

ain

Association of International NGOs in Nepal

An informal network of INGOs working in Nepal



Karnali Development Dialogue

Summary report by

Reshma Shrestha, 30 June 2019

Introduction

The Association of International NGOs in Nepal, AIN in coordination with the Social Development Ministry of Karnali Province organized a half Day Development Dialogue on 30 June 2019 in the Chief Minister's Office in Surkhet. In the context of decentralization under the federal system in Nepal, this is the fourth Development Dialogue that AIN facilitated to have a discussion over development program and priorities in the province.

The Chief Minister of Karnali Province Honorable Mahendra Bahadur Shahi had graced the event as the Chief Guest and Hon. Minister Dal Rawal had attended as the special guest. Present in the dialogue were Principal (Chief) Secretary Kewal Bhandari, Secretary Sant B Sunar, Ministry of Economic Affairs and Projects, Dr Punya Prasad Regmi, Vice Chairperson Karnali Planning Commission, Dr Dipendra Rokaya, Member of Planning Commission and Jeevan Bahadur Shahi, Leader of Opposition Party.

The main objective of this dialogue was to interact with the government officials to establish a positive and productive relationship between provincial government and AIN members; to improve collaboration and coordination with the Provincial Government; and sharing information about programmatic interventions; identifying practical mechanisms for regular contact and discussion; and to provide basic information about AIN, its principles, objectives, INGOs operational procedures.

Twenty two AIN Member INGOs, namely ADARA, Aids Health Care Foundation, BlinkNow, CARE Nepal, CRS, Helen Keller, Helvetas, Humanity & Inclusion, IM Swedish Development Partner, Mercy Corps, Mission East, Oxfam, Plan International, Red Panda, Renewable World, Save the Children, TDH Germany, UMN, Water Aid, WHH, World Education and World Vision had attended the Development Dialogue along with the Federation of Media.

Welcome remarks

Principal Secretary of Provincial Government, Karnali Province Kewal Bhandari in his opening remarks appreciated AIN for its presence and highlighted that Government and INGOs should work hand in hand in coordination and cooperation. The Moderator of the discussion, Pralhad Dhakal, Country Director of ADARA Group expressed AIN's gratitude towards the Ministry for their kind cooperation in organizing the Dialogue in the Chief Minister's Office. He stated that this is the new beginning to understand and know each other better and for building a long term relation. AIN members are keen to engage more with all tiers of Nepal government at state, provincial and local level. AIN intends to promote regular dialogues and interactions at provincial and local level.

Presentations from Ministry

Bishnu P Adhikari, Under Secretary Ministry of Social Development

Under Secretary Adhikari remarked that the Social Development Ministry (MOSD) has responsibility for health, education, women, children, language, water sanitation etc. Karnali province profile is being drafted and will be ready soon along with their policy and programs. MOSD had prepared the Bill in 2074 but it is not yet passed by the provincial parliament. In the past, the ministry had

interaction with the NGOs but this was the first with the INGOs. He said that there are many development challenges in Karnali. There is an urgent need of 'Social Transformation' to develop Karnali region.

Priorities of Karnali: Rapid development in the area of Education, Health & Employment for Prosperous Karnali.

He stated following facts about Karnali:

- ✚ 24% children suffer from stunting, mainly in Jajarkot and Rukkum (WFP has been giving mid-day meals)
- ✚ 4% of children are still out of school
- ✚ Only 96% are in school that too children of grade 1-5 only
- ✚ 50% children are out of school in grade 10
- ✚ Children appearing in SEE is very minimum in Karnali
- ✚ Health facilities have not reached in the remote areas
- ✚ Rautes and aging populations' problem still need to be addressed
- ✚ Traditional harmful social practices like child marriage, Chaupadi still exist

Presentation by Member of Karnali Planning Commission Dr Dipendra Rokaya

Dr Dipendra welcomed AIN and appreciated INGOs interest and concerns for Karnali. He briefly shared that there is currently 15 Lakh populations in Karnali and in 25 years it is estimated that it will be 27.5 lakh. The key priorities of Karnali being:

