"PROMOTING STABILITY IN EDUCATION (PSE): CONTINUITY OF LEARNING AND STRENGTHENING RESILIENCY IN NEPAL"

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PROJECT COMPLETION REPORT, 2023

REED Nepal

Rural Education and Environment Development Center

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"PROMOTING STABILITY IN EDUCATION (PSE): CONTINUITY OF LEARNING AND STRENGTHENING RESILIENCY IN NEPAL"

PROJECT INFORMATION

DFAT GRANT	
NAME OF PROGRAM	Promoting Stability in Education (PSE): Continuity of Learning and Strengthening Resiliency in Nepal
IMPLEMENTING PARTNER	Rural Education and Environment Development Centre (REED Nepal)
PROJECT LOCATION	Solukhumbu, Khotang, Okhaldhunga, Sindhuli, Rupandehi, Kapilvastu, Bajhang

Provide a Narrative Summary of Progress Against Each Outcome of the Project:

Outcome 1: [Continuity of Inclusive Education of Children in 7 Districts]

This outcome centred on ensuring the continuity of inclusive education for children in 7 districts' 16 local government units of Nepal. This encompassed a range of following strategic activities aimed at addressing the educational continuity challenges brought about by the COVID-19 pandemic:

1.1. Develop and Distribute the GEDSI responsive learning materials: In response to school closures due to the pandemic, the project developed and distributed GEDSI responsive online/offline learning materials. A total of 70,846 worksheets and workbooks were distributed to children of 679 schools across 16 local government units. The project recognized the diverse needs of students and strived to accommodate them. The learning resources prepared, printed and distributed in collaboration with different development partners, i.e. ECO Himal, Australian Himalayan Foundation (AHF), Himalayan Trust Nepal, Himalayan Trust, UK, Karuna Trust and local government units of respected areas. These resources were audited from GEDSI perspectives. Additionally, Curriculum Development Center(CDC) provided the approval & validation to worksheets prepared by the project.

1.2. Broadcast GEDSI Responsive Radio/Online Lessons: To further enable learning, GEDSI responsive radio lessons were prepared and broadcasted through 12 local radio stations from east to west of Nepal. As per the target, the remarkable 260 radio lessons covering various subjects (English, Maths, Nepali, Social Studies and Science) were developed and disseminated. Workbooks and worksheets were also distributed alongside the radio lessons, reaching 70,846 children in collaboration with multiple agencies. (Himalayan Trust Nepal (HTN), ECO Himal, Australian Himalayan Foundation (AHF), Himalayan Trust-UK). The experienced teacher trainers devoted their time for its effectiveness and quality delivery. Radio personnels were also trained for GEDSI responsive media broadcasting and mobilization.

1.3. ICT Devices Support: Recognizing the importance of COVID-19 protocols, growing demand for technology in education, the PSE project provided ICT devices to 14 schools which are in need. These devices, including computers, printers, and pen drives, aimed to enhance learning opportunities even in remote contexts of Nepal. Additionally, 2,339 radios vulnerable children and 103 pen drives were distributed to 103 schools to facilitate distance and onsite learning.

1.4. Remedial Teaching and Learning: In response to the aftermath of COVID-19 disruptions & long school closures and its impact on learning, a dedicated initiative: 6800 remedial EMS books support, 3 days remedial training to 296 teachers and remedial teaching-learning to 6800 least performing children were launched upon the resumption of schools. This initiative centred around the ReAL plan of Nepal Government (Recovery of Accelerated Learning) targeting students from grades 4 to 8. A comprehensive sum of 6,800 children were mentored by 296 trained teachers. Their role encompassed guiding students in English, Maths, and Science subjects, all aimed at alleviating the learning loss incurred due to the pandemic.

1.5. Workbooks/Worksheets/Reference Materials: During the pandemic, 70,846 children were supported with workbooks and worksheets to continue inclusive learning. These materials were provided to

address the learning challenges brought by the closure of schools in collaboration with other like-minded NGOs as mentioned above.

1.6. Head Teacher/Local Teacher/Volunteer Mobilization for School Based Mentoring: The project mobilised 103 head teachers, 231 volunteer teachers and 7 Education Field Officers regularly in the project areas for school-based mentoring. This approach aimed to provide support and guidance to students during the emergency period and after schools reopened. Leader/focused secondary schools deployed their teachers to feeder schools to recover the learning loss caused by COVID-19, motivate the students and communicate with the parents to remain optimistic despite COVID-19 impact on education and health.

1.7. Media Advocacy, Lobbying and Publication: The PSE project engaged in media advocacy, lobbying and publication activities to address the various issues related to COVID-19, gender equality, safeguarding, disability and social inclusion. Through the distribution of 103 hoarding boards, 515 flex prints, 2000 brochures and advocacy initiatives, the project aimed to raise awareness and empower communities. These "Publication and Advocacy" initiatives played crucial roles in maintaining learning continuity, mitigating Sexual and Gender-Based Violences (SGBV), and strengthening resilience during emergencies in schools and communities. Publication and advocacy initiatives remained powerful that provided information, raised awareness, influenced policy changes, and promoted collaboration. By focusing on learning continuity, mitigating SGBV, and strengthening resilience, these efforts contributed to the overall well-being of children at schools and communities during and after emergencies.

In summary, Outcome 1 of the PSEP project diligently worked towards ensuring the continuity of inclusive education for children in 7 districts' 16 local government units (Jayaprithvi Municipality, Talkot Rural Municipality: Bajhang, Shivaraj Municipality: Kapilvastu, Tillottama Municipality: Rupandehi, Kamalamai Municipality: Singhuli,Haleshi Tuwachung Municipality: Khotang, Molung Rural Municipality and Khijidemba Rural Municipality: Okhaldhuunga and Necha-Salyan Rural Municipality, Mahakulung Rural Municipality, Sotang Rural Municipality, Mapya Dudhkoshi Rural Municipality, Thulung Dudhkoshi Rural Municipality, Likhupike Rural Municipality (RM), Khumbu Pasang Rural Municipality and Soludhudhkunda Municipality: Solukhumbu). The project's efforts encompassed the development and distribution of tailored learning materials, radio lessons, technology support, remedial teaching, and various advocacy initiatives. This comprehensive approach sought to mitigate the challenges posed by the pandemic and create a conducive learning environment for all children, focusing on their diverse needs and ensuring that no one was left behind.

(Note: Initially, 16 Local Government Units' 105 Secondary Schools were targeted during COVID-19 period. Later on, because of resource duplication concerns, Khumbu Pasang Lhamu RM and 2 schools were left out after the consensus of respected Local Government unit.)

Outcome 2: [Strengthened the Resiliency of Schools to Cope with Humanitarian Emergencies.]

Outcome 2 of the PSEP aimed to strengthen the resiliency of schools in coping with humanitarian emergencies. This was achieved through below initiatives:

2.1 Coordination and Monitoring: The project-initiated kick-off meetings in 105 schools and 16 local government units, followed by regular coordination meetings during project periods across 15 local governments during and after the COVID-19 pandemic. The project closely coordinated with federal, provincial, and local governments to ensure the effective collaboration.

Joint monitoring was conducted at local municipalities and provincial levels. The joint monitoring with government representatives in the PSE project ensured transparency, accountability, and effective project implementation. By involving government representatives in the monitoring process, the project gained credibility, as government officials were seen as neutral and authoritative observers. Their presence helped in minimising mismanagement, corruption, and deviations from the project's goals. Furthermore, government involvement fostered information sharing, early issue detection, and timely resolution, ultimately leading to successful project outcomes aligned with LG's priorities and regulatory compliances.

2.2 Contingency Plan Development Support at Palikas: 15 contingency plans and 9 Local Education Sector Plans (Necha-Salyan Rural Municipality, Mahakulung Rural Municipality, Sotang Rural Municipality, Mapya Dudhkoshi Rural Municipality, Thulung Dudhkoshi Rural Municipality, Likhupike Rural Municipality (RM), Kamalamai Municipality, Haleshi Tuwachung Municipality and Soludhudhkunda Municipality were developed in line with national education and other sectoral plans. These plans were based on the lessons learned from the COVID-19 pandemic and involved 550 stakeholders from schools, local levels, and communities. The goal was to create a comprehensive approach to emergencies over a 5 to 10-year period. Education Contingency Plans developed in 15 local levels of Nepal addressed the local context and accounted for the specific challenges, resources, and circumstances of the areas. Local government representatives were actively participated and committed themselves to data driven planning and resource allocation after these interventions. These plans were developed by leveraging the resources from respected LG units which ultimately will contribute to the sustainability of PSE initiatives.

2.3 Capacity Building: Various stakeholders were trained to enhance their capacity in disaster preparedness, gender equality, safeguarding and protection. 550 Mayors, deputy mayors, and local representatives underwent training in contingency and education planning. 296 English, Maths, Science (EMS) teachers received training in remedial education, while school management committees, parents, and teachers received training on contingency education. 2163 Child club members were also trained on social protection and shock response mechanisms.

2.4 Develop and Share Information, Education and Communication (IEC) Materials: GEDSI-responsive IEC/BCC materials were made available in all 103 targeted schools. These materials covered topics like social protection mechanisms, action plans for emergencies, and awareness messages on various issue. IEC (Information, Education, and Communication) and BCC (Behaviour Change Communication) materials played a crucial role, including safeguarding, gender equality, resilience building, mitigating sexual and gender-based violence (SGBV), and promoting learning continuity in an emergency context.

These materials educated communities, individuals, and organisations about their rights, boundaries, and the importance of reporting incidents regarding safeguarding. These materials challenged harmful gender stereotypes, sensitized about children's rights, and encouraged equal participation in decision-making processes at schools. These materials provided information about disaster preparedness, risk reduction strategies, and coping mechanisms. These IEC resources provided information on recognizing signs of SGBV, reporting mechanisms, available support services, and legal provisions and contributed to reducing stigmas around SGBV and encouraging survivors to seek help.

