

**Leveraging Right to Information against Trafficking and Unsafe Migration
in the Post Disaster Reconstruction**

1st Quarter Progress Report

Submitted to:

UN Women Nepal

Submitted by:

Media Advocacy Group (MAG)

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List of Abbreviations:

CSOs	Civil Society Organizations
DAO	District Administration Office
DCC	District Coordination Committee
DDC	District Development Committee
DFNJ	District Federation of Nepalese Journalists
FNJ	Federation of Nepalese Journalists
FWLD	Forum for Women, Law and Development
FWW	The Future We Want
GEWE	Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment
GRB	Gender Responsive Budget
LGBTIQ	Lesbian Gay Bisexual Transgender Intersex and Queer
MAG	Media Advocacy Group
MOU	Memorandum of Understanding
MoWCSW	Ministry of Women, Children and Social Welfare
NIC	National Information Commission
RTI	Right to Information
TOR	Terms of Reference
TOT	Training of Trainers
UN Women	United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women
WOFOWON	Women Forum for Women in Nepal



Summary Sheet of the Project:

Project Title	Leveraging Right to Information against Trafficking and Unsafe Migration in the Post-Disaster Reconstruction
Project No.	00098368-AWP2.1
Project Start and End Date	11September 2017-31 August 2018
Reporting Period	September 2017- December 2017
Donor/s	UN Women
Total Budget	NPR 65,97,352
Expenditure to Date	NPR 20,22,916
Geographic Coverage	Sindhupalchowk, Dhading and Kathmandu
Responsible Party/ies	Media Advocacy Group (MAG)
Reporting Organization	UN Women
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UN Women Focal Point	Ms. Sharu Joshi Shrestha

I. BACKGROUND OF THE PROJECT

Natural disasters, for it creates the loss of existing structures and disrupt the mechanism including the control over assets, mass displacement and poor living conditions, law enforcement and justice systems including social protection mechanisms and loss of family protection.

The massive earthquake destroyed many houses making millions of people dead, homeless, widowed and orphaned. As a consequence, large number of men has left for employment elsewhere, leaving behind female-headed households at economic and social disadvantage and limited protection. The pressure to migrate increased and many migrants who didn't get the chance to leave the country in a formal, registered way left unsafe. With low education, limited livelihood options most of them are forced to choose unsafe migration without proper information which may drag them to trafficking. As various tools are applied to address the web of adversities facing women but insufficient focus has been paid to the power that information can play in confronting these challenges. Paradoxically, it is arguable that while women are the least likely to demand and receive access to information, they are perhaps the most in need of this potent tool.

Under the overall framework of the The Future We Want (FWW) project and the Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with National Information Commission (NIC), UN Women is partnering with Media Advocacy Group (MAG) to implement this program in Sindhupalchowk, Dhading and Kathmandu. The overall goal of this assignment is to support the Government of Nepal, specifically the NIC to ensure women's Right to Information (RTI) specifically related to labor migration and human trafficking in the post disaster context.

The main objectives of the project are:

- To enhance synergy between institutions and policies on issues of unsafe migration and human trafficking through improved evidence based awareness raising, advocacy, information dissemination, capacity development and coordination support.
- To contribute on women's RTI in the post-disaster context through information sharing mechanisms in partnership with NIC to carry out extensive information dissemination.
- To empower women to seek information from government entities to for transparency and accountability and make informed choice.

The expected results of the project are:

Outcome:

- A synergy has been developed between the institutions and policies on the issues of unsafe migration and human trafficking.
- Information sharing mechanisms have been strengthened in the target districts.
- The women in the target districts used RTI as a tool for demanding information from government and public institutions for their entitlements.

The strategies that will be adopted to achieve the project objective are:

- **Result Based Management:** MAG has prepared the workplan with detail activities of the district. MAG is using the RBM approach to implement the project activities. The project will track changes on seeking information and providing information culture in the project implantation districts.
- **Participatory approach:** MAG has built rapport with returnee women migrant workers and survivors of trafficking and is also coordinating with service providers, Zonta club of Kathmandu, member organizations of the District Development Committee (DDC), NIC and most importantly with the newly elected women representatives in local bodies. Practicle suggestions to use the RTI from the champions will also be incorporated in the training guideline to make it user friendly. Open discussions from the participants have been promoted during the training sessions.
- **Culturally sensitive approach:** MAG has adopted human rights based approach and has respected the obligation and sensitivity of local communities to avoid harm to their lives and relation. MAG asked for permission while collecting human stories and pictures for publication and distribution. The names of the returnee women migrant workers have been changed to maintain confidentiality.
- **Strategic Partnership:** MAG has excellent partnership with government line agencies, national and international organizations, CSOs and forums working in the field of RTI, migration and trafficking. MAG is mobilising with strategic partners like NIC, Deputy mayors and municipalities, Federation of Nepalese Journalist, and women from diverse group while implementing the proposed activities for effective results.

