge from this process. A visual map can be used for discussion with both men and women in selected wards. Gender has been part of the discourse for many years in Nepal and there is existing capacity to do such analysis.

Recommendation 12: Gender analysis provides gender disaggregated evidence of the existing reality of women and men's differential opportunities, ability to access these opportunities, ability to influence public decisions and the barriers which constrain them. This information about existing pattern of gender-differentiated labour, access and control must become part of the database/profile that the VDC/Municipality/District maintains.

❑ VDC/DDC/Municipality authorised standard database/profile of existing power centres, poverty pockets and disadvantaged households.

A database clearly identifying poverty pockets and disadvantaged households should be developed and maintained by the VDC/DDC/Municipality. This should cover the basic criteria of economic and social poverty, using Proxy Means testing²⁹ criteria (such as house roof, lighting, cycles, cooking stoves, dependency ratio, education levels etc) which can be included as criteria in the participatory process of well-being ranking. The information collected should be used to help prioritise investments in the annual planning process. Projects and programmes will need to work from this basic database in choosing their work areas and target households – though they may add additional targeting criteria according to their project mandate.

²⁸ A gender profile of labour, access and decision making patterns identifies, in a gender disaggregated manner, who puts in the labour (i.e. who does the work), who has access to resources and who makes the decisions (i.e. who has the power to control) regarding identified variables.

²⁹ Proxy Means Testing Indicators can be extracted from the NLSS as they develop models of what characteristics are associated with what levels of poverty. Some objective criteria like roof top or consumer goods jointly with the participatory Well-being ranking may reduce the chances of manipulation

Recommendation 13: A VDC/DDC/Municipality authorised standard database of existing power centres, poverty pockets, disadvantaged households and gender differentiated profiles, should be developed. These data can be used by all (local bodies, line agencies, programmes/projects) as the basis for intervention design and for monitoring change. Mapping of disadvantaged households must be linked to addressing underlying causes of poverty and not remain an activity to just target available resources. Local bodies and line agencies should use the poverty pockets information to select their work area and plan accordingly. The disadvantaged household rankings should provide them guidance on targeting their interventions. Programmes/projects must use the information generated from the different processes to develop appropriate sector/issue-based services.

7.5 Recommendations for working with the extreme poor and excluded

□ Employing mobilisers with appropriate behaviours, attitudes and skills

LGCDP through its procurement and training support processes will need to ensure that it employs service providers and mobilisers who understand and have the competencies to work with extreme poor households. As BRAC found when it started its new programme of working with the extreme poor, attitudes and behaviours that had been acceptable for working with those who are already capable, were totally inappropriate and unhelpful in working with the extreme poor. CARE Nepal also has had a similar experience during the implementation of their new approach to understanding poverty and the forms of mobilisation required. This has necessitated not only new skills and understanding amongst the staff but also organisational changes to support the more flexible and responsive approaches necessary in the field (field notes 2008-9).

Recommendation 14: LGCDP has to develop procurement criteria that select service providers with aptitude and experience/ability to work with the extreme poor and excluded. LGCDP will support the development of training programmes focusing on the particular skills and competencies required to work with the extreme poor and excluded. These capacity development programmes must draw on national and international good practice and experience.

□ Citizen Mobilisers' responsibilities to bring in the voices of those not in groups - the poor and non-poor

In cases where there are no existing groups, where households are not members of groups (either because they are from the non-poor and do not need to be part of groups to access services and assets or they are the extreme poor and excluded who often self-exclude or have been left out of groups) the citizen mobiliser will need to ensure there is representation of their voices in decision-making fora.

For the extreme poor and excluded, the following process is envisaged. A transition period to build the capability of extreme poor and excluded to have a voice in decision-making, through support to social protection, inclusion in REFLECT-type processes etc. Mobilisation focuses on coaching the individual to build his or her capability, livelihood security and confidence to engage with the wider opportunities offered through local government, government and NGO-

provided services. Experience from LWF and from PAF indicates the importance of supporting the extreme poor and excluded households to form their own peer groups where possible.

“Although separate groups may appear to increase their exclusion, the respondents (in Yangsila) felt that in the beginning there has to be this separation to ensure that the livelihood security issues and confidence of the very poor are first dealt with prior to their being able to enter these ‘mainstream’ groups. In separate groups, the extreme poor and disadvantaged can talk about their situations, can begin to understand the underlying causes and can begin to build their confidence to speak out in other fora.”
(field notes 2009)

During this transition period the following approaches could be used:

- Formation of loose networks of extreme poor and excluded to ensure direct representation of their voices in Ward Citizen Forums; and their active presence in local-level meetings to discuss priorities.
- For those who cannot attend such meetings to use others to represent their voices including the citizen mobiliser
- Build champions of the extreme poor and excluded to raise voices on their behalf.

For the non-poor, the citizen mobiliser will have the difficult task of encouraging them to attend planning processes and decision-fora while at the same time ensuring they do not dominate the process. This will require particular sets of skills and competencies including clear procedures for negotiation and prioritisation. Building their interest in becoming champions of the extreme poor is one tactic through which to moderate their voices in decision-making processes. Using specific tools for planning and prioritisation will also reduce chances of elite domination.

Recommendation 15: LGCDP will need to develop a transition process and provide guidance on use of tools/processes that support the extreme poor and excluded to have access to decision-making fora and allow their voices to be heard. The non-poor should also be encouraged to participate in, but not to dominate the community planning and decision making processes.

❑ Support to graduation out of extreme poverty

The options for social protection through conditional and unconditional cash transfers are already defined in the social protection pilot design document. This review has reinforced the findings of this design, in particular its support to both conditional and unconditional cash transfers. However, the design is unclear about the mechanisms for providing support to extreme poor and excluded households, presuming that the social transfers will themselves be sufficient to overcome social and economic exclusion.

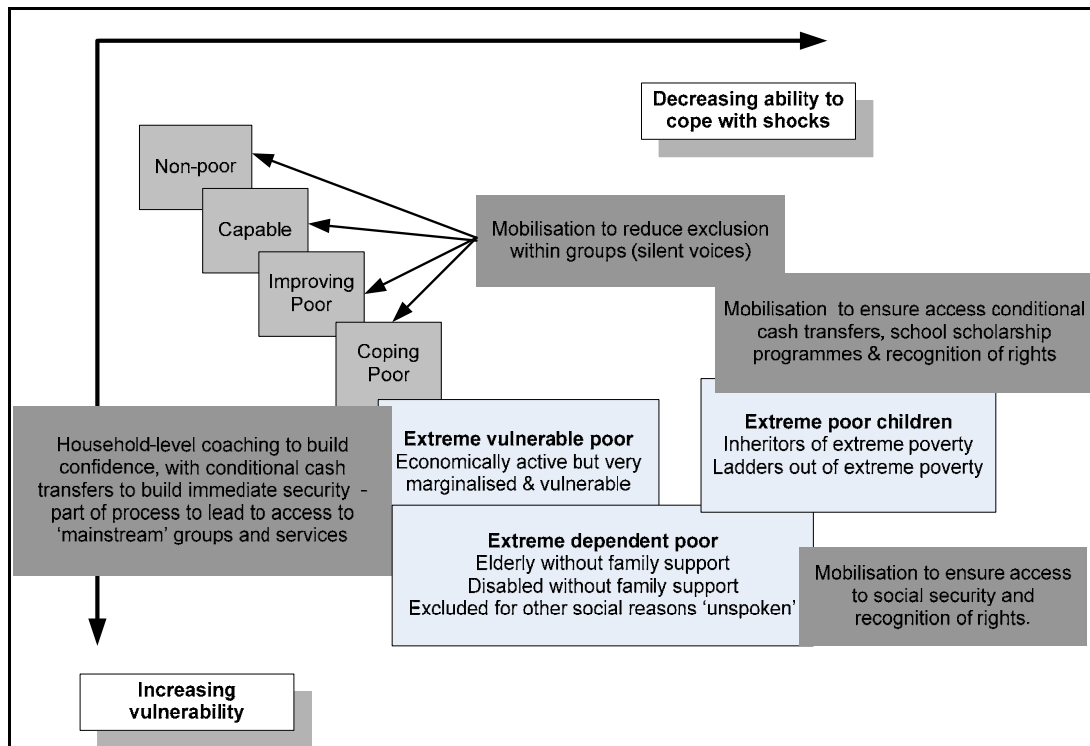
This review found that different forms of mobilisation are required to ensure graduation of households from extreme poverty and exclusion. Figure 7.2 characterises the forms of mobilisation required to ensure graduation of households from extreme forms of poverty and exclusion. It illustrates the different forms mobilisation might take when working across the whole continuum of poverty and exclusion, and links the social transfer elements of LGCDP to the citizen engagement processes:

1. *the extreme dependent poor with limited family support and social networks and no physical ability to labour* need mobilisation support focused on ensuring their access to social security programmes and recognition of these rights in the VDC/municipality

2. *the extreme vulnerable poor and extreme dependent poor* need household-level coaching to build confidence and overcome some of the psycho-social barriers together with conditional (for those families with primary school-age children) and unconditional cash transfers to build immediate security as part of a process to join mainstream groups and gain access to services.
3. *the children of the extreme poor dependent and vulnerable* need mobilisation to ensure access to conditional cash transfers that provide school scholarships and access to health services. This also includes a level of facilitation to build the social contract with the state (VDCs/municipalities) to accept their responsibilities to meet the rights of these children
4. *mainstream groups* need processes that make governance more transparent, reduce exclusion within groups and allow voices of the more excluded to be heard
5. *across the whole* there is a need to ensure that the fora for citizen engagement (both formal and informal) allow representation and fair access to all

Recommendation 16: LGCDP in its social protections pilots supports development of graduation mechanisms through its citizen mobilisation support. Citizen mobilisation must target particular forms of support to households experiencing different levels of poverty and exclusion. This experience will be used as the basis for learning to extend this range of mobilisation approaches to reach the extreme poor and excluded groups across Nepal.

Figure 7.2 Poverty, exclusion and mobilisation in LGCDP



7.6 Recommendations for citizen engagement in planning processes

In order to ensure that the investments citizens make in engaging with LGCDP-supported planning processes is worthwhile, several changes to the existing planning system need to be put in place, to ensure there is a greater level of responsiveness to citizen demand.

