

**Innovative Challenge 3 (IC3)
Nepal – 1st face-to-face meeting**

An interaction program on “Evaluation in Nepal: Current Situation and Challenges”

21 August 2014, Kathmandu, Nepal



Introduction:

International Evaluation Partnership Initiative (EvalPartners) launched a project Innovative Challenge 3 with a main objective to enabling environment of evaluation, and supported through International Organization for Cooperation in Evaluation (IOCE). Partners of the IC3 project are European Evaluation Society (EES), Parliamentarian Forum on Development Evaluation in South Asia (PE), Pakistan Evaluation Association (PEN) and Community of Evaluations – South Asia (CoE-South Asia). As a part of CoE-South Asia, face-to-face meeting was conducted in Nepal.

Methodology:

Community of Evaluators – South Asia (CoE-South Asia) appointed Prabin Chitrakar who is a founder and board member of Community of Evaluators – Nepal (CoE-Nepal) as a country catalyst for Nepal mainly to conduct face-to-face meetings in Nepal under the Innovative Challenge 3 project which is supported by EvalPartners.

In preparation of face-to-face meeting, as a catalyst Prabin Chitrakar had several meetings with different individuals like government officials, parliamentarians, civil society organizations and evaluation practitioners. With the support of CoE-South Asia, CoE-Nepal and Parliamentarian Forum on Development Evaluation in South Asia (PF) it was decided to conduct a face-to-face meeting on 21 August 2014.

The face-to-face meetings entitled “An interaction program on Evaluation in Nepal: Current Situation and Challenges” was jointly organized by CoE-South Asia, CoE-Nepal and PF, and was managed by the country catalyst. In the interaction program, representatives from CoE-South Asia, CoE-Nepal, PF were attended as co-organizers. Honorable parliamentarians, representatives from different ministries, representative of national planning commission and others were attended as presenters and participants.

List of participants:

N.	Name	Organization	Designation	Contact No.	E-mail Address
1	Hon. Ananda Prasad Pokharel	CPN (UML)	CA Member	9851089532	anandapokharel@yahoo.com
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Program Schedule:

**An Interaction program on
"Evaluation in Nepal: Current Situation and Challenges"**

21 August 2014
Kathmandu, Nepal

Program Schedule

- 3:00 PM – 3:25 PM Registration and Tea/Coffee Cookies
- 3:25 PM – 3:35 PM Welcome Speech
– Hon. Sherdhan Rai, CA Member, CPN (UML)
- 3:35 PM – 3:45 PM Introduction and objectives of the interaction program
– Prabh Chitrakar, Board Member, Community of Evaluators - Nepal (CoE-Nepal)
- 3:45 PM – 4:15 PM Presentation on "Overview of Evaluation Environment in Nepal"
– Dr. Gana Pati Ojha, Chairperson, Community of Evaluators - Nepal (CoE-Nepal),
Vice-President, Community of Evaluators – South Asia
- 4:15 PM – 4:45 PM Presentation on the situation of Evaluation – government prospective
– Dr. Teertha Raj Dhakal, Joint Secretary, National Planning Commission
- 4:45 PM – 5:15 PM Presentation on "Why National Parliamentary Forum on Development Evaluation"
– Hon. Ananda Prasad Pokharel, CA Member, CPN (UML) and Board Member,
Parliamentarian Forum on Development Evaluation in South Asia
- 5:15 PM – 6:00 PM Open Discussion
– All Participants
- 6:00 PM – 6:25 PM Formation of National Parliamentary Forum on Development Evaluation Policy in Nepal
– Hon. Ananda Pokharel
- 6:25 PM – 6:30 PM Wrap-up and Vote of thanks
– Hon. Shankar Bhandari, CA Member, Nepali Congress
- 6:30 PM Dinner
– All participants

Supported by:



Organized by:



**Parliamentarians Forum for
Development Evaluation**

Speeches and Presentations:

➤ Hon. Sherdhan Rai, CPN (UML)

Hon. Sherdhan Rai delivered the welcome speech on behalf of the organizers. In his speech he welcome honorable parliamentarians and all other participants to the interaction program, and further said, "We all are aware of the current political, economical, social and development status of Nepal. We not being able to evaluate the situation in proper institutional way, the country today is in unmanaged condition. We are in process of developing new constitution and also heading forward with new policies, plans, visions for development. In this condition, today's primary discussion on the situation and challenges of evaluation will be very much important and fruitful".

