



Monthly Update – February 2010

USAID/Nepal Flood Recovery Program

Build Back Better

SPECIAL REPORT: YOUTH LEADERSHIP

This month USAID-NFRP concluded its comprehensive youth leadership program that supported the development initiatives of 60 youth clubs (YC) throughout flood-affected VDCs of the central and western Terai region. The program was implemented as one of three key activities under USAID-NFRP's Strengthening Local Organizations component. Along with trainings offered to community-based organizations (CBOs) and disaster management committees, members of youth clubs participated in an 11-month program directed at encouraging young people to participate and take leadership roles in local development initiatives.

From March 2009 to February 2010, 1,218 Terai youths between the ages of 14 and 24 completed the full 14-day training curriculum. An additional 1,218 adult CBO members also participated in a similar training program tailored to the specific needs and issues of their organizations.

The youth leadership training emphasized confidence building and the development of communication and conflict resolution skills that can be applied to everyday situations within the young people's communities and local governments. Topics included leadership, participation and democracy, networking and collaboration, organizational planning, advocacy and participation in local decision-making, community assessments, the project cycle, and leveraging assistance.

Once the youth clubs reached the midway point of the program, they qualified for a small donation of materials, supplies and furniture to support operations and strengthen each organization's identity and capacity within its VDC. This also facilitated registration with the district administration offices, thus allowing the youth clubs to formally raise funds and participate in local planning and decision-making.

Following USAID-NFRP's learning-by-doing training approach, youth club members were given the opportunity to apply their newly developed skills at the end of their training. The clubs selected, designed and implemented their own community support projects, with limited technical and financial assistance from USAID-NFRP. Trainees' enthusiasm for this activity went beyond all expectations –



Photos by Fintrac Inc.

A Youth Club member from Rautahat district presents the results of her organization's community support project, a village-level public telephone service center.



Youth club and CBO members from Dumariya VDC of Rautahat participate in a disaster management training.



Young women leaders in Kailali district review results of a local needs assessment to design a community support project based on demand and grassroots participation.

demonstrated by their ability to collect and contribute significant community resources to the projects. In all, youth clubs raised \$12,007 (cash and in-kind), which was added to the \$8,000 already provided by USAID-NFRP.

Community support projects implemented by the 60 youth clubs included:

- The construction of 13 YC/CBO offices
- 13 street maintenance/garbage collection projects
- 11 projects to create potable water supplies
- 8 projects to obtain library and school supplies
- The construction of 5 roads and culverts
- The construction of 3 public toilets
- 2 projects to create after-school sports programs
- The improvement of 2 school buildings
- 1 H1N1 awareness training
- 1 environmental awareness training for adults
- 1 eye-check/vitamin D distribution camp

In early 2010, USAID-NFRP hosted two regional workshops in Dhangadhi and Birgunj municipalities that brought together representatives from each of the 60 youth clubs to share their experiences of the training program. Representatives had the opportunity to discuss aspirations for their organizations and create networks among their peers from nearby VDCs. In addition, each group was able to present the results of its community support project and serve as “experts” for other groups interested in replicating the same activities within their communities. Other participants included chief district officers and local development officers, members of the Nepal Red Cross Society, and representatives from UNICEF, WDO, Mercy Corps and Save the Children.

USAID-NFRP’s youth leadership program long-term goals can be summarized in the words of Surya Gautam, father of Sushila, a trainee from Kanakpur VDC in Rautahat district:

“There are changes in my daughter since she joined the youth club. Sushila is more mature now and can express herself better than before. Now she actively participates in community meetings and even advises her mother on how to advocate for her issues in mothers group meetings.”



Photos by Fintrac Inc
Youth club members in Bara districts conduct village-level assessments.



A youth club participates in mapping exercises in Rautahat.



In Dhangadhi, youth clubs from 30 different VDCs gather to discuss their experiences of the training program.



A youth club presents the results of their community support project at the regional workshop in Dhangadhi.