2.5 COVID Safety Support: Vulnerable students, including children with disabilities and girls, were provided with COVID safety measures, WASH (Water, Sanitation, and Hygiene) resources, and dignity kits (hygiene kits) in 103 schools across 7 districts. This initiative specifically targeted to the well-being of 800 children with disabilities (CWDs) and vulnerable girls (53% males and 47% females).

The provision of 'COVID-19 Safety Support and Dignity Kits' for learning continuity not only bridged the gap caused by disrupted education but also upheld the rights, safety, and dignity of those often marginalised by

society. This support helped to mitigate the learning barriers and fostered a sense of inclusion and self-worth. The provision of hygiene kits: masks, sanitizers, bags, planning diaries with information on preventive measures directly addressed for learning continuity, mitigating vulnerability and strengthening resilience in schools and communities.

In summary, Outcome 2 focused on enhancing school resiliency in the face of emergencies. It included coordination, contingency planning, capacity building for stakeholders, learning materials, IEC materials' development, and providing support for COVID safety measures. These efforts collectively aimed to strengthen schools' ability to respond effectively to humanitarian emergencies.

Outcome 3: Strengthened the Safeguarding/SGBV Response Mechanisms at Schools/Communities.

Outcome 3 of the PSE project focused on strengthening safeguarding and response mechanisms related to Sexual and Gender-Based Violence (SGBV) in schools and communities. The following initiatives were undertaken to achieve this outcome:

3.1 Strengthening SGBV/Social Protection/Shock Response Mechanism via Child Club Mobilization: Child clubs in 103 schools were empowered through capacity-building training on SGBV, Shock Response Mechanism, and Sexual and Reproductive Health (SRH) Education. The project successfully trained 2,163 children, including child club 103 focal teachers in 103 schools. Child clubs of PSE schools engaged in various activities like awareness campaigns, essay competitions, street dramas, and discussions on important GEDSI related issues such as untouchability, unsafe touch, corporal punishment, early marriage and child protection. Additionally, PSEP focused on Strengthening SGBV (Sexual and Gender-Based Violence), Social Protection and Shock Response Mechanism to enhance the systems and strategies to effectively address and mitigate the impact of various forms of violences, provide support to vulnerable children, and respond to sudden shocks or crises in the following ways:

-Strengthening the SGBV response involved improving mechanisms to prevent, address different forms of violence, including raising awareness about SGBV, training to handle cases sensitively, establishing safe spaces at 103 schools and homes.

-Strengthening shock response mechanisms involved preparing 103 schools, communities, and systems to respond swiftly and effectively to such shocks including setting up emergency funds, establishing coordination mechanisms between local government units, NGOs and developing contingency plans that outline actions to be taken during different types of crises.

3.2 Strengthening Child Clubs at Schools: All child clubs from the targeted schools (103 schools) led in 824 extracurricular activities (ECAs) or talent hunts on their own leadership. Two days capacity strengthening workshops provided to 2163 child club members benefited 2,163 children directly and indirectly impacted 17,412 boys and 17,120 girls. Children with disabilities (269 boys and 259 girls) also indirectly benefited from these activities. These activities were mentored by 103 Gender Equality and Social Inclusion (GEDSI) focal teachers, who provided support related to child protection, safeguarding, child rights and complaint handling & response mechanisms.

3.3 10 PSAs on Social Protection/Safeguarding Mechanism: 10 Public Service Announcements (PSAs) or jingles were broadcasted 450 times through 9 local FM radio stations (Approximate Reach to 0.5 Million Children) of Nepal to raise awareness on child rights, harmful social practices, psycho-social issues, child

protection, life skills, and creating a supportive learning environment at home and schools. PSAs (Public Service Announcements) related to Sexual and Gender-Based Violence (SGBV), gender equality, and safeguarding had a significant impact on the lives of children in the following ways:

-Age appropriate and culture sensitive PSAs played a crucial role in raising awareness about SGBV, gender-related violences, and safeguarding measures. Children who were exposed to these PSAs gained knowledge about what constituted healthy and unhealthy behaviours, understanding consent, recognizing warning signs, and knowing how to seek help. This PSA's education empowered them to make informed decisions and protect themselves.

-By educating children about the risks and consequences of SGBV, gender inequality, and unsafe situations, PSAs helped to prevent these issues from occurring in the first place. Children who were informed about their rights and personal boundaries were better equipped to identify potentially harmful situations and take steps to avoid them.

-PSAs empowered children by promoting self-confidence, self-expression, and assertiveness. Children learnt about gender equality and their rights through these messages and they were more likely to challenge stereotypes and discriminatory behaviours leading to improved self-esteem and resilience.

-Exposure to PSAs highlighted the negative impacts of SGBV and the importance of gender equality influenced children's attitudes and behaviours.

- Many SGBV incidents went unreported due to fear, shame, or lack of knowledge about available support services. Later on , PSA's broadcasting and capacity building informed children about helplines, support centres, and trusted adults to whom they can turn if they experience or witness SGBV. This knowledge encouraged them to seek help when needed.

- PSAs challenged harmful societal norms and attitudes that perpetuated SGBV and gender inequality. Children were exposed to positive messages about healthy relationships and gender equity, they were more likely to adopt these values and carry them into adulthood.

3.4 Orientation on Reproductive and Sexual Health-Hygiene: In the first year, orientations on sexual and reproductive health (SRH) were provided to students from grades 6 to 8 in 103 schools which benefitted to 9,121 children, including 5,006 girls and 134 children with disabilities. By implementing a comprehensive sexual and reproductive health education for all children of 103 secondary schools of Nepal found a proactive and essential initiative with far-reaching impacts. By equipping with accurate information and fostering open conversations about these vital concerns, PSEP empowered children to make informed decisions about their bodies, relationships, and well-being.

This initiative not only demystified the changes occurring during adolescence but also addressed critical issues such as consent, gender equality, and safe sexual practices. As a result, students were better prepared to navigate the challenges of growing up, built healthy relationships founded on respect, and made responsible choices that contributed to their long-term physical and emotional health. Moreover, a well-structured sexual and reproductive health education orientation in schools acted as a crucial bridge in bridging societal gaps in knowledge, ensuring that all children, irrespective of their backgrounds, had access to accurate information. By nurturing a generation that valued their bodies, respected others' boundaries,

and understood the importance of their sexual and reproductive health, PSEP laid the foundation for a healthier, more equitable, and informed school children ad society.

3.5 Development and Support on GEDSI Policy/School Reopening Guideline: Guidelines on Gender Equality, Disability and Social Inclusion (GEDSI) and School Reopening were prepared and distributed to 450 community schools of 7 districts. These guidelines aligned with government policies and alternative learning facilitation strategies to ensure continuous learning for vulnerable children. This initiative contributed on system and policy level support to schools and local government units.

In summary, Outcome 3 focused on strengthening safeguarding and response mechanisms through child club mobilization, orientation on SRH, development of guidelines, and awareness campaigns. These initiatives aimed to enhance the safety and well-being of children, promote gender equality, and create an inclusive and protective school environment.

4. Mentoring, Monitoring & Evaluation (Baseline Survey, End line Survey, Monitoring from Central and District level)

The PSE project also emphasized mentoring, monitoring, and evaluation through stakeholder consultation providing support to schools, and conducting baseline and end-line surveys to ensure the project's relevancy, efficiency, effectiveness, impact, and sustainability.

4.1 Baseline Survey

In July-August 2021, a comprehensive baseline survey was conducted as part of the project's initial phase, targeting 103 schools and 16 Rural Municipalities/Municipalities. The purpose of this survey was to collect primary data and information that would serve as a foundation for the project's subsequent activities. Various methodological approaches were employed, including Key Informant Interviews (KII), Focus Group Discussions (FGD), Document Review, Observation, Interviews, document reviews from a distance, onsite interactions.

The survey aimed to gain a deep understanding of the existing educational landscape, challenges, and opportunities within the project's scope. To achieve this, a multifaceted approach was adopted, involving different stakeholders. Key informants such as Head Teachers, School Management Committees (SMCs)/Parent-Teacher Associations (PTAs), Child Club members, Local Government Representatives, Community-Based Organizations (CBOs), and Media Networks were pivotal resources for gathering valuable information.

Through KII and interviews, insights were obtained from educational leaders and local authorities, shedding light on the prevailing educational scenario and potential areas for improvement. FGDs allowed for group discussions, offering a platform for diverse perspectives to emerge. Document reviews and observations further enriched the data by providing tangible evidence and context. Furthermore, the survey's narrative report, alongside a comprehensive database, was meticulously compiled and submitted. This report served as a crucial baseline for the project, offering a clear snapshot of the educational landscape before any interventions took place. The combination of methodologies ensured a holistic understanding of the challenges faced by the educational system, as well as the strengths that could be leveraged.

Overall, the baseline survey played a pivotal role in shaping the subsequent phases of the project, offering a data-driven foundation upon which targeted strategies and initiatives could be built. It provided a

comprehensive understanding of the educational context, ensuring that the subsequent efforts were tailored to address specific needs and gaps identified during the baseline data collection process.

4.2 Endline Survey

To comprehensively evaluate the project's outcomes and impacts and to gauge its effectiveness, relevance, efficiency, sustainability, lessons learned, and identify potential gaps, an endline study was conducted in May and June 2023 across the districts of the Promoting Stability in Education (PSE) Project, namely, Bajhang, Kapilvastu, Rupandehi, Sindhuli, Khotang, Okhaldhunga, and Solukhumbu. The endline study was instrumental in informing the project's strategy and providing a framework to measure its results.