II. PROGRESS ATTAINED

A. Major Changes:

As per the essence of the project being partnered with NIC, the main motto of the project is to build the capacity of right holders on RTI. A regular coordination has been made with the NIC where Ms. Yasodha Timsina, Information Commissioner Spokesperson herself as the focal person for this project and have been leading and facilitating almost each and every activity under this project. Besides, she has been using publications from NIC “Women Entitlements” and using as a tool to the participants to increase their understanding and practice seeking information on the same. .

Though the constitution of Nepal has provided RTI as the fundamental right for the citizens, it lacks awareness in the government staffs themselves. Since the Advisory Committee comprises of government officials, it has helped them to increase awareness on the same. The Deputy Mayors from all the three target districts Sidhupalchowk, Kathmandu and Dhading are chairing the Advisory Committee and have given their word for full support and acknowledged the importance of RTI. In Advisory Committee's meeting, the Deputy Mayor of Kathmandu Municipality suggested providing orientation on the RTI for the newly elected women representatives.

A guideline for women to access RTI has already been developed and shared with UN Women and incorporated feed back. As recommended by UN Women, a topic on GRB was also added in the guideline. Based on which ToT has already been conducted in all three districts. The guideline mainly focuses on the concept and importance of RTI for the citizens especially for women, the agencies where RTI can be applied and the procedures required for applying the RTI application. Besides, it also focuses on women entitlements that have been enshrined in the constitution and other key policies of Nepal.

Taking into consideration, the recommendation provided by Zonta club of Kathmandu, 41 RTI champions have been trained through a three day ToT. to raise awareness at the community level and promote access to RTI. As per the Terms of Reference (TOR), there should have been 30 RTI Champions but MAG was obliged to increase the number because the women were self motivated to participate in the training. With the increment in number, the participation became more inclusive and discussions more productive. The increment demanded the expenditure only in terms of fooding which was managed within the same budget. The participants were selected as per the TOR which includes women representing LGBTIQ, Indigenous, Madheshis, Dalits, people with disability, survivors of trafficking, violence and unsafe migration. There is an estimation of 50,000 of women in entertainment sector who have been survivors of internal migration. As per the recommendation of the

inception workshop in Kathmandu, a category of entertainment sector was also added in the selection criteria for ToT participants. The TOT focussed on where RTI can be applied and the procedures required to apply for the RTI application. Besides, it also focussed on Women Entitlements that was published by NIC in partnership with UN Women. In the completion of the three days ToT, the champions were quite excited and committed to file RTI applications and shared that they would encourage other women from their network to file such applications as well.

B. Major Activities:

1. Meeting with the NIC

A coordination meeting was conducted at NIC to share the details of the project on 23rd October, 2017. The meeting was attended by Mr. Krishnahari Baskota, Chief Information Commissioner; Mr. Kiran Kumar Pokhrel, Information Commissioner and Ms. Yasodha Timsina, Information Commissioner Spokesperson from the NIC; Ms. Sharu Joshi Shrestha from UN Women. The Chief Information Commissioner recommended to include the Deputy Mayor being the women elected representative and responsible for judicial matters from Municipality. for the ownership and sustainability of the project. Besides, the meeting concluded to provide a focal person from NIC to facilitate while implementing the project.

Please find the minute of the meeting in Annex 1.

2. Project approval

Project approval was taken from the District Coordination Committee (DCC) of all the three districts including Sindhupalchowk, Dhading and Kathmandu for implementing the project. But due to the federal system that came into enforcement recently after the local election, there has been unclarity regarding which entity should give approval for project work. The Local Development Act brings the CSOs under the Municipality which is being headed by the elected representatives so it is expected to be easier from the days to come because it will be the main body itself to be involved in the monitoring of the CSOs and provide recommendations for the approval.

Please find Letter of Approval in Annex 2.