➤ Prabin Chitrakar, Board Member, CoE-Nepal

Prabin Chitrakar provided the introduction of Innovative Challenge 3 project and objectives of the program. In his speech he mentioned the followings:

- International Evaluation Partnership Initiative (EvalPartners) launched in 2012 by IOCE and UNICEF
- EvalPartners declared 2015 as International Year for Evaluation (EvalYear)
- Innovative Challenge 3 (IC3) project launched by EvalPartner and supported through IOCE
- Partner VOPEs of IC3, European Evaluation Society (EES), Parliamentarian Forum on Development Evaluation in South Asia (PE), Pakistan Evaluation Association (PEN) and Community of Evaluators – South Asia (CoE-South Asia)
- VOPEs having different field of roles responsibilities
- CoE-South Asia to conduct face-to-face meetings in India, Nepal and Bangladesh through country catalysts
- Objectives of the interaction program to identify and discuss the current situation and challenges of evaluation in Nepal and way forward

➤ Dr. Gana Pati Ojha, Chairperson, CoE-Nepal and Vice-President, CoE-South Asia

Dr. Gana Pati Ojha in his presentation on "Overview of Evaluation Environment in Nepal" mentioned the followings:

Evaluation in Acts/Rules/Regulations

- No evaluation Acts/Rules/Regulation
- Some other Acts/Rules/Regulations have provision for evaluation
 - LSGA 1999: Provision for evaluation of VDC, Municipality and DDC projects
 - Health Service Act 1997 Performance Eval of staff
 - Education Rules 2004: M&E of educational programs
 - Forest Regulation (1995): M&E of Forest Plan
- Appropriateness of these: Partial
- Need for revision

M&E in National Plans

- 1956-1974: No systematic M&E
- 1975: Weightage system
- 1992: Institutional set up, guidelines, logframes, indicators and formats
- 2003: Result-based M&E
- 2007: Inclusiveness/Participation
- 2013: National M&E guidelines

Evaluative Culture

- Less value given to evaluation but changing toward positive direction
- Environment for quality evaluation
- Interaction mechanism: Restrictive

National Monitoring and Evaluation Guidelines 2013

- Comprehensive: planning and managing of M&E, specially M of results

- Emphasis on Use of evaluation: MRE
- Capacity building of GON staff of M&E
- Third party evaluation: New definition, lowering scope for independent evaluators
- Limited to government M&E
- As a national guidelines it should include other sectors as well

Quality Assurance

- NPCS forms a sub-taskforce committee under NPCS M&E Coordination to control third party evaluation (ToR, firm selection, monitoring and feedback)
- SWC forms special sub-committee to select evaluation team, organises pre-field meeting, post-field meeting, correction

Working Environment

- Intra /inter organisation coordination
 - Sharing of study report from one division to another-not adequate
 - No role of M&E in performance evaluation of staff
 - Linkage: NPCS --SWC and NPCS--ministries
 - Implementation of directive: some what
 - Use of M&E report in planning: partial
- Low priority, meagre resources, less opportunities, low respect, over burden
- Low priority by donors, planning div gets higher priority
- Perceived as powerless: no executive function
- Staff retention a big challenge

SWOT Analysis of Enabling Environment of Evaluation

Strengths

- Structure/Institution (NPC/Ministry; SWC/I(NGO))
- Guidelines/framework (Comprehensive)
- Provision for revising guidelines (2010, 2012)
- Committed and knowledgeable current leadership
- Result-based M&E (Logframe) mandatory
- Provision for capacity building of GON staff
- Use of M&E results in decision-making
- Provision for Third party involvement in evaluation
- Sectoral plans and policies integrate evaluation
- National plans have mainstreamed evaluation
- TU has evaluation course under the Faculty of Education
- Some regulations have made M&E mandatory provision (Education, Forest)
- LSGA has made evaluation mandatory at VDC/Municipality and district level plan

Weaknesses

- No evaluation Act/Rules/Regulation/Policy
- Focus on government M&E, not national M&E: The existing guidelines does not consider evaluation community outside the government system
- Absence of high level political commitment
- Personal interest based environment
- Low priority given to M&E in general and 'Evaluation' particular
- Weak coordination: NPCS—SWC; NPCS-ministries
- Low retention of trained M&E human resource
- No specific M&E training for M&E staff
- No adequate M&E training received by M&E staff
- Conceptual unclarity among M&E staff (M means field visit)
- Indicator-based monitoring – Not enough