In this study, a subset of 54 schools was surveyed out of the total 103 schools across the seven project districts. The primary objective was to gather both quantitative and qualitative data that would reflect the changes and impacts occurring in the project's targeted impact areas. Questionnaires, in-depth interviews, and focused group discussions formed the basis of data collection. These methods involved engaging with school head teachers, teachers, representatives of local education units, GEDSI focal teachers, child clubs, School Management Committees (SMCs)/Parent-Teacher Associations (PTAs), English Math Science (EMS) teachers, Local Disaster Management Committees, and other relevant local government stakeholders.

Drawing from a quasi-experimental design, the endline study aimed to incorporate scientific measurement of project impact. The study embraced certain principles of randomized evaluation designs to ensure the robustness of its findings. The evaluation criteria established by the Development Assistance Committee (DAC) were applied to assess the project's relevance, efficiency, effectiveness, and sustainability.

Quantitative data related to student enrolment, learning achievements, dropouts, transfers, and pass rates were extracted from school records, providing a quantitative foundation for analysis. Additionally, qualitative data were gathered through focus group discussions and key informant interviews, enabling a deeper understanding of beneficiary perspectives and local government stakeholders.

The culmination of these efforts resulted in a comprehensive assessment of the Promoting Stability in Education (PSE) Project. By strategically aligning the endline study with the project's goals, the evaluation sought to measure its impact, effectiveness, relevance, efficiency, and sustainability. This thorough assessment informed the project's ongoing strategy, identified lessons learned, and pinpointed potential areas for improvement. The detailed findings of the endline survey, including both quantitative and qualitative insights, are provided separately within this report, offering a holistic perspective on the project's outcomes and impacts.

4.3 Monitoring

The monitoring framework for the emergency response project in remote contexts of Nepal was designed to ensure the quality and effectiveness of learning outcomes throughout the project period. This framework encompassed monitoring visits carried out at both the central and local levels, aligning with the project's core motto of responsiveness and efficacy in challenging environments.

At the central level, a diverse team consisting of REED board members, including the Chief Executive Officer and Program Director, along with the MEAL Manager, Team Leader, Training Specialist, and Safeguarding Officer, conducted monitoring visits at various intervals. Their presence in the field aimed to fortify the project's outcomes by providing oversight, guidance, and insights to enhance its impact.

On the local front, the project extended its monitoring efforts through the engagement of local government representatives, education officers, and education field officers. This local team took on the role of mentors and monitors, ensuring that the project deliverables aligned seamlessly with the project's overarching objectives.

The significance of collaborative engagement was evident in the monitoring process. As part of the DFAT's/Australian Aid's commitment and interest, Her Excellency Ms. Felicity Volk and her team from the Australian Embassy conducted monitoring visits in Lumbini province during the first year of the project. This exemplified the project's dedication to transparency, accountability, and achieving optimal results.

Overall, the monitoring approach aptly matched the project's underlying motto of responding effectively to emergencies in remote settings. By fostering a multi-layered approach that involved central and local stakeholders, as well as the funding agency, the project maintained a comprehensive perspective and ensured that the project's outcomes aligned with its mission in providing stability and quality education in challenging contexts.

4.4 Annual Review Reflection Meeting/Workshops conducted among staff, board members, and stakeholders & Central Level Monitoring

In adherence to the guideline of annual project reviews of REED Nepal, the PSE project convened two pivotal annual review meetings. These gatherings brought together a comprehensive assembly of project staff, esteemed board members at the central office of REED Nepal. The core purpose behind these meetings was to meticulously scrutinise the project's trajectory, highlight best practices that emerged, and collaboratively shape the quarterly roadmap for subsequent actions to be executed by the dedicated project team. These annual review meetings stood as dynamic platforms for reflection, evaluation, and strategic planning. By fostering an environment of collective assessment, the project could gauge its progress against set targets and illuminate the path towards sustained success. These meetings enabled the exchange of insights, ideas, and lessons learned, driving continuous improvement.

In line with the annual review's motto, these gatherings encapsulated the essence of monitoring, adaptation, and refinement. They ensured that the project remained responsive, adaptable, and aligned with its mission throughout its implementation. Through this meticulous review process, the project could uphold its commitment to delivering impactful education in emergency (EiE) response outcomes while fostering a spirit of collaboration and growth among all stakeholders involved.

4.5 MPACs (Municipal Level Project Advisory Committee) Meetings

In steadfast alignment with the core principles of stakeholder ownership, accountability, sustainability, resource leveraging, and a constructive feedback mechanism, the Promoting Stability in Education Project (PSEP) orchestrated one impactful MPAC meeting accompanied by joint monitoring initiatives in 15 local government units of 7 districts throughout the project duration.

These strategic engagements were meticulously implemented embodying the very essence of collaborative and effective emergency education response initiatives. Under the umbrella of stakeholders' ownership, these meetings provided a platform for local representatives, officials, and community leaders to actively participate. By involving these key stakeholders, the project ensured that those most directly connected to the project's outcomes had a voice in its trajectory. This translated into a profound sense of accountability, where these stakeholders became vested partners, accountable for the project's success and aligned with its objectives.

Moreover, the emphasis on sustainability was evident as the project utilised these meetings to explore approaches that would ensure the initiatives' lasting impact beyond the project's duration. The conversations during these gatherings spanned beyond immediate needs, delving into methods to leverage existing resources and integrate the initiatives into the fabric of the community.

The ethos of resource leveraging was inherent, as the project harnessed the collective wisdom, networks, and capacities of diverse stakeholders. The MPAC members, equipped with their unique insights, provided constructive feedback and suggestions that were then systematically integrated into the project's implementation. This dialogue-driven feedback mechanism fostered a culture of continuous improvement and refinement.

In summary, these MPAC meetings, regular monitoring and joint monitoring illustrated the project's profound commitment to stakeholder ownership, accountability, sustainability, and resource optimization. By embracing local leaders as active participants and incorporating their insights, the project ensured that the solutions were contextually relevant and collectively owned. This approach encapsulated the motto of a robust and dynamic emergency education response project, one that not only addresses immediate needs but also lays the foundation for lasting change driven by the very communities it seeks to empower.

5. Other Strategic Initiatives: Resource Leveraging & Collaboration

Resource leveraging through joint monitoring and plan sharing played an improved role in enhancing the effectiveness of emergency response in education project/ promoting stability in education supported by DFAT/Australian Aid in Nepal. These approaches involved collaborating with various stakeholders, optimising available resources, and engaging local communities to create sustainable and impactful initiatives. By the following ways, resource leveraging applied during project period:

5.1. Stakeholder Collaboration:

- Identified and involved key stakeholders such as government agencies, other non-governmental organisations (NGOs): HTN, ECO-Himal, CITC, HT, UK, AHF, etc., local communities, educational institutions, and emergency services providers.
- Collaborated with these stakeholders to share expertise, resources, and experiences, which contributed to a more comprehensive and well-rounded emergency response education program.

5.2. Resource Optimization:

- Evaluated the existing resources available through plan sharing within the project scope, including human resources, infrastructure, technology, and funding.
- Optimised the allocation of resources to ensure maximum impact. For example, partnering with local schools to use their facilities for training sessions helped to save costs.
- Tailored the educational materials and training programs to address these unique challenges, making them more relevant and effective.

5.3 Technical Capacity Building of Human Resources on Online/Offline Resource Development:

- Built a team of 12 trainers of REED Nepal who delivered emergency response education to school children during the COVID-19.

- Provided these trainers with comprehensive training, enabling them to effectively impart knowledge and skills in an engaging manner for online/offline distance lessons.

5.4. Technology Integration:

- Leveraged technology, such as online platforms and mobile applications, to disseminate educational content and conduct virtual training and radio sessions.
- This helped to reach remote or underserved areas where physical presence was challenging.

5.5. Voluntary Stakeholders' Engagement:

- Involved local communities (SMC/PTAs, Ward Chairpersons, Mayor, etc.) in the planning, execution, and evaluation of the project.
- This participatory approach fostered a sense of ownership, empowerment, and sustainability within the community.
- Collected feedback from participants, trainers, and community members to make necessary improvements and adjustments.
- Documented the project's successes, challenges, and lessons learned to share with likeminded organisations and line agencies.

By combining resource leveraging, PSE project became more responsive and sustainable leading to improved community resilience and preparedness in times of crisis.

Provide a Summary of the Coordination and Collaboration with Different Stakeholders Undertaken During the Project Period to Achieve the Results.

The summary of coordination and collaboration with different stakeholders during and after the COVID-19 period to achieve the PSEP outcomes are mentioned below:

During the COVID-19 pandemic, for ensuring the learning continuity, mitigating the impact of SGBV (Sexual and Gender-Based Violence), and strengthening overall resilience in the school education of 7 districts of Nepal, a well-coordinated approach involving various stakeholders were taken into consideration. Drawing lessons from successful initiatives of past projects of REED Nepal like Quick Impact Project and TTQIEP (Teacher Training Quality Inclusive Education Project, Solukhumbu) the following summary outlines the key strategies for effective coordination and collaboration with different stakeholders of Nepal:

- **Multi-level Engagement**: PSEP engaged stakeholders at multiple levels – local, federal, and provincial. Local levels held regular coordination meetings involving Education Field Officers, local government representatives and other like-minded agencies. At the federal level, review meetings with relevant ministries, such as the Ministry of Education, Science and Technology (MoEST), Curriculum Development Center, Social Welfare Council, CEHRD (Centre for Education and Hunan Resource Development), Education Clusters to align initiatives with broader educational policies conducted.
- **Informal Communication Channels**: Established and maintained healthy, frequent, and informal communication channels with media. Regular interaction between education officials, teachers, parents, and students were key approaches for sharing information, addressing challenges, and brainstorming solutions.