3. Recruitment and Procurement

MAG recruited two staff in the central office and 2 staff in field as coordinator to support the implementation of the project. Ms. Menuka Basnet has been recruited as the Project Coordinator and Ms. Yuka Shrestha as the Program Assistant to work and coordinate district activities from the central office. Accordingly, MAG

recruited Mr. Kishor Budhathoki as field coordinator for Sindhupalchowk district and Mr. Rajendra Pratap Shah for Dhading district to work in the field. MAG also made procurement of laptop to be provided to the project coordinator to work for the project.

S.N	Name of employees	Designation	Highest Qualification	Past Experience	Contact Address
1	Ms. Menuka Basnet	Project Coordinator	M.A	More than 10 years experience in development field	Mob:9858750770 e-mail: evaw.kanchanpur@gmail.com
2	Mr. Prabin Basnet	Admin and Finance Officer	BBS	Staff of MAG since 9 years	Mob: 9851174132 e-mail: magfinance08@gmail.com
3	Ms. Yuka Shrestha	Program Assistant	BBA	More than 2 years experience in coordinating events and writing journals, articles and blogs	Mob: 9851032195 e-mail: Yukashrestha21@gmail.com
4	Mr. Kishor Budhathoki	Field Coordinator	BA	More than 10 years experience in journalism	Mob:9841480165 e-mail: krishmapari@gmail.com
5	Mr. Rajendra Pratap Shah	Field Coordinator	BA	More than 20 years of experience in journalism	Mob:9851084880 e-mail: rajendraprata@gmail.com
6	Mr. Sundar Khadka	Office Assistant	Intermediate	Regular staff of MAG since 2 years	Mob:9814872167 e-mail: sansarkhadka999@gmail.com

Please find the meeting minute for recruitment in Annex 3.

4. Formation of the Advisory Committees'

MAG formed three Advisory Committees in the target districts Sindhupalchowk, Kathmandu and Dhading. The committee was formed based on TOR and recommendations made from NIC during the first coordination meeting. The selection of committee members was made from the concerned government agencies like Municipality, Women and Children Office, DCC, Federation of Nepalese Journalists (FNJ) from concerned district and the CSOs working on foreign migration and trafficking and the returnee from foreign employment. The program details have been given below for convenience. Ms. Januka Parajuli,

Deputy Mayor from Sindhupalchowkrecommended to appoint an information officer and proactive disclosure in all the organizations. Based on the commitment, MAG has appointed Ms. Samjhana Ban as the information officer. The participants in Dhading recommended the program to be extended in other wards of the Municipality also.

The committee members from Kathmandu recommended to disseminate the booklet published by NIC and UN Womento all the 600 target beneficiaries of the project. Ms. Hari Prabha Khadgi, Deputy Mayor from Kathmandu recommended to design an orientation programme on RTI for the elected women representatives of Kathmandu Metropolitan Citysince they also perform as duty bearer on RTI. It was also decided among the committee members to include Ms. Soni Joshi, Secretary of the Zonta club of Kathmandu and Ms. Chari Maya Tamang, survivor of trafficking in the Advisory Committee from the next meeting. Below is the Participants list of the Advisory Committees:

S.N	District	Program Date	Total Participants and their Diversity
1	Sindhupalchowk	11th Nov, 2017	7 (Brahmin-3, Chhetri-2, Janjati-2)
2	Dhading	5th Dec, 2017	7 (Brahmin-4, Chhetri-1, Janjati-1, Others-1)
3	Kathmandu	24th Dec, 2017	7 (Brahmin-5, Janjati-2)

Please find meeting minutes of Sindhupalchowk, Kathmandu and Dhading along with the name list of the committee in Annex 4

5. Programme Inception Workshop



Ms. Bijaya Rai Shrestha sharing her opinion

MAG organized three Programme Inception Workshops in the three target districts Sindhupalchowk, Kathmandu and Dhading. The participants in the workshop were the advisory committee members, Information Commissioner of NIC, district focal points, Nepal Police, CSOs, media houses, returnee women migrant workers, survivor of violence and UN Women. The returneewomen migrant workers from the foreign employment in Sindhupalchowk

shared their story. Ms. Januka Parajuli, Deputy Mayor, the media and other stakeholders was informed how minors are also going for foreign employment. It was found during the sharing that majority of returnee women migrant workers had been taken to Gulf countries like Kuwait, Dubai, Qatar and other countries like Malaysia. They had to work under severe conditions facing torture and humiliation.