❑ **Coordinate planning for line agency, local bodies and development partners**

Chapter 6 described the problems of lack of coordination between planning, decision-making processes and budget allocations for line agencies, local bodies and development partners. This is a serious impediment to achieving LGCDP's outcomes and in particular is a major risk to stability. If the citizen mobilisation process is effective in creating citizen demand for services and funds and understanding of what should be available but the response is weak, this potentially could cause high levels of dissatisfaction and societal tensions at the local-level.

LGCDP provides an important opportunity to resolve these bureaucratic problems, and with 15 development partners provides another level of opportunity to move to harmonisation of their planning processes to respond to a local citizen-centred planning approach.

The study team has suggested a timetable for coordination (Table 7.3).

Recommendation 17: MLD and its development partners must take this risk very seriously and take action to address the inconsistencies and contradictions between the existing planning processes. Priority must be given to LGCDP Outcome 3 to ensure that at the national-level the full implications are understood of not being able to respond effectively to a citizen-centred local governance process.

The devolved sectors must be used as an opportunity to coordinate planning of service provision.

❑ **Demonstrating the effectiveness of decentralised local governance and citizen engagement**

LGCDP is designed around three outcomes representing changes in the enabling environment for decentralisation, building responsive service provision, and effective citizen-based demand, where the voices of the extreme poor and excluded are supported through social protection mechanisms. To this end, it is important that LGCDP through its pilot programmes for sectoral conditional grants, social protection pilots and citizen mobilisation, demonstrates the value of linking these three outcomes.

Recommendation 18: the team recommends that the sector conditional grant and social protection pilots and citizen mobilisation are all developed in the same districts and VDCs, to ensure the greatest complementarity and learning between these approaches and to ensure that LGCDP can demonstrate the linking of its three outcomes. In particular this will demonstrate the response of basic services (agriculture, health and education) to citizen-based demand processes.

❑ **Incentives for coordination at district-level**

LGCDP recognises the need for effective decentralisation and has a proposed sector conditional grant pilot to test out a responsive service delivery mechanism for the already devolved sectors (agriculture, health and education). This pilot is clearly very important for improving the response to the demands from a citizen-based planning process but is insufficient to increase the incentives to districts to actively seek out coordination.

Recommendation 19: In addition to the pilot the study team recommends that LGCDP develop incentives for districts to demonstrate effective coordination and response to citizen-based planning through the Minimum Conditions and Performance Measures (MCPM) the system of rewards and sanctions established by MLD for local bodies.

❑ **Identification of local areas of disadvantage: VDC/municipality poverty pocket identification and power mapping**

VDC/municipality poverty pocket identification and power-mapping provide an important entry-point to VDC planning and part of the process of identification of areas of particular disadvantage. This is a process which examines the existing centres of power, identifies the poverty pockets and visualises how this affects different members of the community³⁰. By doing this with political representatives, local leaders, community organisations, School Management Committees, Health Facility Management Committees, representative organisations (women, Dalit, Janajati groups etc), the existing power dynamics and the requirements of different settlements/wards will be identified in a participatory process. It will ensure a more objective identification of the inequalities in the VDC/Municipality/DDC. In the process, with skilful facilitation, participants will gain new insights through reflecting on existing social and political practices.

The power map analysis can be done with the members of the Village Citizens' Forum and the Integrated Planning and Coordination Committee³¹ as it has representatives from political parties, civil society, NGOs/CBOs and government. This power analysis will need to be documented, displayed and disseminated. Local bodies', especially the VDCs', capacity to manage such databases will need to be enhanced. Any new initiative in the VDC/DDC/Municipality should use the database for targeting households and wards for intervention.

“Power analysis” is an important starting point to examine how social and political networks and alliances between powerful actors are fostered and used to gain access to public resources and benefits which elites not only enjoy themselves but also use to build their own support base in the village.

Gradually the VDC and the projects/programmes delivering services will need to develop programming strategies and implementation approaches which address the core issues of disadvantage. Processes for providing services to the identified disadvantaged households need to be strengthened. The LDO, VDC secretary and the Executive Secretary of Municipalities in the local bodies need to play a strong role in coordinating service delivery to the identified households.

³⁰ Refer to Box 3.7 for an explanation of the objective and process of identifying power centres and poverty pockets

³¹ The VDC Grant Operational Manual of 2065 (2008) has established that an Integrated Planning Committee (IPC) will be formed with representation of the VDC secretary, other government bodies, women and excluded groups. The Gender Equality and Social Inclusion strategy of LGCDP/MLD has expanded this IPC to be the Integrated Planning and Coordination Committee (IPCC) with the responsibility to support planning, implementation and monitoring. The IPCC will be a representative body.

Recommendation 20: all citizen mobilisers initiate work in a VDC with power-mapping and identification of poverty pockets, to support the VDC in its planning, in effective targeting of its block grant funds, and ensuring that services reach the areas and people most in need of them.

❑ **Long-term planning linked to annual planning for all resources and services for the VDC/Municipality**

Although LGCDP's main mandate is to support the effective inclusion of citizens in the planning process for allocation of the VDC block grant, the practice of integrated planning for all resources and services should be strengthened. This will encourage greater participation from all citizens, especially the poor and the excluded, if planning also considers access to local resources (forests, water-bodies, land etc). This integrated planning could be incorporated into VDCs and municipalities' five year periodic plans based on different sectors encompassing local issues and local potentials, using a range of information. This should be a perspective plan (rather than a detailed action plan) as the VDC/municipality context is dynamic. These longer-term plans can provide the basis for detailed annual planning of sectoral agencies and donors for that particular VDC/municipality.

Recommendation 21: the planning process should be broadened to include planning across all resources and services in the VDC. The planning process should include 5 year perspective plans as well as annual plans.

❑ **Removing ambiguities in the VDC Grant Operation Manual 2008**

Table 6.3 in Chapter 6 has highlighted a number of critical issues and areas of ambiguity that will hinder development of meaningful citizen engagement in the local planning process. All of these issues require urgent resolution.

- i) In particular, the VDC Grant Operation Manual states that representatives of NGOs, community organisations, women's organisations, Indigenous People's Organisations and School Management Committees on the Integrated Planning Committee will be 'nominated by the VDC'. This undermines the legitimacy of the group representatives who should be selected by their constituent groups and not nominated by the VDC. This will also help to reduce some of the potential for politicisation around this representation process. The (draft) VDC guidelines must be written in clear and simple language, not in heavily bureaucratic language. They must be able to be easily understood locally.

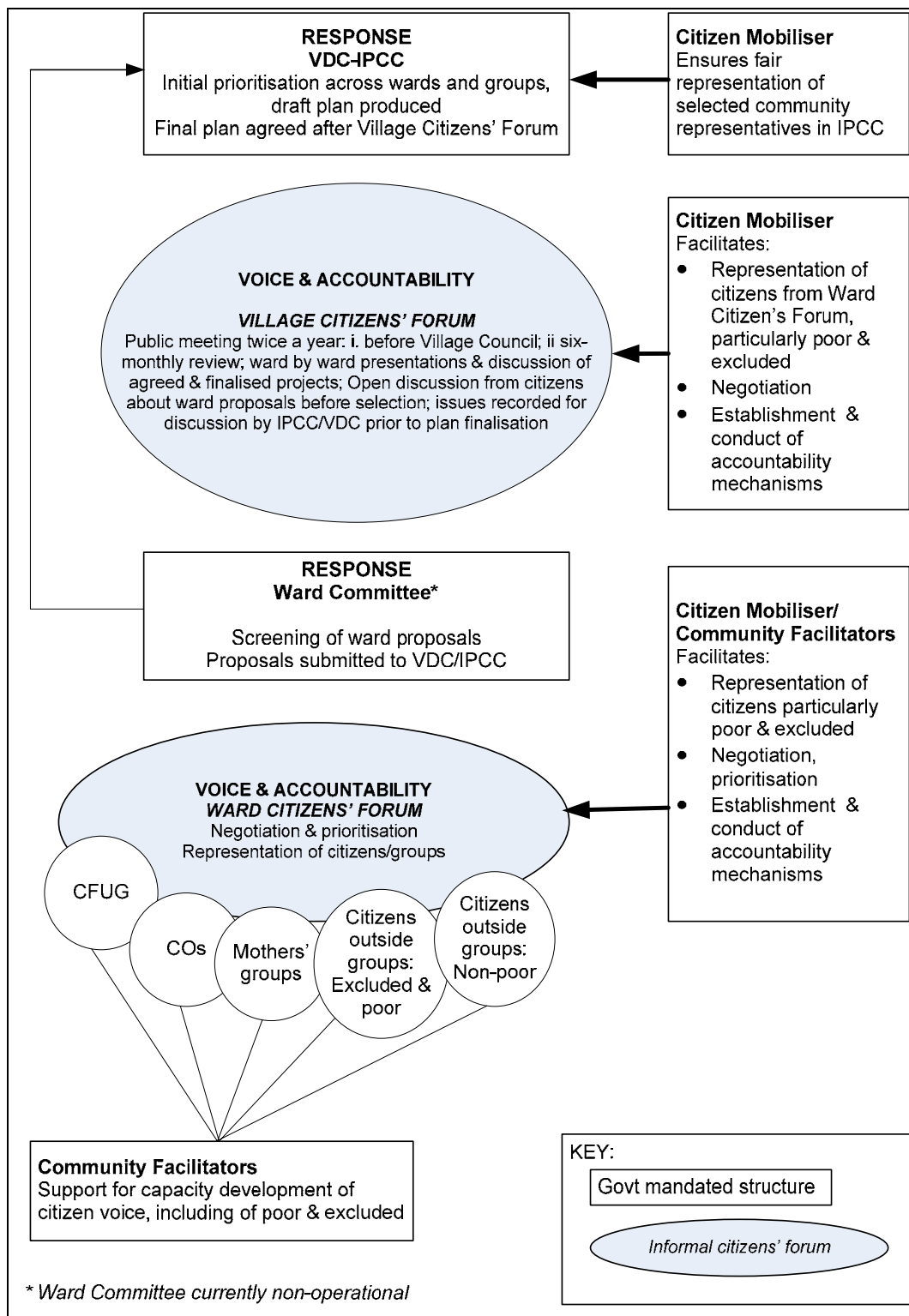
Recommendation 22: the MLD and its development partners should review the VDC Grant Operation Manual 2008 using Table 6.3 to ensure that the Manual is consistent with the spirit and the outcomes of LGCDP which focus on citizen-based governance systems where there is separation of the demand-side from the response. It is essential that this separation is retained and that communities and citizens can have confidence in their representatives and in the processes of local governance. The language must be easy and clear to common citizens.