- **Alignment with Local Priorities**: PSEP aligned its initiatives with the priorities of local governments, it ensured that emergency education measures were tailored to local contexts. This approach made local government representatives more invested in the initiatives' success, enhancing accountability and responsibility.
- **Collaborative Planning**: Involved a range of stakeholders, including local government units, schools, other NGOs, community representatives, and parents in collaborative planning. This participatory approach ensured that strategies were comprehensive, culturally sensitive, and addressed the unique needs of each community.
- **Joint Monitoring and Support Visits**: Planned joint monitoring visits to schools, involving representatives from local government, education authorities, NGOs, and relevant ministries. These visits helped to assess the implementation of initiatives, provided on-the-ground support, and identified areas for improvement.
- **Helplines and Support Services**: Partnered with other NGOs and health organisations to establish helplines or support services for students facing challenges during the pandemic. These services addressed mental health concerns, provide counselling, and offer guidance on reporting incidents of SGBV.
- **Data Sharing and Analysis**: Collaborated with data collection agencies to gather information on learning outcomes, attendance rates, and incidents of SGBV. Analysing this data informed evidence-based decision-making and helped to refine strategies over time.
- **Advocacy and Awareness Campaigns**: Worked with media outlets, NGOs, and community leaders to launch advocacy and awareness campaigns. These campaigns highlighted the importance of education continuity, promoted positive behaviours, and educated the community about preventing and addressing SGBV.

Incorporating these strategies into a comprehensive coordination and collaboration framework helped Nepal Government's education sector priorities to navigate the challenges posed by the COVID-19 pandemic. By learning from past successful initiatives and tailoring approaches to the the-then emergency situation, stakeholders ensured the continuity of learning, the safety of students, and the overall resilience of the education system 15 local government units of Nepal. In the meeting of Education Cluster led by CEHRD, PSEP initiatives were shared and acknowledged by the government agencies which ultimately contributed to the ReAL plan (2023-27) to mitigate the learning loss with joint education cluster members' input.

What are the different approaches the project is using to engage men, women, boys and girls in programming? Do these approaches reflect what was found in the "Gender Analysis"?

The following specific strategies were tailored based on the project's context, goals in the PSE project taking into consideration to engage men, women, boys, and girls as per the received information by respective schools and local governments:

- **Inclusive Radio Lessons Design and Implementation:** PSEP developed the training packages and distance education lessons that incorporated the diverse examples catering to various interests, capabilities and learning styles of students ensuring all the genders.
- **Role Models and Mentors:** PSE arranged orientations where child club members from underrepresented genders also could participate and interact successfully with teachers/role models /mentors in the schools.
- **Safe and Supportive Spaces:** PSEP put its efforts to create an environment that promotes inclusivity and respect, addressing potential biases and ensuring everyone feels comfortable participating in the schools, events and classes.

- **Affirmative Participation:** PSEP's talent hunt initiatives/ECAs organised GEDSI responsive competitions and challenges that encouraged collaboration allowing children of all genders to learn and create together.
- **Address Stereotypes:** PSEP implemented awareness campaigns to challenge stereotypes associated with harmful practices fostering a more inclusive perception.
- **Flexible Learning Paths:** PSEP recognized diverse learning styles and time commitments offering options for short-term training and orientation to accommodate the various schedules/learning styles of boys/girls.
- **Feedback Mechanism:** PSEP continuously gathered feedback from stakeholders of all genders to refine and adapt the project initiatives ensuring it remained responsive to their needs and preferences.

Explain how the project identified and addressed barriers to inclusion and opportunities for participation for people with disability as well? List the challenges experienced and how did the project overcome them? Was a disability inclusion assessment undertaken by the project? How were the recommendations from the assessment included in the design and implementation plan?

PSEP adopted the following strategies to identify and address the barriers to inclusion and opportunities for participation of children with disabilities and creating a more equitable and accessible learning environment despite COVID-19 pandemic:

1. Raised Awareness:

- Education and awareness campaigns conducted to help the children understand the challenges for promoting empathy and reducing stigma associated with disabilities in all capacity building initiatives via integration of disability inclusion related contents.
- Capacity strengthening programs were tailored as per the disability inclusion perspectives to enhance the sensitivity towards disability-related issues & barriers.
- Local Governments were coordinated to implement and enforce inclusive policies and guidelines that protect the rights of children with disabilities and ensure the equal access to opportunities.

2. Consultation and Participation:

- Involved children with disabilities in decision-making processes related to policies, programs, and services that affect them in children clubs.

3. Inclusive Communication:

- Ensured that communication is accessible to all, including providing information in multiple formats like large print, easy-to-read, and digital formats.

4. Collaborative Partnerships:

- Collaborated with the organisations of people with disabilities (OPDs) for the learning resources related with disability inclusion and for service providers mapping.

5. Disability Inclusion Sensitive IEC Materials:

- Promoted a culture of respect and inclusion by challenging negative stereotypes, biases, and misconceptions about children with disabilities through disability inclusion sensitive IEC materials distribution and orientation on them.

6. Inclusive ECAs/Talent Hunts:

- Developed accessible ECA/Talent Hunt activities, sports programs, and events that catered to a diverse range of abilities.
- Continuously monitor progress towards inclusion goals and regularly assess the effectiveness of implemented strategies.

What approaches are working well to include those with a disability (including children)? Do these approaches reflect what was found in your "Disability Inclusion" assessment?

For creating an inclusive environment for children with disabilities, including vulnerable children, required a comprehensive and empathetic approach which addressed physical, social, and emotional needs. Below are some of the best approaches which worked well in PSEP:

- **Project Design:** Adopting inclusive design principles ensured that environments, products, and services were disability friendly with a wide range of abilities and disabilities.
- **Accessibility in Infrastructure:** Orientation to GEDSI focal teachers and parents sensitised about physical spaces were accessible with ramps or not, elevators, wide doorways, and tactile guidance for individuals with mobility impairments to some extent. Also, provided accessible restrooms, learning spaces, and seating arrangements within the limitation of project scope.
- **Orientation on Disability Inclusion:** Schools adopted inclusive education practices where children with disabilities were also educated alongside their peers without disabilities. This approach benefitted all students by promoting diversity and understanding.
- **Accessible Information:** Provided information in multiple formats – visual, auditory, and tactile – to accommodate children with different disabilities.
- **Lobbying for Assistive Technologies:** PSE schools lobbied to integrate the assistive technologies that cater to various disabilities with different government entities.
- **Training and Sensitization:** PSE educated staff, teachers, students, and the community about different disabilities, appropriate language, and how to interact respectfully. This helped to reduce stigma and create a supportive atmosphere.
- **Emotional and Social Support:** Addressed emotional and social needs through counselling services and support/child club groups. Created a safe and accepting environment to build self-esteem and fosters friendships.
- **Accessible Communication:** Used clear and simple language, visual aids, and alternative communication methods to facilitate effective communication with individuals who had

communication difficulties.

- **Advocacy and Policy:** Advocated for disability rights and promoted policies that enforced inclusivity, anti-discrimination, and equal opportunities for children with disabilities.
- **Peer Support/Child Club Programs:** Established mentorship mechanism that pair children with disabilities with peers who could provide support and friendship.

List some of the specific disability inclusion related activities undertaken during the project period.

PSE project adopted the various specific activities in schools to promote the disability inclusion during and after COVID-19 period. Open communication with students, parents and schools with necessary adjustments and personalised approaches were crucial for ensuring meaningful participation during the project period. Few are mentioned below:

- **Accessible Online Learning:**
  - Ensured that all online learning platforms, lessons, materials, and resources are accessible to students with disabilities.
  - Provided technical support for students from local volunteer teachers who required assistance with different resources, audio, video, printed, etc.
- **Individualised Support Plans:** Volunteer teachers developed and implemented Individualised Education Plans (IEPs) for students with disabilities that outline specific accommodations and modifications for remote learning.
- **Peer Support Groups/Radio Clubs/Child Clubs:** Organised peer support groups for students with disabilities to connect, share experiences, and provide emotional support by schools.
- **Adaptive Materials:** Provided adaptive learning materials, such as workbook, worksheet, recorded resources, to students who require them.
- **Inclusive Training to Teachers, Child Clubs, SMC/PTA and Regular Mentoring:** Offered different training sessions on how to support CWDs effectively to students, parents, and teachers.
- **Flexible Assessments:** Modified assessment methods to accommodate different learning styles and abilities, allowing students to demonstrate their understanding in various ways as guided by Nepal Government.
- **Regular Field Trips and Support:** Organised regular field trips and supported by head teachers of leader schools, volunteer teachers, education field officers to support the students including CWDs.
- **Awareness Campaigns:** Conducted school level, media level and community level disability awareness campaigns to educate the school community about different disabilities and foster understanding and empathy.
- **Inclusive Extracurricular Activities:** Adapted extracurricular activities ensuring that all students, including those with disabilities, participated and enjoyed.
- **Accessible Communication:** Provided information and updates in multiple formats, such as audio recordings, plain text, and video, to cater to different communication needs.
- **Virtual Learning Hours:** Hosted virtual learning hours for students with disabilities, providing additional support and clarification on assignments.
- **Collaboration with Support Staff:** Maintained regular communication between special education teachers and support staff to ensure that students' needs are being met as required.
- **Family Involvement:** Engaged parents and guardians of students with disabilities in the planning and decision-making process for remote learning accommodations.

- **Teacher Training:** Provided professional development for teachers to enhance their knowledge of inclusive practices and strategies for remote learning.
- **Social-Emotional Support:** Offered virtual counselling and support services for students with disabilities who were experiencing heightened stress or anxiety.