- ✚ Infrastructure development mainly road & transportation: Humla is still not connected with the state. Need to open the track of Dolpa and Mugu
- ✚ Energy: Electricity, Energy
- ✚ Communications
- ✚ 60% settlements are under high risk of disasters
- ✚ There is Petrol in Dailekh need to explore
- ✚ Potential in Agriculture but need to develop
- ✚ Should promote Karnali tourism
- ✚ There are 31 types of industries (udhyog)
- ✚ 4.80% still under poverty
- ✚ 11 % unemployment: Project youth employment
- ✚ No drinking water taps in homes
- ✚ Need to upgrade the health care centers
- ✚ Promote private sector Airlines

Role of INGOs in Karnali

- Build capacity
- Foreign investment most welcome

✚ More coordination & cooperation

✚ 'Let's go to Karnali: Theme: Spread positive message of Karnali

**Dr Dipendra's presentation attached with the mail*

AIN presentations

Regulatory framework for INGOs

AIN Policy Analyst, Shiva Paudel, made a presentation highlighting about regulatory framework for INGOs, the history of INGOs, how it started, who are INGOs. He explained about the frameworks that recognizes INGO namely the Constitution of Nepal, Social Welfare Act, Nepal Reconstruction Authority, Development Cooperation Policy 2019.

He briefly shared about the challenges in terms of:

- **One door-policy and mechanism:** SWC and various ministries...no common understanding and approaches
- **Delay in Agreements and its Renewal:** General Agreement, Project Agreement and Evaluations
- **Federal system:** Where to coordinate and how? Who is responsible? Roles of Federal, Province and Local Government...including DCC
- **Restriction of I/NGOs:** Fees and Taxes at various level, SWC Agreement fee, M and E fee, Office Registration Fee and Renewal Fee
- **VISA and Tax Exemption:** Equipment, Medicines and Relief Materials
- **Facilitation and Reporting:** L G Us? Province? Federal? SWC? Ministries? Tax Offices? Effectiveness of D P A C and C P A C

Way forward

National Level

- One window system for approval
- Facilitative simple and clear bureaucratic process (visas, agreements, M/E, tax exemption and approvals)
- **Provincial Level**
 - Support in one window system: National / Provincial/Local
 - More welcoming environment and facilitation of INGOs presence
- **Overall**
 - Recognition
 - Constructive Dialogue and Participation (at policy and decision making)
 - Independent evaluation and scale up good practices and learning from INGOs
 - Transparency, public disclosure *yet free civil society space*

**Presentation attached with mail*

Contribution of INGOs in development

AIN SC Member Govinda Neupane, Country Director of IM Swedish Development Partner made a presentation on the overall contribution of AIN Members in Development. He highlighted that Development Cooperation Policy, 2019 has acknowledged INGOs contribution in service delivery, advocacy, awareness raising, humanitarian assistance, strengthening voice, accountability mechanisms and infrastructure. He presented about INGOs' Core funding from their overseas grant and contribution in creating employment. He explained that the budget flow trends in Nepal had risen during 2015- 2016 during Earthquake and now it is decreasing.

Govinda Neupane presented about sectors and budget of AIN Members active in Karnali province. There are around 38 AIN Member INGOs working in Karnali in sectors like Education, health, livelihood, Infrastructure, Alternative Energy and Child Protection, civil society and governance, GESI, women empowerment, Disability, Water & Sanitation WASH, HIV Aids, DRR, Agriculture, Environment, Biodiversity Conservation, Climate Change, renewable energy, migration & remittance, irrigation. The annual budget of AIN Members in Karnali is NRs 1,761,592,624.59.