❑ **Linkages of citizens with local body decision-making**

Chapter 6 analyses the current weak citizen engagement in local planning and decision-making. The non-functional state of ward committees in particular means that there is limited

opportunity for citizens to participate in local governance. The study team has identified two main areas for citizen engagement - the Ward Citizen Forum (already agreed to by MLD and incorporated in the GESI strategy) and the Village Citizen Forum which are necessary to ensure that citizens, including women and men of different social groups, have a mechanism to be able to recognise issues, negotiate, prioritise and discuss amongst themselves how to influence local bodies and ensure that they also respond to the voices of the poor and excluded.

Figure 7.3 Citizen mobilisation interface with local planning



Recommendation 23: the Village/Municipality Citizen Forum and the Ward Citizen Forum are mandated in all manuals, guidelines and strategies as the main fora for citizen engagement with the local body planning process.

❑ Social accountability mechanisms

The review has found uneven experience in the effective implementation of social accountability mechanisms and very little evidence of accountability for decision-making in the VDC over allocation of VDC block grants. It is envisaged that the LG(V)AF should have prime responsibility for supporting accountability mechanisms; the implementation and support to these mechanisms will need to be anchored with the citizen mobiliser.

In order to increase local government (VDC/municipality, IPCC) accountability to citizens, citizens should be informed of all major decisions taken by these committees. The decisions should be posted on a notice board in each of the nine ward offices or WCF office within one week of the decisions. In those VDCs/municipalities where there are no provisions of a ward office, the notice could also be posted on community halls or tea shops, etc., areas which are centrally located in the ward and where the movement of people is high. The notice board would also contain information on different line agencies and projects e.g., agriculture, health facilities, CBOs, NGOs, that are working in the VDC/municipality. The citizen mobiliser will need to ensure that notices are maintained and updated and those who cannot read or access such information are informed using alternative mediums. Furthermore, the income and expenditure of the VDC should be made public and posted on the notice board on a biannual basis. The VDC level decisions must also be disseminated through community facilitators.

A simple process focused guideline should be published explaining the use of accountability mechanisms including public hearing and citizen charters; it should be widely circulated through the citizen mobilisers to inform and build understanding with citizens of the purpose and function of accountability and the means through which to hold service providers to account.

Recommendation 24: Tools like notice boards, public audit, gender audit, public hearing³², citizen's scorecard and other accountability tools will be used for monitoring with representation of IPCC members in the monitoring teams. Public hearing with full participation of community women and men will be organised in VDCs/municipalities.

The citizen mobiliser will support Village Citizens' Forum, IPCC and Ward Citizens' Forums in VDCs and Municipalities to use these social accountability mechanisms, protect their right to information and build citizen's capacity to ensure service providers' accountability.

³² These public hearings and audits will not be ritualistic. Conscious efforts will be made by the Ward and Village Citizens' Forum to ensure that these accountability mechanisms are genuinely implemented with active participation of women, poor and the excluded.

Table 7.3 Proposed planning timeline

Months/ Activities	July	August	Sept	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	March	April	May	June	
	Asar-Shrawan	Shrawan-Bhado	Bhado-Asoj	Asoj-Kartik	Kartik-Mangsir	Mangsir-Poush	Poush-Magh	Magh-Phalgun	Phalgun-Chaitra	Chaitra-Baisakh	Baisakh-Jestha	Jestha-Asar	
Proposed process and time line for VDC		Settlement, ward level: review and issue collection, interactions, meetings, project identification, prioritisation					VDC Council	Forward to illaka and district level					
Proposed process and time line of DDC planning					Planning workshop, Directives, Budget Ceiling identified and sent		Illaka, level Committee meeting		District council				
Proposed Citizen Mobiliser's Task	Review previous year's progress/lessons, HH level education on planning process, budget ceiling, policy provisions and WCF, Organise poor and excluded.				Facilitate, settlement and ward level prioritisation, Documentation, Facilitate/educate the community representatives (Ward Citizen Forum, IPCC, networks, etc) to negotiate or bargain the community interest, especially of, poor, women and other disadvantaged.				Support citizens' to follow-up process of implementation of development activities of, facilitate public auditing (project wise) and public hearing (once a year in different theme), Documentation of progress and lessons learned, support IPCC in monitoring, Facilitate/educate the community representatives (Ward Citizen Forum, IPCC, networks, etc) to negotiate or bargain the community interest, especially of, poor, women and other disadvantaged.				

Note: The actual process may differ from one location to another. Therefore, the above time line is presented on the basis of general timeline followed by local bodies. source: discussions with MLD officials and field based interviews, 2008-09.

7.7 Recommendations for the management structure to support citizen mobilisation

The management structure required to support this programme of citizen mobilisation across the whole of Nepal requires several elements:

- A national organising structure
- Regional service providers
- District service providers
- VDC/Municipality-level citizen mobilisers and ward-level community facilitators

Appendix 3 outlines the roles of the different organisations involved in oversight and implementation of a citizen mobilisation process and the procurement processes to be followed. Figure 7.4 illustrates the proposed structure.

The organisational **options** this study considered for delivery of citizen mobilisation are:

1. Placing all the demand-side responsibilities for citizen engagement (voice and accountability) with the Local Governance Voice and Accountability Facility
2. Contracting the citizen mobilisation process to an international NGO

3. Contracting the citizen mobilisation process to a consortia of international and national NGOs
4. Placing the citizen mobilisation process with local government- DDC/VDC/Municipalities
5. Contracting the citizen mobilisation process to the local government associations

Appendix 4 compares these different options in terms of their advantages and disadvantages. From this assessment as well as from experience, the study team considers that the only option LGCDP should consider is option 1: the Local Governance Voice and Accountability Facility.

The programme document suggests that the accountability aspects of LGCDP should be placed in a separate structure - the Local Governance Accountability Facility. This has been further developed in a recent draft concept note. The study team notes that the current conceptualisation of the LGAF separates two key elements of the demand-side process: voice and accountability. Our experience indicates that these two elements need to be built together and hence we recommend that responsibility for both of them be placed in a single structure: the Local Governance **Voice and Accountability** Facility (LGVAF). This facility should have oversight for the whole demand-side including an active learning structure that can inform policy decision-making.

The structure, governance, and funding arrangements can only be decided once it is agreed that the LGAF should be expanded to the LGVAF and the organisation designed accordingly.

Recommendation 25: the decision as to which management structures LGCDP uses to manage the citizen's mobilisation process must be undertaken through a full consultation between MLD and the development partners for LGCDP. This study can be used as the basis for this decision.

However, the study team **strongly recommends** the first option - the Local Governance Voice and Accountability Facility which critically brings together the two key elements of building effective demand - voice and accountability. This will allow a strong demand-side process that can respond to the diversity of contexts across Nepal, ensure lessons are learned, provide advocacy support at the national-level and ensure the independence of the processes put in place. For implementation of citizen mobilisation, a consortia of international and national NGOs working through local service providers (at regional and district-levels) would deliver the most effective processes, geographical coverage and responsiveness to diversity.

The team **recommends** that MLD and the development partners reconsider the scope and mandate of the LGAF and expand it to become LGVAF to include voice and accountability.

□ Funding arrangements

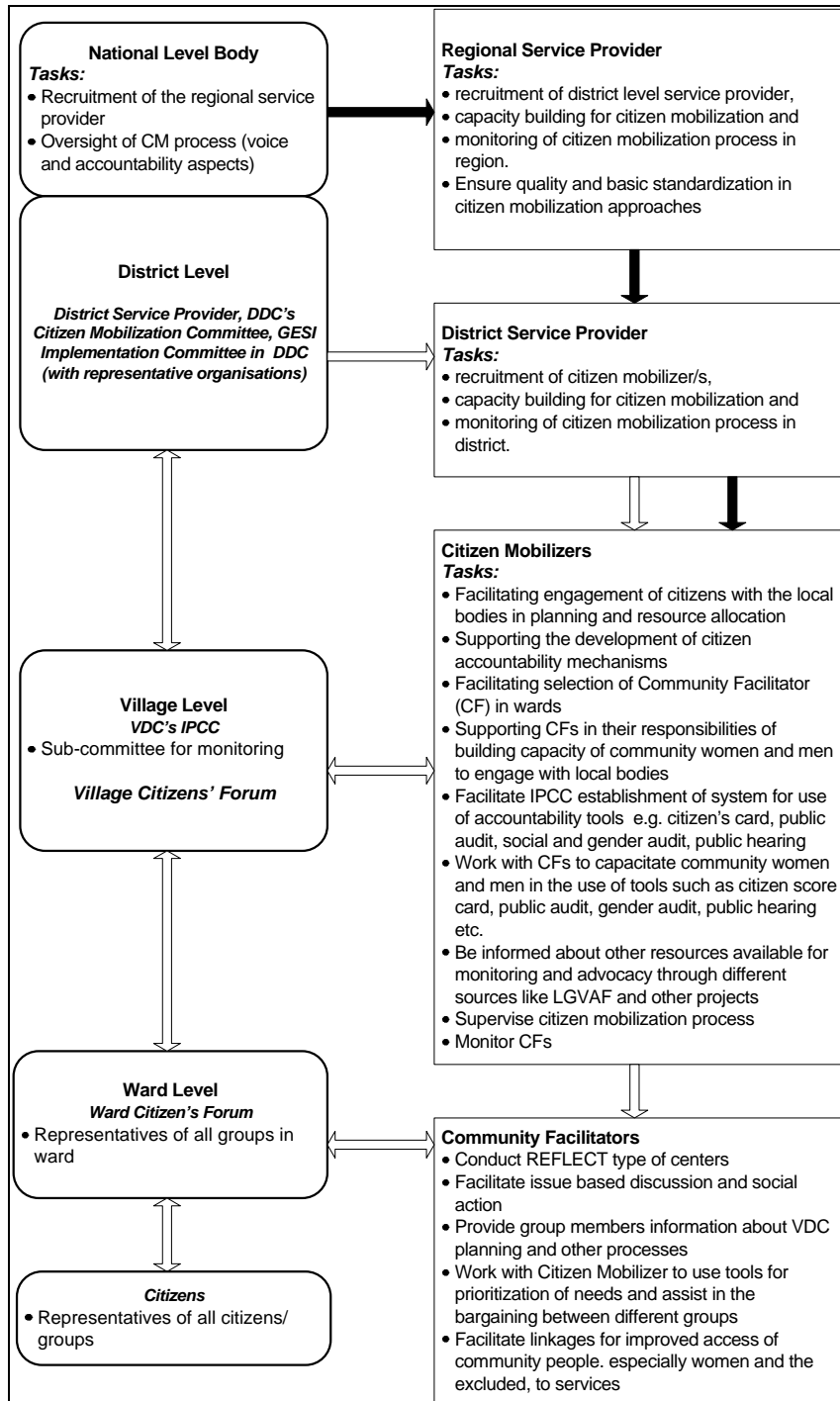
If it is agreed that the LGAF should take on this additional mandate, the study team suggests that a basket fund for citizen mobilisation be established. This will be part of a larger fund managed by the LGVAF. This will be maintained in the national-level body with contributions of GoN, local resources and donors.