How did the project identify the barriers to inclusion and opportunities for participation for indigenous people and ethnic minorities? Please, list the any challenges experienced and how the project overcame them.

PSEP worked adopting the "Leave No One Behind" approaches. Data disaggregation was considered for data base management and reporting. There were not any hindrances to involve the ethnic minorities people and children in the project period. Access and participation of indigenous people and ethnic minorities in the project deliverables has been ensured.

Sustainability:

Does the project have a sustainability plan? List the initiatives taken within this reporting period to move towards sustaining the various outcomes of the project.

The sustainability of the PSE Project has been achieved via Capacity Building of School stakeholders and Strengthening of Systems. By focusing on system strengthening and capacity building, the project paved the way for enduring results. The creation of a solid platform demonstrates the potential for continued success.

The integration of Contingency Plans into the Local Education Support Plan (LESP), along with adherence to Gender Equality, Disability, and Social Inclusion (GEDSI) guidelines at targeted schools, showcased the project's commitment to long-term impact. The functional integration of these plans and guidelines into the School Improvement Plans (SIP) underlined the project's dedication to fostering gender-responsive, inclusive, and disaster-ready educational environments at both local and school levels.

Through the empowerment of key stakeholders such as Head Teachers (HTs), School Management Committees (SMCs), Parent-Teacher Associations (PTAs), GEDSI focal teachers, child club members, and community representatives, the PSE project ensured the continuation of advocacy efforts. This ongoing advocacy for disaster preparedness, educational stability during emergencies, and gender-responsive budgets from local governments underscores the sustainability of the PSE project's influence.

Furthermore, the instrumental role played by the project in capacitating Rural Municipalities and Municipalities cannot be overlooked. By equipping them with the necessary skills and knowledge, the project has enabled these entities to effectively implement the prescribed functions and activities outlined in their contingency plans and LESP. This commitment to actions even after the project's conclusion underscores the resilience of the project's outcomes.

In conclusion, the sustainability of the PSE project is demonstrated through its profound impact on various levels of the education system and local governance. By fostering a culture of preparedness, inclusivity, and advocacy, the project has laid the groundwork for lasting change, ensuring that the benefits of strengthened systems and capacity building endure well into the future.

To what extent, the project is successfully reaching beyond the direct beneficiaries of the project to build the sustainable changes in the whole community?

The PSE project, beyond the direct beneficiaries of school stakeholders, reached with larger communities to build the sustainable changes in the whole community with careful planning, collaboration, and strategic implementation. In addition to mobilisation of 12 radio stations across Nepal for online GEDSI responsive radio education and PSAs' broadcasting throughout the project period, PSEP adopted the below key initiatives for sustainable changes:

1. **Assessment and Planning:**
   - Conducted a thorough assessment of the stakeholders' needs, vulnerabilities, and existing resources related to emergency response and disaster preparedness with reference to COVID-19.
   - Identified the key stakeholders, including local government agencies, community leaders, non-governmental organisations, and CBOs, who could contribute to the project's success.
   - Developed a comprehensive project implementation plan that outlined the objectives, target audience, activities, timeline, and desired outcomes.

2. **Engage Stakeholders:**
   - Fostered partnerships and collaborations with various stakeholders to create a unified effort. Involved local leaders, community organisations, and CSOs in project planning and decision-making. (SMCs, PTAs, EDCUs)
   - Held meetings to gather input and feedback from different stakeholders. Ensured their perspectives were considered in shaping the project's approaches at local level.

3. **Tailor Training and Distance Education Curriculum and Outreach:**
   - Designed an emergency response distance education curriculum that is culturally sensitive, relevant, and engaging for both students and the wider community.
   - Developed materials that could be easily understood and shared with different age groups and demographics.
   - Organised trainings and orientations to disseminate information about emergency preparedness. Utilised various communication channels, such as local radio, social media, and community gatherings, to reach a wider audience.

4. **Train Trainers and Multipliers:**
   - Trained teachers, students, local volunteers and community leaders who can effectively delivered emergency response education to others.
   - Empowered these persons to cascade the knowledge and skills they've learned to their peers, family members, and neighbours, creating a multiplier effect.

5. **Hands-On Training and Simulation:**
   - Organised practical training sessions and simulations to provide hands-on experience in emergency response techniques, especially in Bajhang. This could include DRR training, evacuation drills, and mock disaster scenarios.
   - Encouraged active participation to ensure that participants feel confident and competent in applying their knowledge during real emergencies.

6. **Promote Community Involvement:**
   - Fostered a sense of ownership and responsibility within the community by involving them in decision-making and project implementation. Encouraged them to take an active role in identifying and addressing local vulnerabilities.

- Established community emergency response teams that can coordinate efforts during emergencies and disasters.

7. **Continuous Education and Awareness:**
    - Implemented a strategy for ongoing education and awareness, integrating emergency response concepts into various aspects of community life.
    - Used storytelling, case studies, and real-life examples to illustrate the importance of emergency preparedness and response.

8. **Measuring Impact and Adaptation:**
    - Regularly assessed the project's impact through surveys, interviews, and feedback from community members.
    - Used the feedback to adapt and refine the project's strategies and activities based on the changing needs and challenges of the community.

9. **Recognition and Incentives:**
    - Recognized and celebrated the efforts of individuals and groups who actively participate in the project.
    - Provided incentives or rewards to encourage ongoing engagement and commitment to emergency preparedness.

10. **Sustainability Planning:**
    - Worked with local institutions and authorities to integrate emergency response education into school curricula, community programs, and local policies.
    - Explored avenues for securing funding or resources to sustain the project's activities over the long term.

Outline how local systems and processes were utilized and how local partners' and institutions' capacity has been strengthened during implementation? What strategies are the project using to ensure established groups will be sustainable?

To utilise the local systems and processes in emergency response projects: PSEP within school education was essential for ensuring a coordinated and effective response during crises/COVID-19. By leveraging existing resources and structures within the local community, schools were mobilised to enhance the preparedness and response capabilities. By integrating local systems and processes into the emergency response project, schools fostered a sense of community resilience and enhanced their ability to effectively address crises while minimising potential disruptions to education.

Below approaches outlined how local systems and processes were utilised to successfully implement PSEP interventions across Nepal:

1. **Assessment and Planning:**
    - Collaborated with local authorities, emergency services, and community organisations to conduct a thorough assessment of potential risks and vulnerabilities specific to the school's location and education continuity.
    - Developed an emergency response plan that integrated the local knowledge, resources, and procedures. This plan addressed various scenarios, such as natural disasters: landslide, COVID and contamination issues.

2. **Stakeholder Engagement:**

- Established partnerships with local government agencies and community-based organisations/NGOs.
- Created a network of key stakeholders who could contribute their expertise and resources to the emergency response project. (HTs, GESI Teachers, Subject Teachers)

3. **Communication and Notification:**
   - Coordinated with local communication channels, such as radio stations, social media groups, and community boards, to disseminate emergency alerts, updates, and instructions to students, parents, and field staff.
   - Established a clear communication protocol that outlined how information could be shared internally and externally during emergencies and after.

4. **Resource Mobilisation:**
   - Identified local resources that could be utilised during emergencies, such as emergency shelters, medical facilities, transportation, and volunteer groups.
   - Collaborated with local organisations to secure support for emergency supplies and equipment.

5. **Training and Drills:**
   - Conducted training sessions and drills involving local volunteers to ensure everyone understands their roles and responsibilities during emergencies and after.
   - Integrated local expertise into the training curriculum to enhance the effectiveness of emergency response efforts.

6. **Cultural Sensitivity:**
   - Considered the cultural and linguistic diversity of the local community when developing emergency response plans and communication strategies.
   - Involved community leaders/cultural experts to ensure that emergency plans are respectful and inclusive of diverse populations.

7. **Evacuation and Sheltering:**
   - Identified safe evacuation routes, assembly areas, and emergency shelters in coordination with local authorities.
   - Collaborated with local facilities to establish school-designated shelters or support existing community shelters.

8. **Recovery and Support:**
   - Collaborated with local health professionals, and social workers/GESI focal teachers to provide psychological support to students after an emergency.
   - Established connections with community resources that could provide assistance.

9. **Continuous Improvement:**
   - Regularly reviewed and updated the emergency response plan/activities based on lessons learned and feedback from local stakeholders.
   - Maintained open channels of communication with local partners to ensure ongoing collaboration and readiness.

10. **Community Awareness:**
    - Educated the local community about the school's emergency response procedures, encouraging parents, guardians, and neighbours to be informed and engaged.

Additionally, to ensure the sustainability of established groups in PSE projects, careful planning, ongoing engagement, and a focus on building strong foundations was necessary. Sustainability required an ongoing effort and a commitment to continuous improvement from donor and organization to evaluate the group's activities, impact, and challenges to refine strategies and maintain its vitality over time. Below are few efforts that PSEP put to sustain the efforts:

- **Clear Plan and Capacity Building:**
  - Defined a clear and compelling objective for the group (Local Teachers, Subject Teachers, Head Teachers, Children's Clubs, Media) in the plans. This provided a sense of purpose and direction, which could motivate members to stay engaged over time.
  - Provided training and skill-building opportunities that empowered members to contribute effectively to the group's goals.
- **Develop Strong Leadership:**
  - Developed strong leaders within the group who were passionate about the mission and could guide the group effectively.
  - Provided training and supported to ensure continuity of efforts.
- **Clearly Defined Roles and Responsibilities:**
  - Defined roles and responsibilities with codes of conducts for group members, ensuring that everyone had a meaningful contribution and a sense of ownership.
- **Adaptability:**
  - Became open to adapting the group's activities and strategies based on changing circumstances, needs, and feedback.
- **Collaboration and Partnerships:**
  - Collaborated with other relevant groups, organisations, or institutions to leverage resources and expand the group's reach. (LGs, CBOs, NGOs)
- **Documented Processes and Knowledge Sharing:**
  - Documented group processes, decisions, and lessons learned to facilitate knowledge sharing and continuity as membership changes.