**Presentation attached with mail*

Questions and Answers

- ❖ In the context of only 5% disbursement Budget in Karnali by INGOs and development partners, what provincial govt. can do to welcome more INGOs? How can a conducive environment be created so that more INGOs would be interested to come to Karnali?
- ❖ INGOs want to go to remote areas but there are no banks and police. What are the plans of provincial govt. to set police station up in the remote parts of Karnali?
- ❖ The Population of women is higher in Karnali but five priorities of Karnali doesn't consist 'women empowerment programs'. Why is it so? What are the plans of the Province?
- ❖ There are rivers in Karnali but no drinking water projects. Doesn't the government think something needs to be done by the Government?
- ❖ It seems INGOs and Karnali Government has same priorities but how to match it and complement each other's work?
- ❖ Project operation cost in Karnali is high for INGOs due to its mountainous terrain. How to resolve this?
- ❖ Government should bring matching funds for education, children.
- ❖ Need swift approval systems: SWC takes 21 months for PA.
- ❖ Request the Government not to put all INGOs in one basket, there are good ones whose sole objective is development.
- ❖ Is there a possibility of opening school directly in partnership with the government rather than going with NGOs

- ❖ Need clarity on hardware and software. At times it is difficult to meet the 70 – 30 requirement of Hardware vs software, given the expensive administrative cost in Karnali
- ❖ 53% of Red Panda in Nepal is found in Karnali, what is government's plan for its conservation?
- ❖ There is lot of herbs available but not well managed, no easy access. There is Walnut in Humla but not well explored. Does the Government have any plans on the same?

Summary of Government's response to the questions from the floor

Principal Secretary Kewal Bhandari and Member of Planning Commission Dr. Dipendra Rokaya gave responses to the queries and concerns from the floor.

- ✚ INGOs should put Karnali in High priority
- ✚ Hardware does not mean higher infrastructure like highways and hydropower. INGOs can focus on building model schools, water sanitation, livelihood and social empowerment projects
- ✚ INGOs can give technical support to local and provincial Government
- ✚ INGOs should be transparent and accountable
- ✚ INGOs and NGOs are Dev partners, they complement Government work
- ✚ Karnali has introduced gender empowerment program. Karnali have introduced- "one daughter one bank account- 1000 on birth and 500 every month until she is 20. However, she should remain unmarried to get this amount."
- ✚ Regarding Red Panda, the Ministry was not aware that the INGO is working on the conservation of Red Panda; they have plans for the same and exploring the possibilities
- ✚ The Ministry is advocating with the Federal government for carrying out PA with INGOs only after their recommendation of the project.

The principal secretary requested INGOs to provide focal persons to support the government in finalizing their policy and program papers.

Deliberations and remarks

Secretary Sant B Sunar, Ministry of Economic Affairs and Projects

Secretary Sant B Sunar stated that in the past there was one central government but now with Federalization there are 761 Government who have been given rights and responsibilities by the Constitution for ensuring smooth development work. The Provincial Government should take the responsibility for the prosperity of Karnali. In 1952 most investment was done in Karnali. If INGO investment goes through government budgetary system, then it will be more accountable and transparent. It has to be clear and transparent as the water in the bottle.

He emphasized that the Ministry of Social Development has to do proper facilitation and coordination. The Social development Guideline of the province will be out soon. There will be a desk in the Ministry of Finance to deal with Development Partners as well.

Dr Punya Prasad Regmi, Vice Chairperson Karnali Planning Commission

Dr Punya Regmi shared that the Planning Commission was established in 2018. He explained that INGOs can come directly to the Commission and participate in the planning process and explore how INGOs could be associated with the Commission. Karnali has a unique Development model since Karnali has unique features like hydropower, herbs and natural resources. The Commission has done meeting in all the 10 districts and compiled recommendations. They have drafted the first five year plan with latest data. They are preparing the Karnali Provincial Profile and it is in the final stage. They have Provincial Flagship Projects which is the pride of Karnali. They are soon doing an Entrepreneurs Summit with project banks and Detail Project Reports. Karnali stresses on hardware projects. He emphasized that there are three categories of development partners. One who does advocacy, one who does awareness creation and the third one who does research. He expressed that in Karnali no proper research has been done to make master plans for roads, tourism, agriculture, organic farming etc. There has been no sectoral research, no land use plan and no irrigation research. Karnali is a virgin land and there is a need of a vision and categorical plan for 25 years.