The national-level body will contract Regional Service Providers who will be responsible for overall quality assurance and monitoring of the citizen engagement process, contracting the the District Service Providers and providing capacity building to them. The District Service Provider will receive funds to manage the citizen mobilisation process, recruit the citizen mobilisers, train them and for monitoring. The community facilitators will also be trained by the District Service Provider.

Recommendation 26: a basket fund with contributions from GoN and donors will be established. This fund will be used for the accountability, citizen mobilisation (voice) and information activities to be implemented by various service providers. LGVAF or the national body with the responsibility to manage the whole citizen mobilisation process will be responsible for using the fund. Part of this fund will be used to contract the regional and district service providers and pay the citizen mobilisers.

Figure 7.4 Recommended management structure for citizen mobilisation (CM) service provider and citizen mobiliser arrangements

(Black arrow shows fund flow)



❑ Monitoring and learning

Currently a monitoring framework for LGCDP is under development. Appendix 5 provides detail on the monitoring and reporting structures necessary for the citizen mobilisation in LGCDP. An important element of this are the learning processes that need to be put in place to ensure that LGCDP can as a whole learn from the citizen mobilisation processes and the demand-side activities, use this learning to influence policies and to inform wider audiences. The LG(V)AF plays a key role in these learning processes and in particular the support of innovative practices in both accountability and voice. Learning from innovation across diverse contexts in Nepal will be necessary to ensure that LGCDP can adapt its practices accordingly.

Recommendation 27: the proposed LGVAF should play the central role in ensuring that the learning mechanisms are in place; the experience and evidence from the demand-side processes are captured and shared widely; the learning is used to inform policy change and programmatic activity. As part of this learning process it should be responsible for supporting innovation in both accountability and voice processes and learning from these innovations to spread good practice across the whole programme.

❑ Accountability mechanisms of citizen mobilisation

As emphasised in the LGCDP document, downward accountability mechanisms for citizen mobilisation are required. Citizen mobilisers (CM) and community facilitators (CF) will be directly accountable to the people of the VDCs. Using an appreciative process, Ward Citizens' Fora and the Village Citizens' Forum (with IPCC) will hold an **annual public hearing** on the performance of the CM and the CFs based on their job description in wards and VDCs respectively. The District Service Provider will be accountable to the Regional Service Provider and to the Citizen Mobilisation Committee in the DDC which will organise an **annual public hearing**. The Regional Service Provider will be accountable primarily to district stakeholders and to the national level body which will conduct **performance evaluation** of the Regional Service Provider with systematic feedback of the DDC Citizen Mobilisation Committee and the District Service Provider (Appendix 6).

Recommendation 28: mechanisms for annual public hearing at VDC and district levels must be established which would allow citizens and citizens' fora to assess the performance of the community facilitator, community mobiliser and the district service provider. The performance of the regional service provider must be evaluated by the national body/LGVAF with district stakeholders.

While all the recommendations made are significant and need to be implemented, Appendix 7 identifies which ones must be acted upon immediately for the citizen mobilisation process to proceed.

7.8 Conclusions

To summarise and conclude, for LGCDP to deliver its intended outcomes, careful work needs to be done to ensure that each outcome is linked and commissioned studies, designs of new structures, guidelines, strategies and the M&E Framework, complement and support each other.

The Major Findings from the Study: Based on an analysis of LGCDP's concept of social mobilisation and the GSEA framework of the three domains, the key finding of the review is that for real transformational or structural change to deliver the LGCDP outcomes, action is needed eventually in all the three domains of assets and services, voice and rules of the game. There are relatively few programmes that use transformational approaches to mobilisation but those that do, provide some clear guidance on the types of approach LGCDP should follow. These approaches provide evidence of change in voice of poor and excluded people and their capability to demand and have in addition addressed some of the problems of resistance by the advantaged to specific focus on the excluded.

Key findings:

- Importance of **transformational approaches** to citizen mobilisation
- **Disadvantaged household identification:** community-based process creates good ownership, but there are many contradictory and conflicting indicators leading to mis-targeting, confusion and suspicion
- **Extreme poor** are left out or self-exclude from almost all mobilisation processes
- There are no **graduation mechanisms** to support movement of extreme poor and excluded into mainstream development opportunities
- Few programmes **link citizens/groups with local body processes;** group processes are generally isolated and parallel and are failing to support the development of citizen-state relationships.

LGCDP's Outcome 1 is: 'Increased voice and capability of citizens to influence the decisions and processes that affect their lives through a citizen-centred, responsive and accountable local governance system' (Project Doc). In order to achieve this outcome, LGCDP requires transformational mobilisation processes that build peoples' capacity and confidence - particularly for poor and excluded - to actively participate in their own governance.

LGCDP through responsive citizen engagement provides a potential peace mechanism and is a major opportunity to address inequitable development, a key cause of conflict in Nepal. But currently there is a risk of exacerbating conditions for conflict, unless some significant changes are put in place. Outcome 1 through a citizen mobilisation process will build voice and demand but for this to be effective there must be adequate, timely and fair response to this demand, which requires that Outcomes 2 and 3 must provide the response and enabling environment to meet this demand.

To summarise, to achieve LGCDP Outcome 1 the following needs to be in place:

- Transformational approaches to citizen mobilisation
- Accountability of citizen mobilisers to citizens/community
- Separation of the citizen mobilisation process from local government
- Social protection processes linked to citizen engagement processes (at first in the Social Protection Pilot)
- A combined community-based and proxy-means test approach to disadvantaged household identification with independent verification
- Planning for the whole VDC to include services, resources and the block grants
- Consistent, coherent processes, guidelines, strategies based on a common and agreed understanding about citizen-centred local governance that delivers responsive services to citizens
- A combined accountability and voice structure at national-level with operational implementation of citizen mobilisation through a consortia of INGOs and NGOs

The immediate next steps to take citizen mobilisation forward are:

Next Steps:

1. **Hold a decision meeting** of MLD and Donor Partners to review study recommendations and finalise the citizen mobilisation approach.
2. **Prepare a timeline** to sequence the critical tasks that need to be done in order to enable citizen participation in the coming year's planning process and effective response by local bodies. These would include, amongst others: i. Agreement and finalisation of Citizen Mobilisation Guidelines, ii. Design and establishment of LGVAF, iii. Recruitment of citizen mobilisation organisations, and iv. Development of national citizen mobilisation capacity building programme.
3. **Establish a Task Force** to review the terms of reference, key documents, various guidelines and strategies (both developed and planned like the Citizen Mobilisation Guidelines, Planning and Decision-making Guidelines, VDC Grant Operational Manual, Gender Equality and Social Inclusion Strategy and Capacity Building Strategy), the Social Protection Pilot, Sectoral Grant pilot, the policy reform efforts, MCPM and other relevant regulations to remove inconsistencies and clarify ambiguities. These inconsistencies create confusion which allows work to continue as usual and enables elite capture.

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Appendix 1: Range of services offered by programmes/projects

Programme/Project	Services
Transactional	
LISP, REDA/ Helvetas	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Group capacity/governance: Group Formation, Support initiatives of communities for social organisation, participatory governance ▪ Sectoral/technical: improved access to services and markets ▪ Economic (including asset transfers): income generation, skill development; Technical Training, Technology Transfer; Revolving fund to the poor and excluded for joint ginger farming; Credit
MEDEP/UNDP	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Group capacity/governance: Social/community mobilisation ▪ Sectoral/technical: Training of Emerging Entrepreneurs, Training of Growing Entrepreneurs, Training of Potential Entrepreneurs, Training of Starting Entrepreneurs training, Credit Capital from Agriculture Development Bank, Skill development training through different organisations, Technology transfer, Market linkage; Capacity Building: Various kinds of trainings based on resource potential, market demand and their needs. to develop the capacity of targeted families, potential and existing micro entrepreneurs, the district level partners and Business Development Service Providing Organisations (BDSPOs); building partner capacity for replication ▪ Economic (including asset transfers): Entrepreneurship skill, Technical skill, appropriate technology, Micro credit, Marketing; develop linkages with large domestic companies in order to market the local products like soap, incense, baskets, clay items (pottery), honey, fruit jams, squash and mushroom, produced by MEDEP entrepreneurs.
PAF/WB	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Group capacity/governance: Group formation, management and federation; capacity strengthening through training and social mobilisation; proposal writing skills. ▪ Sectoral/technical: Financial and technical support in community infrastructure development. ▪ Economic (including asset transfers): Revolving fund; skill development training; savings and credit; enterprise development activities – off farm and on farm. <p><i>The transformational potential of PAF may depend on the quality of NGOs that get the contract in a particular district and the history of the group. If the group is empowered from before, it can do a lot with the resources brought in by PAF e.g.as in Doti</i></p>
RWSS/WB	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Group capacity/governance: Training for user's committee; Group formation of women and social mobilisation; Institutional Development: Community Mobilisation and Organisation, Complementary Non-formal Education; ▪ Sectoral/technical: Construction of Drinking Water; Toilet construction and awareness on health and hygiene; Water Supply and Sanitation; Health, Hygiene and Sanitation ▪ Economic (including asset transfers): Economic Development Through WTSS: Rs 10,000 for IGA; skill training, saving and credit utilisation of Time Saved in productive uses; Skilled Based Training to Women Group