Ram Kumar Thapa, Head constable, District Police Office said, "The main culprits behind trafficking and unsafe migration of women are their own father, brother or husband. They do this because of their economic conditions and in the hope that their wife or sister or daughter can bring back some money home. But when they do not send money back home, they report to the police in 'missing category'"

Some of them went to foreign employment around the age of 15 when they were even not legitimate to get passports and had stayed forcefully in those countries from 6 months to 5 years. Mr. Ram Kumar Thapa, head constable shared the police report of missing category from Sindhupalchowk. From his sharing, it could be devised that majority of the missing people included girl child. In four years time, 627 cases of girl trafficking, 152 cases of disappearance of women and 46 cases of disappearance of girls were reported. Deputy Mayor Ms. Parajuli shared that the Municipality of Sindhupalchowk is in the process of the establishment of the Management Information System which can act as a supporting device in implementing RTI in the district.

Many CSOs shared cases that are filed in their organization in the inception workshop held in Kathmandu. This sharing helped the stakeholders in unveiling the nexus between trafficking and migration. Ms. Srijana Pun representing Women Forum for Women in Nepal (WOFOWON) raised issues regarding internal trafficking in the entertainment sector. Ms. Pun opined that the entertainment sector is used as a transit point for unsafe migration and trafficking. She further added this sector needs more protection in terms of dignity, minimum salary and security.

Uma Tamang, Legal Officer, Maiti Nepal raised the issue regarding internal trafficking and how it is increasing day by day as destinations are changing. Ms. Tamang pointed out how village girls go to the capital with the hope of earning some money. But they are sold in places like Gaushala and Buspark and become victims of trafficking. She shared about the cases that have been recorded in their organization. One very sensitive case was a woman shared that the girl child in her womb was already sold in advance, considering the girl child can work for the household of buyers in future. These heart



Mr. Ram Kumar Thapa, Head Constable sharing police report

wrenching cases are numerous, she stated. Thus, RTI can help such women in determining their rights and help them in demanding the right information with justifiable compensation from concerned authorities. She also said that Maiti Nepal is ready to share data and reports when needed.

Dev Kumari Parajuli, representative of National Disable Fund shared that the women who became handicapped or whose homes were destroyed after the earthquake are not receiving the assistance that the government has provided for them. This is because these women don't have the information or they do not know how to seek that information. Thus, she pointed out why educating about RTI is so important.

Ms. Soni Joshi, secretary of Zonta Club of Kathmandu, expressed that the program gave her a lot of insight regarding the miserable life that women have been living. She informed that Zonta is reaching towards youth and media for creating awareness of RTI.

In the inception workshop of Dhading, Mr. Manraj Bhandari, Deputy Mayor of Nilkantha Municipality stated that it is not that people should not go for foreign employment rather they should, since remittance is the highest contributor to the country's GDP but what they should do is be well informed about the conditions before going abroad for employment.



Senior Journalist, Sita Ram Barma, sharing his feedback

Mr. Dholak Raj Dhakal, Chief District Officer of District Administration Office made an excellent suggestion for the selection process of the RTI champions to make the governance accountable and transparent.

***Note:** *Booklets and fliers on 'Common Charter of Demand after Earthquake by core group of Women' were also distributed during the Programme Inception Workshop to showcase, how women can come collectively to demand information and share their concerns collectively. Number of participants with diversities detail in the Inception Workshop:*

S.N	District	Program Date	Total Participants and their Diversity
1	Sindhupalchowk	10th Nov, 2017	32 (Brahmin-10, Chhetri-6, Janajati-14, Dalit-2)
2	Kathmandu	17th Nov, 2017	44 (Brahmin-14, Chhetri-12, Janajati-16, Madhesi-1, Muslim-1)
3	Dhading	6th Dec, 2017	36 (Brahmin-21, Chhetri-3, Janajati-12)

Please find the detail reports of the inception workshops at Sindhupalchowk, Kathmandu and Dhading along with the participants list in Annex 5.