Project Risk/Challenges:

What context specific / project specific risks or challenges as listed in the proposal/design have eventuated and how the project mitigate it? Also, list the unexpected risks and challenges that emerged during this reporting period. Risks may relate to; fraud, child protection, safeguarding, sexual abuse and exploitation, political, displacement & resettlement, environmental protection, staff safety or others.

PSEP faced few risks and challenges that raised in an emergency response education project situation. Below presented the key risks along with mitigation measures:

1. Limited Resources:

- **Risk:** Inadequate funding for maintaining stability in education within a short span of time in the remote contexts of Nepal, few project personnels, and limited ICT infrastructure could hinder the project's effectiveness as envisioned in "Partnership for Recovery: Promoting Stability in Education".

- **Mitigation:** Secured and leveraged the funding sources, sought partnerships with other like-minded organisations, utilized volunteers, and prioritized essential resources.

2. Community Engagement:

- Risk: Difficulty engaging the target community, resulting in lack of interest or participation.
- Mitigation: Conducted thorough needs assessments by mobilizing local volunteers, involved local leaders, used culturally appropriate communication methods, and tailored programs to the community's and school's needs.

3. Changing Needs and Context:

- **Risk:** The emergency response landscape could rapidly change due to evolving emergencies or shifting community and schools' needs.
- **Mitigation:** Maintained flexibility in program design, established mechanisms for regular needs assessments, and adjusted programs as necessary.

4. Infrastructure and Logistics:

- **Risk:** Poor infrastructure, transportation issues, and logistical challenges could impede the delivery of educational materials and programs.
- **Mitigation:** Planned for different logistical scenarios, used technology for remote education if necessary, and collaborated with local government partners for effective delivery.

5. Language and Cultural Barriers:

- **Risk:** Language and cultural differences could hinder effective communication and understanding.
- **Mitigation:** Provided materials in multiple languages (Nepali and English), involved cultural mediators, and offered culturally sensitive training to project staff.

6. Security and Safety:

- **Risk:** Working in emergency situations could expose project staff to safety risks.
- **Mitigation:** Developed and communicated security protocols, provided safety training to staff, established communication systems, and collaborated with local authorities/governments.

7. Sustainability:

- **Risk:** The project's long-term sustainability might be compromised due to dependence on external resources.
- **Mitigation:** Integrated capacity-building components, engaged local stakeholders in project design, and explored cocreation initiatives for ongoing funding.

8. Data Protection and Privacy:

- **Risk:** Collecting and storing sensitive data could pose risks to individuals' privacy.
- **Mitigation:** Implemented data protection measures, obtained informed consent, anonymized data when possible, and complied with relevant data protection regulations.

9. Access to Technology:

- **Risk:** Limited access to technology in certain communities/schools might hinder the adoption of digital educational resources.
- **Mitigation:** Offered offline alternatives, considered low-tech solutions, and worked with local government to provide access to technology when feasible.

10. Evaluation and Monitoring:

Risk: Inadequate monitoring and evaluation could lead to an inability to measure project impact.

Mitigation: Developed clear monitoring and evaluation frameworks, collected relevant data regularly, and used the data to inform program adjustments.

Addressing these risks and challenges through proactive mitigation measures enhanced the overall success and impact of an emergency response education project: PSEP. Keeping in mind that each project is unique, PSEP tailored the mitigation strategies to the specific context and needs of its targeted communities and schools.

PSEP did not face any unexpected risks and challenges during the project period, may it be safeguarding and fraud related.

Monitoring & Evaluation

Were there any variations to the approved implementation/ work plan? If so, why? Kindly note that a change to implementing partners, project scope, outputs, beneficiary numbers, schedule and changes to project budget need prior approval from DFAT.

The variance has been observed under the Indicator 1.1. The indicator's statement indicated at least 90% children (48000 children) of targeted schools supported through alternative/radio education, workbooks, worksheets and remedial learning packages aggregated in the regular exam/evaluation system of teaching learning process.

However, the number of reached out beneficiaries is 147.59% (70,846: 50% -) the variance against the indicator (1.1) target is 47.9% (22,846). The reason of exceeding indicator target was having funding collaboration with AHF funded TTQIEP, HTN, ECO Nepal, HT, UK, Karuna Trust that contributed to reach the additional children.

Summarise processes employed to monitor the project activities (towards creating the expected outputs and outcomes) in this reporting period.

Monitoring an emergency response project: PSEP that focused on learning continuity, mitigating Sexual and Gender-Based Violence (SGBV), and strengthening resilience of schools and communities in remote contexts of Nepal involved few monitoring and evaluation processes. They are presented below:

- **Outcome and Output Mapping:** Clearly defined the desired outcomes (long-term goals) and outputs (specific deliverables) of the project for each focus area: learning continuity, mitigating SGBV, and strengthening resilience. This provided a roadmap for monitoring progress.
- **Indicator Development:** Identified the specific and measurable indicators for each output and outcome. For instance, indicators for learning continuity included: student attendance after reopening, access to remote learning, etc.
- **Baseline Data Collection:** Gathered relevant data before the project started to establish a baseline against which progress was measured. This provided a point of reference for evaluating changes over time.
- **Monitoring Plan Creation:** Developed a comprehensive plan that outlined how monitoring could occur. This included detailing who would be responsible for data collection, how often it would be collected, and which methods (surveys, interviews, site visits) would be used.
- **Data Collection:** Regularly collected data according to the monitoring plan. This involved conducting surveys to assess learning outcomes, tracking incidents of SGBV, and evaluating the adoption of resilient practices.
- **Data Analysis:** Analyzed the collected data to assess progress and trends. Compared the data against baseline figures and target values to gauge whether the project was on track.
- **Feedback Loops:** Established mechanisms for stakeholders to provide feedback on project activities. This included beneficiaries, community members, and project staff. Their insights helped to identify challenges and opportunities for improvement.
- **Adaptive Management:** Based on the data analysis and stakeholder feedback, prepared to adjust project activities as needed. This adaptive approach ensured that the project remained responsive to changing conditions and needs.
- **Risk Assessment:** Continuously assessed risks that could affect the project's progress, such as environmental factors, social dynamics, or logistical challenges. Developed strategies to mitigate these risks.
- **Documentation:** Maintained accurate and thorough records of all monitoring activities, data collected, and decisions made. This documentation served as a historical record and facilitates accountability.
- **Reporting:** Regularly communicated the progress and findings to stakeholders through reports, presentations, or dashboards. This transparency fostered understanding and support for the project.
- **Evaluation:** Periodically conducted evaluations to assess the overall impact of the project on the intended outcomes. This involved more in-depth assessments by external experts to provide an unbiased perspective.
- **Capacity Building:** Provided training and capacity-building initiatives for project staff and community members. This empowered them to contribute effectively to the project's success and ensures sustainability beyond the project's lifespan.

By diligently applying these key processes, the emergency response project: PSEP systematically monitored its activities and made informed decisions to optimise its impact on learning continuity, SGBV mitigation, and resilience building of schools and communities in 7 districts' remote areas of Nepal.

What feedback has your organisation received from community members / other stakeholders? How has the project responded to them in the project period?

After implementing an emergency response education project in 7 districts' remote contexts of Nepal, it was important to gather feedback from community, schools and other stakeholders and local government representatives to assess the project's effectiveness, identify areas for improvement, and ensure that the project aligned with the actual needs of the community and schools' priorities. Below are few feedbacks that PSEP received from the working communities and schools along with REED's response measures:

1. **Effectiveness of Response:**
   o **Feedback:** Community members, schools and local government units provided insights into whether the project's best practices could address the emergency situation in future, such as a natural disaster or health crises.   (Sustainability).
   o **Response Measures:** PSEP capacitated to stakeholders to conduct a thorough evaluation to understand the gaps and revising the local government's plan from emergency response perspectives, and incorporate it in the SIP of schools. Additionally, it was requested to continue and engage with the community and schools to maintain preparedness and ensure sustainability via different platforms. (Media, Meetings and Discussion)

2. **Relevance to Local Needs:**
   o **Feedback:** Stakeholders provided feedback on whether the project addressed the most pressing needs of the community and schools during the emergency in future.
   o **Response Measures:** PSEP regularly engaged with local leaders, schools and community members to understand evolving needs. Flexibility in project design and implementation was crucial to adapt to changing circumstances.

3. **Community Engagement:**
   o **Feedback:** Stakeholders expressed whether they felt included in the decision-making process and if their input was valued.
   o **Response Measures:** Implemented mechanisms for ongoing community, school and LG representatives' participation, such as MPAC meetings, joint monitoring, and focus group discussions, etc. Used this feedback to adjust project strategies and decisions.

4. **Coordination and Collaboration:**
   o **Feedback:** Stakeholders shared their experiences with the coordination efforts among various organisations and agencies involved in the emergency response education.
   o **Response Measures:** Strengthened coordination mechanisms by conducting regular meetings with school stakeholders of areas, sharing information transparently, and clarifying roles and responsibilities.

5. **Accessibility and Inclusivity:**
   o **Feedback:** Stakeholders raised concerns about whether the project was accessible to vulnerable groups, such as the persons with disabilities, or marginalised populations.
   o **Response Measures:** Incorporated accessibility considerations from the planning stage, including provisions for different languages, mobility challenges, and cultural sensitivities. Conduct post-project assessments to ensure inclusivity.

6. **Resource Allocation:**
   o **Feedback:** Stakeholders provided insights into whether resources were effectively allocated and utilised during the emergency education response.