Hon. Jeevan B Shahi, Leader of Opposition Party

Jeevan B Shahi in his remarks expressed that 'all is good in Karnali yet nothing is good'. Government has the budget but it has not been used. He advised INGOs not to kill Karnali with their aid. 'Are people really hungry or they are hungry for rice' he asked. The reality is people are surviving on apple and potatoes and they can. Karnali people should think globally and act locally. He shared his views on how the 'Chaupadee' practice came from the ancient time when there was just one roomed villages, where whole family cooked food and slept in the same room. Slowly the practice is decreasing since people now live in bigger homes. When Democracy came in Nepal in 2007, people in Humla heard about it in 2008 only. Hence, it is a matter of access and reaching out to the remotest. Practicing child labor at villages was the need of the poor family to get two- square meal. INGOs alone cannot stop child labor without proper government laws.

He emphasized that 'Good Governance' should not be a separate project, it should be the heart of every project, and it should be like the breathing process, which has to come simultaneously with each and every development projects of INGOs and Government. INGOs want one door policy and government did have one door at the central level but with many windows. Government practiced controlling mechanism rather than facilitating.

He recommended six mantras (six 'Bs') for development of Karnali

- Connectivity: Good road access to improve tourism (Baato)
- Electricity: nothing is possible without it: education, health, agriculture all sectors need electrification (Bijuli)
- Forest: everything is in the forest: water, environment (Ban)
- Market (Bazaar)
- Management: efficient system (Byabasthan)
- Ideas & enthusiasm: opinion, internet, net, digitization modern age (Bichhar)

Remarks from the Minister

Hon. Minister Dal Rawal appreciated AIN for approaching MOSD for organizing a very constructive and productive development dialogue. He opined that it is a historical turning point. He emphasized that Karnali province has come up with a very clear vision of policies and programs. The Parliament has endorsed the Karnali Development Plan. In the changing context, the government has always valued the contribution of INGOs. Their contribution in the time of Maoist revolution was highly commendable. The Civil society has played a significant role in assuring human rights. He recommended that AIN should now come up with a new Strategic Plan to align with the Federal context and system. He shared that he happened to browse through the AIN website where he saw the AIN Strategy Plan 2017 -2019 and Federalism in Nepal has been established since 2018.

Minister Rawal cautioned that INGOs should not involve in 'Development Politics'. They should not spread religion or proselytize. They should not convert people to another religion in the name of poverty. He stated that as per SWC there are 260 INGOs in Nepal and he thinks that maybe the Government should tell that all INGOs should come under AIN. So that all INGOs are under one umbrella and it will be easier to coordinate. Minister Rawal emphasized that Karnali Province is clear about its provincial priority, they welcome foreign Aid earmarked for the country and as per SDG goal 17 they adhere by the Global partnership principles. The INGOs who come to Karnali should have clear partnership principles, should be accountable and avoid duplication of development work. He informed that Karnali Province will be soon establishing their 'Social Development Council.' He believes in partnership with INGOs and is keen on adopting models like Rural Access Program of DFID. He stressed that ultimately it is the Government who does the development work and INGOs could complement their work in good partnership.

In his concluding remarks, he appreciated AIN for initiating such a high level and well organized dialogue and recommended that more SC Members should have attended the discussion.

Remarks from the Chief Minister

Hon. Chief Minister Mahendra Bahadur Shahi remarked that the first development dialogue is the new beginning of coordination and cooperation. He is aware of the very old INGOs that have supported Government since long. He is also thankful to the INGOs who played a meaningful and valuable role during conflict period (even to the extent of providing Paracetamol tablets to the

needy) when Government capacity was not there. The country has come a long way since then. All the developed countries like USA and Europe has reached the current state through human development, they have made life easy and simple through development. Nepal too can develop if it can understand the problem and find ways to solve it through positive thinking and development of capable human resources.

Chief Minister Shahi explained that Nepal has gone through a lot of changes since the Maoist Revolution and people's movement. Nepali people got their constitution and if things could have been implemented as written in the Constitution, Nepal would have been a better country. There is some dissatisfaction & grievances regarding the Constitution but if everybody could have understood the 'main spirit of the Constitution' it would have been wonderful.