Programme/Project	Services
Transformational and Transactional	
DACA/UNICEF	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Group capacity/governance: leadership training, improvement of maternal and neonatal health; Improve psychosocial and cognitive development of children; promotion of quality basic education; Protection of children and women against violence, exploitation and abuse; greater access to safe drinking water and sanitation; ▪ Sectoral/technical: skill building training, para-legal training, health awareness & causes of malnutrition training, awareness of HIV/AIDs, care for pregnant women, early child development classes, including regular weighing of new born babies, improved management of common childhood illnesses, environment cleanliness activities ▪ Economic (including asset transfers): Saving and credit activities (loan used for agriculture, business, education, health, animal keeping etc.). Generally DACA/UNICEF does not form its own groups but works with saving credit groups formed by other organisations ▪ Social- rights-based: Facilitate discussion and awareness activities on children and women issues, including conflicts between husband and wife and family conflicts, support women in making marriage certificate, birth certificate and support formation of child clubs/network
DLGSP/UNDP	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Group capacity/governance: Group formation and management/leadership development, accounts keeping training; institution building at VDC level (CMC), linkage and networking with VDC and local service providers, support in decision making and communication; capacity building (articulating their voice and concerns in group) of poor women and disadvantaged; ▪ Sectoral/technical: support for technology transfer, study tour to inter and intra districts, skill development training - short term and long term; ▪ Economic (including asset transfer): group-based savings and credit activities, credit for starting enterprises ; seed grant fund for constructing small infrastructure projects, support from small income generation activities, - lease scheme, goats exchange programmeme, etc. - for extreme-poor ▪ Social – rights based: Training and orientation on domestic violence, caste and gender based discrimination to COs and CMC members, allocation of certain percentage of seed grant to the poor; provision of equity in credit delivery and small infrastructure projects
Gender Equality and Empowerment of Women /DWD/ADB	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Group capacity/governance: group formation and management support, basic training on group management, leadership, institution-building ▪ Sectoral/technical: various skill development training and support in IG activities, small infrastructure support like drinking water, community building, etc., ▪ Economic (including asset transfers): savings and credit; income generation activities; poor-only savings and credit cooperatives ▪ Social- rights-based: community-based literacy courses and the establishment of local-level women's centres to build group activities; awareness raising campaign on issues related to gender, caste, and ethnicity including community-based training of both women and men; Legal awareness and legal support through lawyers, Committee for Alternative dispute resolution.
Livelihood Forestry Programme/DFID	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Group capacity/governance: Formation of group and governance strengthening, training on group management, organisation development, accounts keeping, gender relation and good governance.; support in preparing constitution and operational plan of CFUG, support for VDC and district level CFUG federation; conduct wellbeing ranking; linkage development with VDC; ▪ Sectoral/technical: Sustainable Forest Management; Access to natural resources (public land, forest etc.); Technology transfer, NTFP based IG and enterprise development support, developing Local Resource Persons, ▪ Economic (including asset transfers): Promoting NTFP and forest based enterprise; Savings and credit, revolving fund; IGA training; ▪ Social- rights-based: Reaching out to the un-reached; Special Package to ultra poor and excluded (land, employment, subsidy etc) and leasing land to ultra poor; ensuring the establishment of rights of ultra poor on state resources; mediation of conflicts on resources; work against domestic violence;

Programme/Project	Services
NSCFP/SDC	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Group capacity/governance: formation of group, group governance coaching particularly about responsibilities towards the extreme poor and the entitlements of extreme poor to forest product access, land on lease, use of CFUG funds to support ▪ Sectoral/technical: Forest resources promotion; Sustainable Forest Management; ▪ Economic (including asset transfers): Livelihood Improvement Programme (LIP); livestock related programme; ▪ Social- rights-based: Rights based capacity building; inclusion of poor and excluded on executive committee; FREELIFEH2O followed; targeting of extreme poor households and support through Livelihood Improvement Programme
Reaching the Disadvantaged/ DWD/ADB	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Group capacity/governance: 7 days basic training, ▪ Sectoral/technical: Household Development Plan; ▪ Economic (including asset transfers): Household Development Grant: Conditional cash transfer to identify ultra-poor HH of \$350/hh/- under three headings: opportunity costs: 25%; basic needs: 25% and for livelihoods: 50%; Savings and credit; Training allowance; ▪ Social- rights-based: 3 days women -men co-development training;
RUPP/UNDP	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Group capacity/governance: Organise and support Tole Lane Organisations (TLO); information flow about business and community enterprises; raising the livelihood options of the members; supports the planning and implementation of development activities at tole-lane level. ▪ Sectoral/technical: Training on market management, enterprise development and special kind of skill development, technology transfer for business development; entrepreneurship development training. ▪ Economic (including asset transfers): Credit capital, seed grant for community infrastructure project and other development activities, income generating training, credit for enterprises,. ▪ Social- rights-based: Support to improve the bargaining power of TLO; orientation on gender and pro-poor concerns in project selection and implementation
PARHI/UNFPA	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Sectoral/technical: Reproductive Health Action plan development by analogous groups, Quality of Care (COPE/PLA), RH literacy class, Uterine Prolapse correction and prevention, Mobile Reproductive Health Unit (MORHU) Activities ▪ Social- rights-based: Scholarships to Dalit girls, Media advocacy, UN 1325 and GBV trainings
PASRA	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Group capacity/governance: Basic group norms and regulations set; Group governance strengthened, Linkages with local bodies and service providers; Higher level organisations, federations formed (e.g. CMC, Cooperatives) under VDC; District level linkages established ▪ Economic (including asset transfers): Saving/Credit; Short-term IGAs; Long-term IGA activities and joint marketing; ▪ Social- rights-based: Participatory Learning centre (PLC)
RHDP/SDC	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Group capacity/governance: group management training; linkages with other agencies (inter SDC project, LILY, VDC, DDC, and other); reorganisation of mothers group; support in VDC-DDC level planning; promote good governance; conduct wellbeing ranking among mothers groups; networking among mothers' groups; ▪ Sectoral/technical: Training on maternal health; safer motherhood; a stretcher in each ward of 8 VDCs; arrangement of dress for FCHV and Traditional Birth Attendance; livestock support to P&E in Mother's group; support in toilet construction; ▪ Economic (including asset transfers): saving and credit, funds for FCHVs for IGA; emergency fund; matching fund for SP and SHP; livelihood training; goat rearing support to P&E; ▪ Social- rights-based: Continuous mentoring of Mother's group by local social mobiliser; emphasis on inclusion of Women, Dalit and Janajati in development activities; interest free loan to sick

Programme/Project	Services
SAGUN/CARE	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Group capacity/governance: Organisation and strengthening of CFUG; governance education to women, Dalit and Janajati, development of Local Resource Person (LRP); support in handover of CFUG; support in public hearing and public auditing; support in drafting constitution and operational plan; assist rangers to record the inventory of the forest; support to develop system for participation, equity, transparency, social accountability and communication; conduct well being ranking, linkage and coordination with VDC, DFO and DDC; federation of LRP at district level; ▪ Sectoral/technical: Regular monitoring and follow-up support on the CFUG activities; development of LRP by providing them various technical and capacity development training; ▪ Economic (including asset transfers): Revolving fund, kitchen gardening; goat rearing ▪ Social- rights-based: Improving the access of excluded groups in forest product; ensuring the representation of Dalit, women and Janajati in the CFUG's executive committees; awareness building training on: rights of users; orientation about the provisions of constitution and operational plan; orientation on equity provisions; pricing of forest products; gender equity and equality training; support the women, Dalit, Janajati in accessing the CFUG resources; work against social ills; training to LRP on RBA;
HCBO/Sahakarya	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Group capacity/governance: capacity building training; literacy organisation management training; joint planning and monitoring, social and public auditing; ▪ Sectoral/technical: health services, weighing of children, iron tablets for women ▪ Economic (including asset transfers): Infrastructure development, material support for taking micro-enterprise, support for hauling construction material for women, additional allowance for pregnant and lactating women ▪ Social- rights-based: Awareness raising on health rights of women; right to health increased through collaboration with health facilities
Village level Development planning/NSCFP/SDC	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Group capacity/governance: capacity building of political party representatives and local social leaders, CBOs on planning process and techniques; information collection, group facilitation ▪ Sectoral/technical: Support to develop Strategic Plan of VDCs; Identify constraints and opportunities within the VDC and the areas where particular support is required ▪ Social- rights-based: Participation of poor and excluded in VDC planning through tole level meetings and representation in different thematic committees

Programme/Project	Services
Transformational	
Empowerment Education Programme/LWF	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Group capacity/governance: Group formation, trainings such as group management, organisational development, group mobilisation account keeping; strengthening of various committees, federating the COs at the VDC level; capacity building of VDC level CBOs in the areas of linkage, net working and service delivery to COs, documentation of activities and progress, training on planning process, good governance, public hearing, human rights and other RBAs. ▪ Sectoral/technical: Adult literacy, training for IGAs, IGA support to poor households ▪ Economic (including asset transfers): Revolving fund, leasing. ▪ Social- rights-based: Organisation of Reflect circle, Facilitate issue-based social action, facilitation of child rights through child clubs.
Marginalised Community Empowerment Project/MS Nepal	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Group capacity/governance: Group management training, gender, account keeping, proposal leadership, good governance etc ▪ Sectoral/technical: skill development training (bamboo chair making, ginger production, sewing and cutting, furniture training, bee-keeping, pig farming etc) ▪ Economic (including asset transfers): Micro credit support; ▪ Social- rights-based: Rights of Kumal, an indigenous group, promoted and claimed
SAKCHAM, CARE	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Group capacity/governance: Group Formation; Link with VDC and line agencies for budget and services; Building local capacity of CF and volunteers who are all local women through training on psycho-social, reflect, street drama, advocacy skills ▪ Sectoral/technical: Support on psycho-social and natural disaster; Training on basic concept of natural resource management (NRM); Support to members in case of disaster; ▪ Economic (including asset transfers): Saving and credit, IGA support of Rs 5000 /- each to two women; group livelihood improvement plan for the Poor, Vulnerable, Socially excluded (PVSE) women ,Skill training for IGA (vocational training, candle making, embroidery etc); PVSE members of Popular Education centre (PEC) provided loan for IGA through seed capital and saving generated ▪ Social- rights-based: Power map to identify power centre and poverty pockets with local leaders, weekly PEC (REFLECT) discussion; Support in campaigns (alcohol, cleanliness, corruption in school); Volunteer Campaigner for advocacy: 2/VDC, Street drama PSVE wellbeing: 2/VDC, CBPCSW: 2/VDC; Cooperative of saving and credit groups (planned)
SAMANTA/CARE	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Group capacity/governance: Identification of poverty groups and their capacity building; use of power map and resource map for identification of underlying cause of poverty (UCP) by organising meeting of poor, elite and rich; people's organisations are created at ward and VDC level which are used for advocacy and campaigns on Dalit and gender issues; ▪ Sectoral/technical: School enrolment; access to Dalit scholarship; sanitation education; ▪ Economic (including asset transfers): Saving/credit activities; Revolving fund, IGA support and IGA related activities include vocational training, trading, livestock, etc., based on class analysis; ▪ Social- rights-based: Power map is used to identify poverty pockets; weekly advocacy class, discussion and analysis of health, education issues; raise voice against gender and caste based discrimination and injustice; exploitation and dependency analysis to make the poor and excluded aware of their rights and organise them for campaign and movements; develop change agents to work in Dalit issues; identification of issues through Reflect circle; work against domestic violence and social ills;