- **Response Measures:** Regularly monitored resource utilisation and adjusted allocations based on changing priorities, emerging needs and resource leveraging.
7. **Communication and Information Dissemination:**
   - **Feedback:** Stakeholders shared feedback on the clarity and effectiveness of communication during the emergency education response.
   - **Response Measures:** Implemented a robust communication strategy that included clear and timely information dissemination through various channels accessible to the community schools, radios, social media.
8. **Long-Term Impact:**
   - **Feedback:** Stakeholders expressed concerns about the long-term impact of the project on the schools and community's resilience and preparedness for future emergencies.
   - **Response Measures:** Developed contingency plans for post-project engagement, including capacity building, training, and continued support for the community to enhance its resilience.

Overall, the key was to establish a feedback loop/logbook that involved consistent communication and engagement with the community, schools and other stakeholders. PSEP actively used the feedback received by adapting, refining, and enhancing in the PSE project's strategies and activities, leading to more effective emergency education response in remote contexts like Nepal.

Summarise the key processes employed by the project to ensure the data gathered for reporting (beneficiaries, activities achieved, etc.) is accurate and validated in the project period.

For ensuring the accuracy and validity of data gathered for reporting in a humanitarian education response project/PSEP, which was happened during and after COVID-19 time, used the following key processes:

- **Data Collection Planning:** Developed a clear and detailed data collection plan that outlined the specific data points to be collected, the sources of data, the methods of collection (surveys, interviews, etc.), and the frequency of data collection.
- **Standardized Data Collection Tools:** Designed the standardized data collection tools such as surveys, questionnaires, and interviews to ensure consistent data collection across different locations and time periods.
- **Training and Capacity Building:** Trained Education Field Officers on the importance of accurate data, the methodology for data collection, and the proper use of data collection tools. This helped to ensure that data was collected consistently and in line with project objectives.
- **Data Collection Oversight:** Assigned training specialist to oversee the data collection process and provided guidance, addressed challenges, and ensured that data collectors followed the established protocols.
- **Data Entry, Cleaning and Management:** Established a structured process for data entry and management to minimize errors during this phase. Implemented data validation checks and double-entry methods to catch discrepancies.
- **Quality Control Checks:** Regularly conducted quality control checks on collected data to identify errors, inconsistencies, or outliers. This involved cross-checking data from different sources or comparing data against predefined benchmarks.
- **Data Verification:** Verified data by beneficiaries or stakeholders to confirm the accuracy of reported information. This helped to ensure that reported activities and outcomes align with reality.
- **Documentation of Sources:** Maintained a clear record of the sources of data, including dates, locations, and individuals providing the information. This documentation facilitated transparency and accountability.

- **Data Analysis Validation:** MEAL department validated the data analysis process by having multiple team members. This helped to identify any discrepancies or errors or feedbacks from the stakeholders.
- **Regular Reporting and Feedback Loop:** Established a regular reporting mechanism that included feedback loops with stakeholders. This allowed for continuous verification and correction of data as needed.
- **Ethical Considerations:** Ensured that data collection respected ethical principles, including informed consent, data privacy, and protection of vulnerable populations.

By implementing these key processes, in the humanitarian education response project: PSEP enhanced the accuracy and validity of the data gathered for reporting, leading to more informed decision-making and better project outcomes.

Summarise some key decisions taken by the project team / community leaders to increase effectiveness and impact based on the analysis of the project data in the project period.

Key decisions that PSE project teams and local government leaders had taken to enhance the effectiveness and impact PSEP impact during and after COVID-19 in 7 districts' remote contexts of Nepal, which are presented below:

- **Adaptation of Content Delivery:** Reviewed the project beneficiaries' data to identify which educational content delivery methods were most effective during the pandemic. Considered incorporating a mix of online and offline resources, such as recorded lessons, printable materials, and radio broadcasts, to ensure access in areas with limited connectivity.
- **Targeted Resource Allocation:** Analysed data to determine which regions or communities faced the most challenges during the pandemic. Allocated resources, such as teaching materials, digital devices, and connectivity solutions, to these areas to ensure equitable access to education.
- **Technology Based Training for Teachers:** Provided targeted training and support to educators to enhance their digital literacy and pedagogical skills for online and blended learning.
- **Use of Social Platforms:** Developed different social platforms to engage stakeholders, such as interactive platforms, virtual classroom sessions, or peer-group collaborations, to keep students/teachers/ media/ head teachers to keep them motivated and connected to the learning process.
- **Assessment and Feedback Analysis:** Evaluated assessment data to gauge student performance and identified areas of improvement. Adjusted training and assessment strategies, such as introducing formative assessments/remedial teaching or formative assessment to cater to individual learning needs.
- **Community Participation and Ownership:** Analysed project data to determine the level of local government's involvement. Strengthened community and school's engagement by involving local leaders, parents, and other community members in project decision-making and implementation, fostering a sense of ownership.
- **Localized Content Development:** Reviewed data to understand if locally relevant content was more effective. Considered developing content that is culturally sensitive and contextually appropriate, enhancing its relevance and impact.
- **Health and Safety Measures:** Analysed data to assess the success of health and safety measures implemented during the pandemic. Used COVID-19 protocols and guidelines to ensure the well-being of students, teachers, and community members.
- **Long-Term Sustainability Planning:** Used project data to identify successful practices that could be continued beyond the pandemic. Developed a sustainability plan that outlined how the project's initiatives and strategies could be integrated into the long-term education framework of the Palikas.

- **Communication and Outreach:** Evaluated data on communication strategies and their effectiveness. Based on the analysis, enhanced communication channels with parents, guardians, and the wider community to keep them informed and engaged in the emergency education process.
- **Flexibility and Resilience Planning:** Examined project data to understand how well the project adapted to changing circumstances. Developed contingency plans and strategies to ensure the project could quickly pivot in response to future emergencies or challenges.

Incorporating these decisions based on thorough data analysis contributed to the project's effectiveness, sustainability, and lasting impact on emergency response education in remote contexts of Nepal, both during and after the COVID-19 pandemic.

Was there an evaluation undertaken for this project during the project period? Specify the type of evaluation and sector focus.

Below mentioned evaluations/assessments had been carried out during the project period:

- Pre-test and Post-test of Remedial Support
- Pre-test and Post-test of Radio Education
- Baseline and Endline Survey of Project
- ICT Assessment

Learnings:

Report any project-level lessons that have been generated by the project, and how these lessons are planned to be applied or have been applied. Lessons may relate to project issues/ challenges, or project successes.

Lessons Learnt:

Emergency Education Response Project/PSEP implemented in remote contexts of Nepal during and after COVID-19 generated the following key lessons highlighting the importance of adaptability, community engagement and holistic approaches. These lessons emphasized on the need to address not only immediate educational challenges but also the broader well-being of students, schools and communities.

- **Adaptive Training Curriculum Development:** Developing adaptable and context-relevant curriculum is essential. Lessons are to be designed to accommodate different levels of access to technology, parental involvement, and varying home environments.
- **Technology Integration with Caution:** Technology could bridge gaps, its integration should be mindful of remote areas' challenges, such as limited internet connectivity and access to devices. Blending model found useful: digital and offline methods for effective learning.
- **Community Engagement:** Involvement of local communities, parents, and guardians is crucial. Their insights could guide the design of appropriate educational strategies and ensure the relevance of content to local contexts.
- **Teacher Training and Support:** Teachers need training not only in delivering content remotely but also in providing socioemotional support. This is vital to help students cope with the pandemic's emotional aspects.
- **Flexible Assessment Strategies:** Rigid assessment methods found unrealistic during crises. Implementing continuous assessment techniques like project-based learning, assessments for better learning and teacher made evaluations to gauge student progress found more relevant.

- **Inclusive Approaches:** Consideration of diverse learning needs, including those of children with disabilities is essential. Offering alternative formats, such as audio-video-visual content to students and providing resources for teachers to address varying needs found worthwhile.
- **Localized Content Creation:** Developing learning materials that reflect local culture, language, and examples found meaningful. This not only enhances engagement but also ensures content's relatability to students' lives.
- **Partnerships and Coordination:** Collaborating with likeminded organizations, local government bodies, and other stakeholders for better resource sharing, avoiding duplication of efforts, and ensuring a wider reach found very useful.
- **Psychosocial Support Integration:** Integration of psychosocial support within the curriculum to help students and communities helps to deal with trauma, stress, and anxiety caused by the pandemic/disasters.
- **Distance/Onsite Monitoring:** Establishing real-time monitoring and evaluation systems to track engagement, effectiveness of methodologies, and the overall impact of the education response is essential and useful. Using this data to adapt strategies as needed found more meaningful.
- **Long-Term Resilience Building:** Transition from emergency response to long-term resilience-building is essential. Focus on not only academic recovery but also psychological and social well-being helps to mitigate the learning loss of students.
- **Health and Hygiene Education:** Integration of health and hygiene education into the training curriculum, emphasizing practices to prevent the spread of diseases like COVID-19 found more relevant. This has lasting benefits beyond the pandemic.
- **Parental Empowerment:** Educating parents about their role in supporting their children's education at home could be useful during and after the pandemic. Providing guidance on creating conducive learning environments and managing learning schedules helps to strengthen resiliency, mitigating SGBV at homes and communities and promoting stability in education.
- **Localized Education Authorities:** Strengthening local education government units to make agile decisions in response to emergencies is necessary. Empowering them to make adjustments based on ground realities helps to maintain sustainability.
- **ICT Infrastructure Development:** Advocating for improved ICT infrastructure in remote areas, including better access to electricity, the internet, and transportation facilitate inclusive education in normal and emergency contexts.
- **The Alternative Education Modalities:** The Alternative Education Modalities can be promoted as part of the Learning Continuity Campaign to prove valuable not just for children who are being impacted by school closures, but also in places where schools have opened to help children make the transition. The recorded lessons are used as preparedness materials for the future response.
- **Facilitation Guidelines/IEC and BCC Materials:** Providing teachers, parents and school authorities with these guidelines, learning tools and approaches will also be key to ensuring children keep learning in the case of future crises.