Minister Shahi explained that they are under pressure and time is ticking. The Provincial Government is clear about its plan and priorities. It will respect hard work. He emphasized that INGOs should be **transparent and disclose about their development activities** and programs that they operate in Nepal. One should look at Karnali yesterday and today. There was more gold and silver in Karnali than in Kathmandu, the only thing not available was salt. But who is responsible for the current state of Karnali? Is it the State or the government or the people? The problem is huge and there are many challenges. Karnali has uncountable and unlimited problems.

Chief Minister remarked that there is a need for everybody to come together from Government to private sector, non- government sector and development partners to make a coordinated effort. There is a need of more dialogues and the Government is open to more dialogues and collaborations. Roads and Electrification has been a key priority followed by safe settlement of people at risk, irrigation, poverty reduction, food security and irrigation. Drought due to climate change has caused severe problems, even birds are dying. He advised not to bring noodles and Korean rice in Karnali as it is not sustainable. Instead bring irrigation projects. He explained that he Government has set the priorities and the INGOs & Development partners should follow the priorities.

Vote of thanks

AIN Member Ned Olney, Country Director of Save the Children stated that the Dialogue is the beginning of a new relation. The Dialogue is not aimed to solve all the problems at once, but an initiation to understand each other. He stated that it is the golden age of development and Karnali has a historical past, many fought for Karnali and still fighting for Karnali's development. Nepal has the new Constitution and the rate of change & development is happening fast. He remarked that the INGOs in Nepal are committed to support the development agendas of the government. INGOs are changing; they are working on reducing duplication and have reduced expat leads. INGOs are working on promoting positive dealings and being a catalyst of change. In his vote of thanks, Ned Olney appreciated the Ministry for their time and kind coordination in organizing the Dialogue at the Ministry.

Meeting between AIN Members

After the Dialogue a meeting was held between AIN Members to discuss on the way forward. The meeting agreed to form a 'Provincial Chapter of Karnali' to work together and strengthen their coordination and collaboration in the coming days. It would function as per the working groups of AIN to discuss on the provincial issues, challenges and concerns. Members advised to draft a TOR on how to mobilize the group and what will be the mandate of the group. Members advised to review the Article of AIN to incorporate the Provincial Chapter. It was opined that since the country is now decentralized, INGOs need to decentralize as well. The meeting also agreed to discuss on sectoral and operational issues and stand as one voice in times of need and interface with the Government. Members agreed that the AIN provincial chapter should carry AIN logo and should be ready to fulfill the AIN compliance.

The meeting agreed that Save the Children would take lead of the next meeting tentatively fixed for the last week of September. It was agreed that Blink Now, Save the Children and Helvetas who has office in Surkhet would liaise with the Ministry and act as focal contacts for Karnali Member INGOs. Present in the meeting were officials from ADARA, Aids Health Care Foundation, BlinkNow, CARE Nepal, CRS, Helen Keller, Helvetas, Humanity & Inclusion, IM Swedish Development Partner, Mercy Corps, Mission East, Oxfam, Plan International, Red Panda, Renewable World, Save the Children, TDH Germany, UMN, Water Aid, WHH, World Education and World Vision.

Development Dialogue Glimpses





AIN DEVELOPMENT DIALOGUE IN SURKHET KARNALI PROVINCE, 30 June 2019

S.N	NAME	ORGANIZATION	DESIGNATION	EMAIL	SIGNATURE
1	महेकुलहाट्टु आरी		उपचार्य		
2	रामबहादुर		हामाउडा विकास समिति		
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5	कुमल उहाड मर्यादी	गुरुनारायणमठ	उपेक्ष समिति सदस्य		
6	जालाराम शर्मा	मु.प्र. तथा म.प्र. समिति	सचिव	sharmabrs2@gmail.com	
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22	Rajendra Adhikari	HKI	Province Program coordinator	radhikari@hki.org	
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24	Samita Giri	AIDS healthcare foundation	Counselor (Province HSP, etc)	samitagiri888@gmail.com	
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40	RLTH DEKKER	BUNKNow	COO		
41	Shiva Pandey	AIN	Policy Analyst		
42	NOTE *				
43	MINISTRY OF SOC DEV STAFF	20			
44	BODY GUARDS OF MINISTERS	15			
45	DRIVERS	15			
46					