Opportunities

- Supportive Global environment
- Support agencies working in countries (JICA, UNDP)
- VOPEs are emerging

- Curriculum for training is available
- Training institutions have some capacity to provide M&E specific training
- Increased awareness in state and non-state actors
- Training centers have some sessions allocated for M&E—NASC, LDTA, HTC
- TU has human resources and space to provide M&E specific training
- Some CSOs are organising M&E specific training

Threats

- No direct donor support for evaluation
- No priority area of donor
- No evaluative culture
- No specific budget for NECD
- Limited number of VOPEs; Young VOPEs
- Absence of sharing forum
- Discouraging environment for state M&E officials taking membership to non-state professional societies
- No provision for additional incentives for staff to retain in the M&E units
- Public perception to M&E staff low as it has no monetary and physical resources to distribute
- Less opportunity to give and to get
- Demoralised mentality of M&E staff within GON
- Platform for good posting
- Posting of neglected people
- Weak linkage (State-state; state-nonstate, nonstate-nonstate)
- No networking among actors (Country to international level)
- Low demand and low supply of quality evaluation

➤ Dr. Teertha Raj Dhakal, Joint Secretary, National Planning Commission

Dr. Teertha Raj Dhakal in his presentation he has mentioned followings:

Situation of Evaluation in Nepal

- There is growing realization in the govt. that sound M&E system is a **prerequisite for informing policy process** and promoting **accountability**
- Starting from 1990 (8th plan) M&E evolved as a system and from 2003 efforts are made to institutionalize and make it results-based (PMAS)
- There are M&E framework and M&E policies integrated in the plan documents though there is no separate eva policy/Act to guide evaluations.
- Despite the policies and efforts to institutionalize M&E system, practically more focus has seen on narrow cohort of monitoring of inputs and outputs.
- So far, NPC alone has conducted eva of 32 projects in last 15 years (3rd parties) available in NPC website; compared to no. of projects very low.
- No proper documentation- Now it is available in npc.gov.np. There is no integrated documentation of eva facilitated by min. or DPs or others.
- In 2013, the govt has developed and implemented the new National M&E Guidelines which further gives emphasis on institutionalizing evaluation, among others.

Status of the use of evaluations:

Use of eva critical- otherwise no matter how independently it was done and whatever of quality the reports are (lessons on use- adapted from the recently published article of Dr. Teertha Dhakal in JMDE, USA)

- **Evaluation policy norms and std.** are crucial. Proper documentation and rigorous analysis of eva evidences provide information to policy makers.
- **Commitment to use evaluations among the policy makers** at the higher levels naturally affects the demand and use of evaluations.

- **Quality concerns** can come on the theory of change of the intervention, methodologies used and on the analysis of the data generated.
- **Clarity of objectives** guides the framing of specific evaluation questions to provide evidences in areas where the policy makers are interested.
- Use of evaluations depends on **independence and credibility** of the process and clarity of recommendations addressing to the responsible agencies for implementation.
- **Stakeholder participation** is important in the effective use of evaluations especially to enhance accountability of fund users' downwards to people.
- To use eva to promote accountability there is a need to develop a system that takes **eva as an integral part of annual performance mgmt cycle** of the govt.

Existing policies of eva. include: (i) Certain number of completed or on-going projects evaluated each year (engaging third parties and internally) (ii) Eva. reports prepared by various agencies well **documented** and promote their use (iii) Formulate **standards and norms** of evaluation, institutionalize **internal/self-evaluation**. Building capacities is the crux of the policy.

Challenges:

Capacity to facilitate and conduct eva; **commitment** to demand and use it; **Institutionalization**; Critical role of oversight agencies;

Next steps

- Evaluation policy needs to include **evaluation norms and stds** so that it can guide both the commissioners and evaluators to systematically and independently conduct evaluations maintaining acceptable standards.
- Institutionalization of **self-eva in NPC and ministries**, expand **third-party eva** and encourage **meta-evaluation**
- **Capacity building** of those who **facilitate and those who conduct** eva
- Regular **networking**- 1st meeting last year and 2nd meeting in Sept 22nd and a policy forum in 23rd. Collaboration with interested parties;
- Institutionalize culture of evaluation- Use piles of available data for eva
- Eval year 2015 activities; Nepal is planning to celebrate the Eval Year 2015

➤ **Hon. Ananda Prasad Pokharel, CA Member, CPN (UML) and Board Member, Parliamentarian Forum on Development Evaluation in South Asia**

Hon. Ananda Pokharel in his speech highlighted the importance of evaluation for sustainable development with transparency and discipline, and also mentioned the importance of evaluation to reach development to the civilians and prove social justice.