Programme/Project	Services
Value-based Governance/ RDF/DANIDA	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Group capacity/governance: Sets up village development fund at VDC level; networking of COs; linkage with local and district level service providers; capacity enhancement of Village Development Forum (VDF) including VDC, political parties and local elite; organisation of governance circle to the women, Dalit and Janajati based on LSGA/R; support to VDC in planning process; organisation of monthly meeting on governance issues; organisation of public audit and public hearing of VDC projects selection and budget allocation; support in user's committee formation; formation of project wise monitoring committee; mobilises mothers' group against domestic violence and other social ills as also health, sanitation education; facilitate VDC in its development activities; lobby to the political parties to act according to the party manifesto. ▪ Social- rights-based: Focus on increasing participation of people in their own governance; the inclusion of poor and excluded voice in VDC planning; organisation of governance circle of poor and excluded; works in all type of issues related to health, environment, education, domestic violence, social discrimination, etc.
Under Privileged Children Association (UPCA), Action Aid	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Group capacity/governance: Group formation, capacity building, leadership training, support to network, accounts-keeping, savings and credit ▪ Social- rights-based: Reflection classes to bring up issues, Support in advocacy for citizenship, birth registration and marriage registration etc., Awareness activities in health, education, domestic violence and human right etc., School dress to needy students through women's umbrella organisation, facilitate in coordination with LAs, Municipality and DDC. Campaign, Research, Media advocacy, Capacity building, Physical services

Source: Field notes and programme/project document, 2008-09

Appendix 2: Tasks of citizen mobilisers and community facilitators

Based on the review and to help in the preparation of the Citizen Mobilisation Guidelines, the study team has outlined the tasks for the citizen mobiliser.

2a. The tasks for the citizen mobiliser

Identification of existing groups, those not in groups and representation

- identify existing groups in the VDC/municipality and support formation of a Ward Citizens' Forum (WCF) with representation of these groups
- identify people who are not in groups and motivate them to either join existing groups, form their own or find a way to send representation to the Ward Citizens' Forum
- work with social mobilisers of existing groups, where they are present, to build effective voice internally in these groups particularly of poorer and excluded households
- facilitate formation of Village Citizens' Forum with representation from WCF
- Support IPCC in collecting, for planning purposes, disaggregated information on, amongst other topics, resources available, issues, prevalent discriminatory practices and previous plan and budget analysis
- Facilitate IPCC to establish robust social accountability mechanisms and ensure that results are widely publicised.
- Be informed about other resources available for monitoring and advocacy through different sources like LGVAF and other projects
- Support processes of analysis of power relations in the VDC/municipality, underlying causes of poverty, Appreciative Inquiry and REFLECT approaches
- Support facilitation of negotiation and prioritisation of demands for planning using different tools in the ward level meetings
- Support fair processes of selection for user committees for implementation of VDC projects
- facilitate recruitment of Community Facilitators (CF) to support groups in wards
- Support Community Facilitator in the delivery of their responsibilities
- Inform and backstop Community Facilitator on building capacity of women and the excluded to influence planning, programming, budgeting and to monitor performance local bodies and services.
- Work with CFs to link VDC/municipality level networks, federations and representative organisations with ward level fora to improve access to services
- Work with CFs to capacitate community women and men in the use of tools such as citizen score card, public audit, gender audit, public hearing etc.

In addition, in those VDCs where the **social protection pilots** are in process, the citizen mobiliser will have other responsibilities. These would include supporting the work of the social protection worker who will:

- Ensure the correct identification and targeting of extreme poor and excluded households
- Provide household-level coaching support and support to group formation of those households not involved in any other groups
- Ensure fair access to social transfers managed by the VDCs
- If these are conditional cash transfers liaise with the VDC to ensure that the household has access to education and health services

2b. The role of the **community facilitators** is critical to support a process of empowerment with poor and excluded households. The responsibilities of the Community Facilitator will include:

- Providing group members and individual households information about VDC/municipality planning and other processes including social transfer mechanisms (in pilot social protection VDCs)
- Inform and build knowledge of citizens and communities including the excluded to recognise their rights and responsibilities, to access services and to influence public decisions (this would include providing the details about the Block grant and other resources and services available in the area)
- Facilitating linkages for improved access of community people especially women and the excluded, to services
- Facilitating REFLECT-type principles and processes and underlying causes of poverty analyses for empowerment to bring together the marginalised and powerful to jointly analyse the reasons for their situations and to develop a shared response
- Facilitating issue based discussion and social action
- Ensure fair representation of the demands of all citizens (particularly the poor and excluded) in the VDC/municipality planning process
- Provide follow-up support to poor and excluded households and check they are eligible for social transfers and if so, ensure that they get access.

Appendix 3: Citizen mobilisation management structures and procurement processes

The following roles at each level need to be fulfilled (Figure 7.4) illustrates the relationships between the levels and organisations). These roles split into oversight and implementation.

3.1 Oversight Structure

a. National-level organisation

The national level organisation will:

- have oversight responsibilities to ensure that the citizen mobilisation is objective, transformative and protected from elite capture and party politics.
- be responsible for recruitment of the regional service providers and oversight of the citizen mobilisation process (voice and accountability aspects)
- Fund innovative approaches to voice and accountability, particularly for the extreme poor and excluded households;
- Lead a process of learning from these approaches and ensuring this learning is then built into good practice across the programme.

b. DDC Citizen mobilisation committee

The Citizen Mobilisation Committee in DDC will be established within the Social Committee of DDC with the LDO as the Chair and the Social Development Officer as the Member Secretary. The role of this committee will be to coordinate and harmonise the citizen mobilisation efforts in the district. The district level service providers will work in close collaboration with the Citizen Mobilisation Committee in DDCs. The composition and responsibilities of this Citizen Mobilisation Committee in DDCs will be:

Composition	Tasks
Chair: LDO and Social Development Officer/DDC: member secretary ■ One representatives each of the district Dalit and Adibasi Janajati Coordination Committees, Muslim and Madhesi Coordination Committee (where formed) and the Gender Mainstreaming Coordination Committee (GMCC) ■ One representative each of other excluded groups in the district e.g. people with disability ■ Representative of DDC unit/section with responsibility for citizen mobilisation ■ One representative of project staff of I/NGOs, programmes and of relevant line agencies like health, education, agriculture, livestock, forestry, irrigation	■ Harmonise and coordinate citizen mobilisation efforts in district ■ Develop and maintain disaggregated information regarding citizen mobilisation efforts in district ■ Citizen mobilisation related tools and guidelines disseminate to each VDC ■ Build common understanding on citizen mobilisation of DDC Citizen Mobilisation Committee, VDC secretary and political party representatives at district level ■ Documentation of progress and lessons learnt

c. Integrated Planning and Coordination Committee (VDC/Municipality)³³

The Integrated Planning Committee, established by the VDC Grant Operation Manual 2008, will be enlarged to become the Integrated Planning and Coordination Committee (IPCC). The representatives of the IPC as provisioned in the VDC Grant Operation Manual 2008, one representative each of organisations or groups not included in the IPC (e.g. Child Clubs, Youth networks, federated groups such as CMC, CFUG, Women's Federation, Federation of the Disabled registered and working in the VDC/District) will be members of this committee.

The responsibilities of the IPCC will include:

- Make citizen's engagement related policy and financial decisions and monitor citizen's engagement efforts in the VDC/Municipality.
- Coordinate with Village Citizens' Forum to ensure citizen's voices influence local body functioning
- Support VDC/Municipality to prepare a VDC-level profile of ongoing development and citizen mobilisation programs
- Ensure that tools like well-being ranking, with community participation, using proxy means tests, are used to identify the economically poor and socially discriminated. Coordinate with Ward Citizens' Forums to provide relevant information for this to be used for VDC programme planning and budgeting and for sectoral services.
- Facilitate with line agencies for service provision to the most needy locations and people
- Ensure an inclusive planning process is followed and the priorities identified are presented to the village/municipality council
- Monitor and coordinate program implementation according to the plans using a GESI lens. Ensure GESI related provisions in projects and programmes of GOs and NGOs
- Mediate between different agencies in case of duplication or conflict of interest.
- Promote shared learning from experiences

d. A Village Citizens' Forum will be established. Representatives of the Ward Citizens' Forums will select from amongst themselves, a Chair, Vice-Chair and two members to form the Executive Committee of this Forum. This forum will hold public meetings twice a year: i. before Village Council; ii six-monthly review and can call other meetings as required.

The responsibilities of this forum will include

- ward by ward presentations and discussion of agreed and finalised ward level projects
- open discussion from citizens about ward proposals before selection
- issues recorded for discussion by IPCC/VDC prior to plan finalisation
- submission of these negotiated plans to IPCC/VDC
- ensuring these are represented in the Village Council
- Being a watch-dog for ensuring citizen's voice, including of the poor and excluded, is taken seriously by local bodies
- supporting monitoring of projects
- implementing accountability mechanisms for making local governments accountable
- organising public hearing for reviewing work of citizen mobilisers and community facilitators

³³ The GESI strategy has outlined these mechanisms/structures at the ward, VDC, municipality and district levels which have been agreed to by MLD.