Financial Management:

List any major financial issues like fraud, conflict of interest or financial mismanagement risks encountered in this reporting period.

There were not noticed any financial issues during the project period.

Case Studies / Stories of Change:

Provide at least one case story which demonstrates a result that the project is trying to achieve. Case Stories should include photos with captions and appropriate consent for the use of images should be undertaken by the Partner before providing it to DFAT.

"Functional Safeguarding: Boon for Resiliency Enhancement"

Shanker Raj Luitel,

Education Chief, Kamalamai Municipality, Sindhuli

"Education unit of municipality was searching the collaborating partners during the COVID-19 pandemic period. Kamalamai municipality has wider coverage and very remote from many perspectives having large number of scattered geographies and schools. We have very limited capacity for technology access for education. In this background, the collaboration between Kamalamai municipality and REED Nepal for emergency response project found greatly supportive to each other. PSE project considered the inclusion aspects to a great extend however inclusion is the matter of subjectivity. The joint planning, implementation, monitoring and review helped a lot to be everyone on the same page and effectively implement the project initiatives on time

Talent hunt programs in each school were greatly acknowledged. They helped to establish the functional safeguarding mechanism and resiliency. Awareness and orientation programs contributed on mitigating the learning loss on the part of students. Mobilization of volunteer teachers during movement restrictions time found meaningful to scaffold the learning loss and continuity. WASH support to children with disabilities and extremely vulnerable children helped a lot to address the urgent needs and concerns of the vulnerable children. Children focused programs, i. e. training, ECAs, helped the children and girls' leadership and life skills. Regular school-based mentoring from Palika and REED staff helped a lot to support in the learning gaps. However, we would like to request with REED Nepal and donors to think from sustainability perspectives, alignment of project with Palika priorities, initiation of development initiatives and establishment of network of teachers. Lastly, we would like to offer thanks to REED and DFAT/Australian Aid for the support and eagerly waiting the future collaboration."

Thanks and Regards,

Shanker Raj Luitel,

Email: sluitel10@yahoo.com

Phone: 9843423232

Jointsecretary, Kamalamai Municipality, Sindhuli

"Alignment & Dedication: Cornerstone for Change"

Bimala Rai, Mayor, Haleshi Tuwachung Municipality

"From my perspective, as a mayor, I realized that system strengthening is very necessary to have changes in terms of 'Gender and Social Inclusion', quality learning outcomes and environment in the remote contexts. In Haleshi Tuwachung municipality, all schools were closed because of COVID-19 and REED supported to continue the schools' education of our children. Here is very limited access of mobile and TV technology to run the regular classes. Our area has very huge gap in term of digital divide. In our area, many ethnic minorities and socially excluded groups are residing. Poverty and low-income families are another challenge for coping with disasters and pandemic.

In this context, the support from REED Nepal via PSE project became cornerstone for change. It helped for learning continuity. It helped in dropout mitigation from our schools. The awareness campaigns helped to mitigate the sexual violences. The orientation on SRH rights helped to minimize the taboos associated with menstrual health and psychological distress. Additionally, the training on Palika level plans and policies made us aware on system strengthening. It equally aware us on ensuring the inclusion and protection addressing the specific needs of girls and women for gender-based violence's response mechanism. We also believe that this project enhanced the capacity for management and coordination for Education in Emergencies and ensuring the safeguarding mechanisms for future outbreaks. REED customized its efforts as per the local government's needs and contributed hugely for stability and recovery. Remedial supports equally helped to revitalize the educational loss. In future, we request with REED and donors to put their efforts from sustainability perspectives having more strategic partnerships for institutional and social reforms. Finally, our sincere gratitude to all the team members associated with emergency response project and Australian Aid for funding collaboration."

Thank You!!

Bimala Rai,

Mayor, Haleshi Tuwachung Municipality, Khotang.

Phone Nubmer:9842974571

Communication MatarialS:

What communication products have you produced in this reporting period? Please provide links to any blog posts, press releases, social media posts, films or professional photographs.

https://rupakotkhabar.com/?p=6307&fbclid=IwAR2TmtuqE9ZvoPilLvl_fc8ADpmJkZdxyDKI NddMXmJEqYGtwboEerc_FkE

https://sanjalkhabar.com/news/33842?fbclid=IwAR0CAX1gKa6Ihm3J4Gt4EBu1H24NP7K5S Sc7Es1DXzedZZMMdxlC32RNwzU

https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/15XRLg7IR9xAC2pSQnsXPSUMTisKfQnc5?usp=shari ng

https://fb.watch/mLYzYr_fNj/

*"SRH Orientation: Blessing for School Continuity"*

"I am Nirmala Baral from Janajyoti Secondary School, Sindhuli. I believe 'Periods' should not stop schooling even in emergencies. Pandemics could make girls and women more vulnerable from many perspectives and making lives more difficult. I live in remote area of Sindhuli and belong to poor family. I often find difficult to get dignity kits because of my financial situation. This might be the case to many girls like me. Schools provide the pads but not other things that we, growing age girls, need to have for healthy behaviors. Because of that, girls normally face taboos, violences, exclusion, embarrassment and shame as a result of 'Period'. That's why we often keep this matter secret. Additionally, some of us have to walk for a long to get the school. Our school do not have sufficient water and safe practices to manage it nicely. This is not only my unique problem but also problem facing many girls of schools who could not tell it properly. Many girls might have been exploited sexually by their seniors & friends, victim of bullying and unsafe touch due to lack of proper SRH education at schools and communities.

In this context, REED Nepal provided a set of WASH materials and orientation on SRH rights. That's become blessing for us however this was only one time event. Our team highly respect it because "something is better than nothing". It helped us to scale up our self-esteem and to cope with challenges associated with mensural taboos. We talked SRH rights with our parents, teachers and friends openly. We equally requested with our ward chairperson to plan about mensural hygiene for providing the essential services to remove the false information, taboos, embarrassment and stigmas. Many adolescents are becoming the victim of suicide, early pregnancy, child marriage, school drop outs and victim of other harmful practices due to lack of SRH education on time. Our child club advocated with principal and SMC to have a door and clean water in girl's toilet, safe disposal machine, vending machine and suggestion box in school. It was useful to remove the barriers for girls for mitigating embarrassment and stopping them from skipping from the school to some extent, and had profound impact on girls' overall development. SRH education with essential kits increased the regularity of girls in school to some extent. Finally, on behalf of all girls and schools, we would like to express our heartfelt thanks to REED Nepal, Australian Aid and most importantly, schools for the immense support which helped us to continue our schooling despite COVID-19 pandemic."

Nirmala Baral,
Janajyoti SS,
Kamalamai Municipality, Sindhuli!!
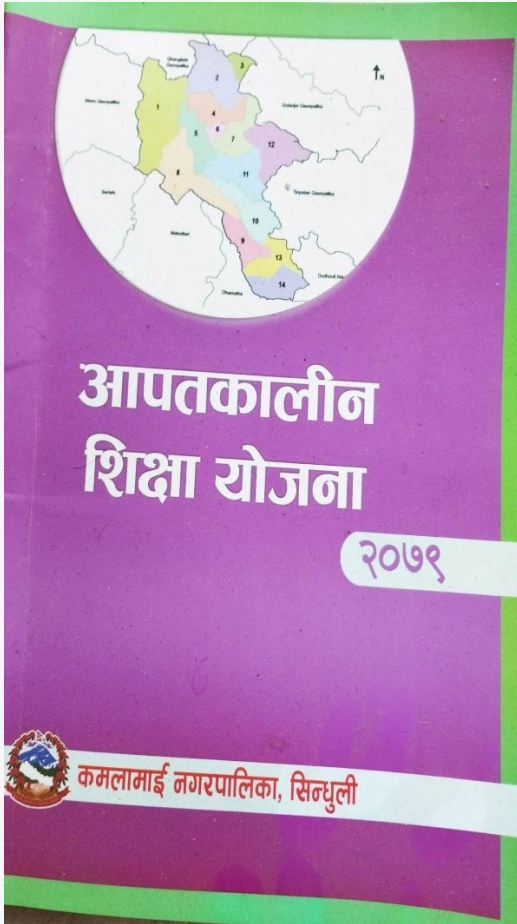
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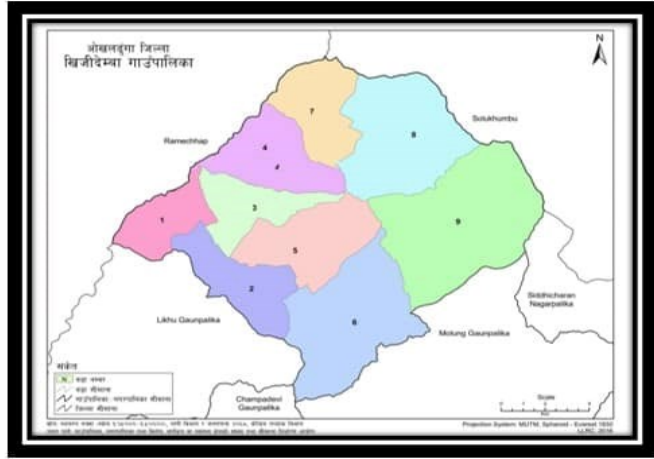
नेपाल सरकार

खिजीदेम्बा गाउँपालिका

प्रदेश नं १, ओखलढुङ्गा, नेपाल

खिजीदेम्बा गाउँपालिका