Hon. Pokharel emphasized the necessity of national evaluation policy in Nepal and also emphasized on the importance of the linkage between evaluation commissioners and evaluators, likewise, the coordination between line-ministries, political parties and different government agencies. Hon. Pokharel in his speech further mentioned as follows;

The use of evaluation by the policy makers is most important rather than the numbers of evaluation conducted. Politician should take an ownership of the evaluations. The need of today is a national evaluation policy which would be essential for sustainable development that can be reached to civilians and provide them social justice.

During the conclave in Kathmandu, parliamentarians from Sri-Lanka, Bangladesh and Nepal had a meeting where Hon. Ananda Pokharel represented Nepal. During the meeting it was realized that there should be a political intervention and ownership of evaluation policy to have effective evaluation mechanism in a country or globally. Therefore, it was decided to form a parliamentarian forum which today resulted in formation of Parliamentarian Forum on Development Evaluation in South Asia and is recognized globally. There has been different country level parliamentarian forums in countries like Sri-Lanka, Bangladesh, Bhutan, Afghanistan, etc. It has been very

important to establish a national parliamentarian forum in Nepal. Parliamentarian forums in seven region are active, and a Global forum of parliamentarian is going to be established in Dublin in October.

Hon. Pokharel mentioned of his proposal to the Constituent Assembly Chair for establishing a parliamentarian forum within the Constituent Assembly of Nepal and also to draft an evaluation policy to present the government. As the Constituent Assembly is currently focusing on the new constitution, the proposed forum within the Constituent Assembly might not be possible at present. Therefore, the establishment of a committee of parliamentarians for evaluation policy in Nepal is necessary for sustainable development of Nepal.

Many times, the findings of evaluations will be influenced by the donor interest which will lead the result to different direction which is not good, so there should be a fair evaluation and thus the evaluation policy should be established which the ownership should be taken by the parliamentarians. Parliamentarians could use its power to establish the national policy of evaluation. It can also address the problems and suggestions of the national evaluation to the Constituent Assembly. The civil society organizations like CoE-Nepal, evaluation practitioners, etc. should provide their supports from their sides.

Formation of National Parliamentarian Forum on Development Evaluation Policy in Nepal

With the leadership of Hon. Ananda Prasad Pokharel, the National Parliamentarian Forum on Development Evaluation Policy in Nepal was formed with 15 parliamentarians. Below are the names of current members;

- Hon. Ananda Prasad Pokharel
- Hon. Bhanu Bhakta Dhakal
- Hon. Sherdhan Rai
- Hon. Parbat Gurung
- Hon. Shankar Bhandari
- Hon. Raju Khanal
- Hon. Raju Thapa
- Hon. Dr. Babu Ram Pokharel
- Hon. Dr. Shivajee Prasad Yadav
- Hon. Ganesh Pun
- Hon. Aman Lal Modi
- Hon. Sita Nepali
- Hon. Sita Gurung
- Hon. Shiva Gauttam

➤ Open Discussion – All Participants

- The current situation of Monitoring and Evaluation in Nepal is very weak
- Evaluation is very important in every section of government and non-government
- The establishment of National Policy would be very important to strengthen the evaluation of Nepal
- The establishment of Parliamentarian Forum is very positive
- This will make all the people related to the field as well as a nation responsible
- This would also help in the coordination with different organization
- There is lots of evaluation happening but policy is not available
- Evaluation policy should be easy to implement
- The policy will help make change
- Evaluators should not focus the interest of the evaluation commissioners
- The quality of evaluations are very poor
- Instant action should be taken for the evaluations that are artificial

- Should be included in Constitution
- There are lots of evaluations completed but the use of evaluation is very less
- The use of evaluation should be emphasized
- There should be a well indicators for Monitoring and Evaluators
- Monitoring and Evaluators should be independent
- The quality of evaluators should enhanced
- Framework of M&E should be established
- Priority to the policy only we can have a good implementation
- National M&E policy is not available in Nepal. However, the government, parliamentarians, and evaluation practitioners has realized of its necessity.

➤ **Hon. Shankar Bhandari, CA Member, Nepali Congress**

Hon. Shankar Bhandari delivered the wrap-up and vote of thanks.