3.2 Citizen Mobilisation Implementation Structure

a. Regional Service Providers

The responsibilities of the Regional level Service Provider will include:

- recruitment of the district level service providers,
- capacity building of the district providers for citizen mobilisation; and
- monitoring of citizen mobilisation processes in the region
- facilitating learning between service providers, feedback and learning to the national-level body

b. District Service Providers

The responsibilities of the District level Service Providers include:

- recruitment of citizen mobiliser/s,
- capacity building for citizen mobilisation; and
- monitoring of citizen mobilisation process in district
- facilitating learning between service providers and citizen mobilisers, ensuring transfer of experience to the regional-level
- advocacy at district-level with service providers

3.3 Procurement process for Citizen Mobilisation Organisations

a. National-level body

The procurement process for the national-level organisation requires a full competitive process. In the case of the LGVAF it needs to be designed and its mandate and structure agreed. Procurement will need to follow MLD/international development partner procurement guidelines, with transparent processes for selection. A board should be set up with representation from government, development partners and civil society to oversee the recruitment process. The design of the LGVAF will specify these processes. Amongst the main criteria to be used for selection should be:

1. extensive experience in Nepal and other countries in the region with approaches to citizen engagement and in particular the inclusion of extreme poor and excluded people;
2. demonstrated capability of effective engagement in policy processes and supporting effective advocacy
3. experience of operating challenge funds;
4. demonstrated capability of building effective information, communication and learning systems;

b. Recruitment of Regional and District Service Providers and Citizen Mobilisers

To ensure transparency and objectivity, it is best to outsource citizen mobilisation to service providers. The VDC Grant Operation Manual too states that external agencies can be the service providers. This will also support a clear separation of roles. The citizen mobiliser will be there to support development of citizen capability to actively participate in local body planning processes, claim services, resources and to hold the state and other service providers to account.

The role of the VDC will be to respond to the demand and hence they cannot employ people whose role is to support the demand-side.

Regional Service Provider: The national-level body, after a professional selection process³⁴, will contract a regional service provider agency (this could be a national NGO, or a consortium of NGOs or private sector).

The selection criteria of Regional Service Provider will include the following:

- At least five years experience working in the region,
- Experience working in the region on social mobilisation/development activities and transformation based approaches
- Experience of working on local governance
- Experience of building capacity of project staff and social mobilisers in the field of right based approach, community development, planning and monitoring, and gender and social inclusion.

District Service Provider: The regional level service provider will recruit the district citizen mobilisation service providers (more than 1 in one district) following a similar selection process as for its own selection in consultation with the DDC-Citizen Mobilisation Committee and GESI Implementation Committee. Some of the selection criteria for district service providers should include:

- experience in mobilisation for empowerment of communities
- demonstrated understanding of rights, gender, inclusion and governance
- credibility as an agency/organisation
- At least 3 years experience working in the district

c. Recruitment of Citizen Mobilisers: The district level service provider will recruit the VDC level citizen mobilisers through a transparent selection process. The district level service provider will form a recruitment committee with representation of the LDO, VDC Secretary, Village Citizens' Forum of the VDC/municipality, the Citizen Mobilisation Committee within the DDC and GESI Implementation Committee of DDC to develop the selection criteria, design the process and conduct the interview. The process of vacancy announcement through appropriate media, screening of applications and CVs, field exercises and interviews should be followed. The final responsibility of the recruitment will be with the District Service Providers.

d. Selection of Community Facilitators: The Citizen Mobilisers will facilitate a process with Ward Citizens' Forum (which have representation of all groups in the ward) to identify the community facilitators.

³⁴ A professional and transparent selection process for service provider agency selection should include the following steps: i. formation of recruitment committee; ii. design of vacancy advert with clear criteria; iii. vacancy announcement through different mediums ensuring access of remote and disadvantaged groups to announcement, iv. criteria development including affirmative action points for proposal screening with scoring; v. organisational assessment of shortlisted agencies with field visits to work area and discussion with clients; vi. report of recruitment committee to LGVAF or other national body; vii. Decision based on analysis of scores

Appendix 4: Comparison of organisational options for citizen engagement

	Advantages	Disadvantages
Local Governance Voice and Accountability Facility	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ An independent body to be established by LGCDP to support accountability mechanisms within the VDC/municipality ▪ Opportunity to link together coherently the demand-side processes of voice and accountability in one institutional mechanism ▪ Enhance and strengthen the learning for the whole demand-side ▪ Oversight of processes and responsibility for quality of procurement and implementation ▪ Opportunity through procurement process to get a range of service providers offering different experiences relevant to local contexts ▪ Objective processes, ability to retain independence and quality of verification of operations ▪ Support the development of nationwide training programmes for citizen engagement processes ▪ Potential to use challenge fund type approaches to encourage innovation in citizen engagement practices and practices to support extreme poor and excluded, to identify and support advocacy approaches at all levels including national 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Delinks the learning from the response-side structures through the MLD ▪ Does not necessarily build on-going competence at the national-level to support demand-side processes ▪ Another institutional mechanism created which may not sustain after programme phase out
International NGO responsible for citizen engagement processes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Provision of services from an NGO highly experienced in citizen engagement approaches ▪ Existing network of service providers already competent in these approaches down to the VDC/municipality levels ▪ Relatively easy to scale-up approach ▪ Objective and transparent service providers selection process at district levels ▪ Ability to adopt affirmative action policies e.g. to include representative organisations of women and excluded as service providers ▪ Capacity to build skills of and monitor service providers 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Reliant on one NGO's approach to citizen engagement does not allow for adaptation, different approaches ▪ Does not build national competence to deliver these types of approaches ▪ Relies on NGOs network of partners may exclude organisations that could bring new strengths to the approach ▪ No oversight for the whole demand-side process as the accountability elements will remain with the LGVAF
Consortium of INGOs and national NGOs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ All of the above ▪ Diversity of approaches and networks of partners ▪ Could include the accountability aspects of the LGCDP ▪ Building capability of national NGOs to support citizen engagement processes spin-off effects into other aspects of their work ▪ Connections with other country experiences through networks of international INGOS 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Difficulties in maintaining coherence across consortium ▪ Relying too much on a few organisations for a key part of a national programme with the risks of not being able to deliver ▪ Selection at the outset of a few organisations reduces the potential to respond to new ideas and approaches from other organisations outside the consortium ▪ Establishing mechanisms of accountability between partners ▪ No oversight for the whole demand-side process as the accountability elements will remain with the LGVAF ▪ High cost

	Advantages	Disadvantages
Local government responsibility for citizen engagement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Already have a cadre of social mobilisers engaged at district and VDC-level that could be retrained to support citizen mobilisation approaches ▪ Relatively easy to take to scale and implement a minimum standard of citizen engagement in VDC planning across many VDCs and municipalities ▪ Building close understanding in local government of the demand-side issues ▪ Potential for linkage with line agencies greater ▪ Cost- effective 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Conflict of interest is very high in placing responsibility for citizen engagement with the bodies that are supposed to be responding to the demand from citizens ▪ Weak accountability and high opportunities for non-transparent processes of targeting and directing services and assets ▪ Staff retraining necessary from transactional to transformational approaches ▪ Difficult to build flexible and responsive approaches more likely to follow transactional approach that is easy to prescribe ▪ Accountability structures will be even more important and the role of the LGAF critical to this ▪ High chance of citizen mobiliser becoming main link between citizens and line agencies, rather than building the relationship between citizens and the VDC and then to the line agencies ▪ MLD as the national-level institution with line responsibility for the administrative elements of local government should not be responsible for building citizen demand, this should remain outside government and be a process of civil society ▪ Accountability of citizen mobilisers, not towards people but towards local government bodies ▪ Possibility of citizen mobilisation process being reduced to completing a "job" in office hours, without the enthusiasm and empathy necessary for such processes
Local government associations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Broad coverage ▪ Representatives of local government bodies so high legitimacy ▪ Strong ability to influence all DDCs/ Municipalities/ VDCs 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ No proven expertise in citizen mobilisation ▪ High conflict of interest as members of the local government associations should be the ones providing response to the demands emerging from the citizen engagement process ▪ Potential for increased politicisation of the processes ▪ Difficult to build competence to support these processes ▪ Slow scale-up ▪ Accountability structures will be even more important and the role of the LGVAF critical to this ▪ Potential increased risks of politicisation of process

Appendix 5: Monitoring and reporting

a. Conceptual framework and guiding principles for monitoring

Monitoring and reporting should follow the conceptual frame of citizen mobilisation in 3 areas/domains: a. changes in assets/services (responsiveness); b. changes in voice and ability to influence (demand); c. changes in informal and formal policies and behaviour (rules of the game/enabling). All monitoring and reporting formats must have: disaggregation by poverty, sex, caste, ethnicity, location (refer to GESI strategy of LGCDP). Monitoring teams must be inclusive with representation of IPCC members and ensuring representation of women and the excluded. Monitoring teams must consult with community women and men, including those experiencing exclusion, citizen mobilisers, representative organisation, WCF, VCF and IPCC members.

b. Monitoring Criteria for Citizen Mobilisation at VDC level

Planning:

- Citizen mobilisation ensures that IPCC effectively follows the Citizen Mobilisation guideline, GESI strategy and VDC Grant Operation Manual, 2008 in the planning process
- VDC annual plan reflects the priorities of the Ward Citizens' Forum and Village Citizens' Forum, including of poor and excluded with adequate budget allocation
- Budget allocation is fair to projects directly benefiting poor and excluded based on GESI strategy and VDC Grant Operation Manual, 2008
- Citizens, including poor and excluded, informed on time regarding VDC planning processes and provisions
- Quarterly meetings of IPCC to be held regularly and decisions documented

Implementation:

- Citizens, including poor and excluded, informed on time regarding VDC/municipality plan and budget allocation
- Citizen mobilisation must ensure that users' committee formation for planned projects is participatory and inclusive
- Citizen mobiliser to conduct or facilitate Public Audit of each project twice in the project period
- Citizen mobiliser must facilitate VDCs to timely release budget for each project
- Citizen mobiliser must facilitate coordination and collaboration with other service providers (line agencies, projects, I/NGOs, private sector etc.)

Representation

- Facilitate fair representation of all political parties of VDC in IPCC and in monitoring committees through timely information to political parties and other IPCC members
- Facilitate representation of COs, CBOs, NGOs, representative organizations in IPCC
- Facilitate representation of community groups and all citizens, including poor and excluded, in Ward Citizens' Forum (WCF) and Village Citizens' Forum (VCF)

Inclusion

- Specific needs and constraints of poor and excluded recognised and addressed for inclusion in local government's processes
- Graduation of extreme poor households to mainstream groups/development processes

Knowledge:

- Conceptual clarity about gender, social inclusion and poverty of all citizens in the VDC, both the powerless and powerful
- Information regarding government schemes and policies/provisions (VDC Grant Operation Manual, 2008, CM guideline, GESI strategy and other relevant guidelines)
- Regular implementation of REFLECT kind of processes
- Regular analysis of underlying causes of poverty and discrimination with both the poor and excluded and the powerful
- Facilitate issue-based campaigns identified in REFLECT processes

Transparency

- Pressurise VDC and other service providers to use accountability tools such as public audit, public hearing and citizen charter at specified times
- Public hearing of citizen mobilisation service providers (community facilitator and citizen mobiliser)
- Ensure display boards are placed at WCF, VCF, IPCC and VDC and decisions (in appropriate languages) of the WCF, VCF, IPCC and VDC are posted in each WCF within a week.
- Ensure VDC planning decisions are aired in community FMs within a week

C. Citizen mobilisation monitoring and reporting responsibilities and process should be as follows:

Monitoring of Citizen Mobilisers and Community Facilitators:

- **Monthly meetings** should be held by the District Service Provider with the Citizen Mobilisers and the Community Facilitators to review progress and resolve issues. As preparation for this CF should have monthly meetings with Ward Citizens' Forum to monitor progress and issues.
- A monitoring sub-committee should be formed with representatives of IPCC and Village Citizens' Forum. **Every three months** the District Service Providers must have a **reflection and learning meeting** with this monitoring sub-committee. Preparations for this meeting must include discussions of the sub-committee members with the community women and men to identify issues. A simple format should be developed for this.
- LGVAF and the Regional Service Provider will have a **six-monthly meeting** with representatives of the District Service provider, Citizen Mobilisers, Community Facilitators and the VDC level IPCC monitoring sub-committee.
- A **six-monthly public hearing** (in the VDC/municipality) should be held to review the work of citizen mobilisers and community facilitators.

Monitoring of District Service Provider:

- A monitoring meeting should be held every three months by the Regional Service Provider. Participants should include the District Service Provider, representatives of the Citizen Mobilisers, Community Facilitators and the VDC level IPCC monitoring sub-committee. Preparations for this meeting must include a report of the reflection and learning meeting held by the District Service Provider.
- The national-level body and the Regional Service Provider have a six-monthly meeting with representatives of the District Service provider, Citizen Mobilisers, Community Facilitators and the VDC level IPCC monitoring sub-committee.

Monitoring of Regional Service Provider

- Bi-annual meetings of the national-level body with Regional Service Provider

Monitoring of National-level Body

- Depending on the type of national -level body monitoring should include - monitoring by its oversight structure (whether this is a board for the LGVAF or any other oversight arrangement)
- LGCDP monitoring combined with government-development partner monitoring missions, and regular six-monthly monitoring by Thematic Group on Citizen Engagement³⁵

Reporting

All reporting must be disaggregated by caste/ethnicity, gender and location. It must, where applicable, aggregate outcomes against the three domains of change to monitor shifts in access of citizens, including the poor and excluded to assets and services, in building voice and in changing mindsets/discriminatory practices and formal rules/policies.

- Daily diaries should be maintained by Community Facilitators and Citizen Mobilisers
- Monthly progress reports should be submitted by Citizen Mobilisers to District Service Provider based on diaries and meetings
- Trimesterly progress reports have to be submitted to VDC and Regional Service Provider by District Service Provider based on Citizen Mobilisers' reports and reflection and learning meetings
- Trimesterly and Bi-annual report of Regional Service Provider must be submitted to national-level body
- Annual report of District Service Provider submitted to VDC and Regional Service Provider and of Regional Service Provider to national-level body
- Six-monthly and annual **briefing and report to** Thematic Group on Citizen Mobilisation by national-level body. The Thematic Group on Citizen Engagement must report to the Thematic Group on Monitoring

³⁵ The existing Thematic Group on Social Mobilisation should continue through the life of LGCDP as the Thematic Group on Citizen Engagement taking responsibility for both the voice and accountability aspects of the programme

Table: Roles and Timing of Monitoring and Reporting

Time	CM/CF	Ward Citizens Forum/Ward level	Village Citizens' Forum/Integrated Planning Coordination Committee/VDC	District Service Provider	Regional Service Provider	National-level body	Thematic Grps Monitoring & Citizen Engagement (MLD, DPs)
						Facilitate setting up of citizen mobilisation monitoring and reporting systems ; monitoring visits, review	
Monthly	CF to submit report to CM; CM to sub-committee on monitoring IPCC	Monitor progress in group participation, access to services, cases of discrimination; Monthly meeting to inform Community Facilitator	Member of sub-committee on monitoring; Regular meetings, monitoring of social mobilisation and programme implementation	Regular supervision. Monthly meetings with Citizen mobiliser; Trimesterly report	Regular supervision. Assessment of progress as per plans. Basis of monitoring to be the three domains of change		
Trimesterly Review	CF and CM to participate in reflection and learning meetings with report	Participate in monitoring meetings with focus on the 3 areas of change (services, voice, rules of the game)	Trimesterly monitoring meetings with sub-committee, service providers, citizen mobilisers	Reflection and Learning meetings with sub-committee. Monitoring visits, Review with disaggregation as per the three areas of change	Analyse reports of district service providers. Integrate progress and learning to inform decision-makers (Regional	Review reports and respond as required	National-level body to brief Thematic groups; respond as reqd.
Six-monthly	CF and CM to participate in meeting with Regional, District SPs and national-level body with report	Public hearing: covering program implementation and citizen mobilisers work	Public hearing; Public audit;	Participation in public hearing and audit Report to Regional Service Provider, VDC	Service Provider, VDC, IPCC, national-level body for strategic changes. Report as per the three domains of change	Supervision and review meeting with Regional, District Service providers, IPCC sub-committee and CMs/CFs representatives	National-level body to brief Thematic group
Annual	Report	Report	Report	Annual report		Report	National-level body reports to CE Thematic group; CE thematic group reports to Monitoring Thematic Group

CF: Community facilitator; CM: Citizen mobiliser/mobilisation; CE citizen engagement; IPCC: Integrated Planning and Coordination Committee

Appendix 6: Accountability mechanisms for citizen mobilisation

a. Community Facilitator (CF): The Community Facilitator will primarily be accountable to the ward community. The Ward Citizens' Forum will hold an **annual public hearing** inviting ward citizens to the hearing on the community facilitator's work achievements. An **appreciative process** should be used to identify the contributions and the areas for improvement of the services provided by the CF. The basis of this assessment must be the **job description** of the CF.

b. Citizen Mobiliser (CM): Citizen Mobiliser will also be primarily accountable to the people of the community. The monitoring sub-committee of the IPCC will hold an **annual public hearing** on the citizen mobilisers' work achievements. The citizen mobiliser's **job description** should be used as the basis for the assessment. An **appreciative process** of recognizing the contributions of the mobiliser must be used and areas of improvement identified.

c. District Service Provider: The District Service Provider will be accountable to the Citizen Mobilisation Committee in the DDC and to the Regional Service Provider. The IPCC will organise an **annual public hearing**, inviting all members of the committee. In this hearing the district service provider will present the operational progress on citizen mobilisation in the district with specific reporting on the inclusion of poor and excluded. The district service provider will also present an analysis of implementation of the Citizen Mobilisation guidelines and the GESI strategy: what was supportive and what was constraining in their implementation.

d. Regional Service Provider: Regional Service Provider will be accountable primarily to district stakeholders and also to the national level body. National level body will be responsible for the performance evaluation of the Regional Service Provider with systematic feedback of District Citizen Mobilisation Committee and District Service provider based on the terms of reference of the Regional Service Provider.

Appendix 7: Implementation sequencing of recommendations *IMMEDIATE IMPLEMENTATION*

Recommendation Area	Recommendation Nos
<i>CITIZEN MOBILISATION PROCESS</i>	
Harmonising around LGCDP's Framework	Recommendation 1
What is citizen mobilisation in LGCDP?	Recommendation 2
What's in a name - citizen or social mobilisation?	Recommendation 3
Citizen mobiliser tasks	Recommendation 4
Required Competencies and Skills of Citizen Mobilisers and Community Facilitators	Recommendation 5
Numbers and Salary of Citizen Mobilisers and Community Facilitators	Recommendation 6
Taking the citizen mobilisation process to scale	Recommendation 7
<i>DISADVANTAGED HOUSEHOLD IDENTIFICATION</i>	
Harmonisation of terminology	Recommendation 9
Standardised approach to well-being ranking indicators	Recommendation 10
<i>ORGANISATIONAL MECHANISMS</i>	
Organisational Structure for Citizen Mobilisation	Recommendation 25
Funding arrangements	Recommendation 26
<i>WORKING WITH THE EXTREME POOR AND EXCLUDED</i>	
Employing mobilisers with appropriate behaviours, attitudes and skills (linked to reco 5)	Recommendation 14

II. ONCE CITIZEN MOBILISERS ARE IN PLACE:

Recommendation Area	Recommendation Nos
Citizen Mobilisers' responsibilities to bring in the voices of the poor and non-poor not in groups	Recommendation 15
Identification of Local Areas of Disadvantage: VDC/municipality poverty pocket identification and power mapping	Recommendation 20
Social accountability mechanisms	Recommendation 24
Monitoring and learning	Recommendation 27
Accountability mechanisms of citizen mobilisation	Recommendation 28

III. ONGOING PROCESS OF DIALOGUE of MLD and DPS FOR DECISIONS AND ACTION

Recommendation Area	Recommendation Nos
Moving towards harmonisation of mobilisation practice and people working with citizen fora	Recommendation 8
Well-being ranking process	Recommendation 11
Gender Analysis	Recommendation 12
VDC/DDC/Municipality authorised standard database/profile of existing power centres, poverty pockets and disadvantaged households.	Recommendation 13
Support to graduation out of extreme poverty	Recommendation 16
Citizen engagement in planning processes	
Coordinate planning for line agency, local bodies and development partners	Recommendation 17
Demonstrating the effectiveness of decentralised local governance and citizen engagement	Recommendation 18
Incentives for coordination at district-level	Recommendation 19
Long-term planning linked to annual planning for all resources and services for the VDC/Municipality	Recommendation 21
Removing ambiguities in the VDC Block Grant Operational Manual 2008	Recommendation 22
Linkages of citizens with local body decision-making	Recommendation 23