6. Training Guideline

A training guideline was developed that outlines concept of RTI, its importance especially for women; the procedure to access those rights with a special focus on foreign labour migration, trafficking and post disaster relief and recovery. This training guideline has 11 sessions each comprising the necessary details, making it a complete and user friendly package for the RTI champions to conduct orientations for the target beneficiaries. As per the constructive suggestion by UN Women, a chapter on Gender Responsive Budget was also added. The topics included under the sessions are:

- Conceptual clarity on RTI
- Importance of information and where to go in case information is not provided.
- Application format and procedure for information
- Importance of RTI for women and its uses
- Uses of RTI on foreign employment for women
- Nexus between trafficking and migration in post-disaster
- Information during and post-disaster
- Conceptual clarity on gender budget including how to use RTI on Gender Responsive Budget

- Identification of sector, agencies and subject for asking information in the concerned districts
- Future strategy
- Assigning responsibilities

Dissemination of Training Guideline:

This guideline will be published and disseminated to all those RTI champions who participated in three days ToT training at Sindhupalchowk, Kathmandu and Dhading. This guideline will also be disseminated to the concerned CSOs, municipalities, media houses, government officials, NIC and the 600 women beneficiaries of the FWW project for their use. The guideline is being reviewed to incorporate the feedbacks from the RTI champions collected during the ToT to make it more beneficial and user friendly. The guideline will be published after incorporating feedbacks.

Please find the electronic copy of the training guideline in Annex 6.

7. Capacity Development Program of RTI Champions

MAG conducted three Capacity Development programs (ToT training) using the RTI guideline for the selected RTI champions from Sindhupalchowk, Kathmandu and Dhading. The champions were selected taking into consideration the recommendation from the Advisory Committee; their personal capacity and experience with foreign employment, trafficking, disaster and recommendations from Zonta club Kathmandu. The RTI champions belonged to diverse groups including media, CSOs workers and social workers which made it more inclusive.

The training was organized to develop the capacity of the RTI champions and train them to conduct orientations to the target beneficiaries. They were also encouraged to file applications for RTI to get information and entitlements in their concerned districts. The training was conducted for three days in each district, eight hours each day



Ms. Tamang (returnee migrant worker) sharing her story

based on the training manual prepared in consultation with UN Women and NIC. Ms. Yasodha Timsina, Information Commissioner Spokesperson facilitated the training along with Ms. Babita Basnet, president of MAG and media expert

throughout the training period. Ms. Timsina, additionally, distributed the booklets and flyers related to RTI to the participants which will be helpful to them to use as a resource material. The training was conducted using power point presentations followed by question and answer session which created a platform for interaction and sharing. Ms. Basnet delivered the theoretical aspects of RTI from national and international perspectives. Similarly, Ms. Timsina focused her session on a practical basis enhancing the champions' knowledge on the procedures for filing the applications for RTI, identifying agencies where RTI is applicable, the accuracy in formats and where to go if they can't find the required information even after they file the RTI applications. The experiences shared by the RTI champions related to the content in each session added value to make the guideline more practical.

**Case Story of Nila Tamang,
Returnee migrant worker**

Ms. Nila Tamang (name changed) was influenced by her friends and family members to go for foreign employment. Without knowing any official process and information she went to Dubai from informal route and stayed for six years as a house maid. She had to look after the children and work in the house. She neither understood the language nor had the skills to perform household activities that involved the use of modern technologies. Till 5 months, everything was fine. She was paid good salary and allowed to contact her family. After 5 months, she faced torture and pain. They stopped giving her salary and did not allow contacting her family. They did not even let her go outside the house. After much torture she had no option but to run away. She did not know where she was going and just ran. She had no idea about the existence and role of the Nepal Embassy. She told that had she known about it then she would have directly gone to the Embassy. But because she was not informed she had to go through so many hassles and finally she was able to return back.

Though the champions have experiences with foreign employment, trafficking and disaster, it was found during the pre-test evaluation that they have very few or no knowledge regarding RTI. During and after the training the champions were found to be more excited and encouraged to apply the learning in their life and encourage others too. In the post-test evaluation the champions were found to have more knowledge on RTI as a fundamental right of citizens, who can ask for information to whom, what kind of information can be known and the procedure to file application for RTI.

Through the sharing of the experiences of the returnee migrant women Ms. Timsina highlighted scope of information that is needed in foreign employment beforehand. Ms. Basnet highlighted that just knowing RTI is not enough because there are several processes required for its implementation. There are things for instance, steps in writing application, identifying the required fee for the information according to number of pages, the number of days within which information can be received and what to do and where to go if the requested information is not provided. Ms. Timsina again focused on the specificity of the

information to be asked where it must cover one topic at a time to reduce the hassle in getting information.

The champions were asked to write the application individually. Some of the organizations they wrote their applications as:

- Bir Hospital- information regarding major equipments bought for the fiscal year 2073/2074 and the price of the equipments bought.
- Foreign Employment Promotion Board- information regarding the deposited amount in the welfare fund till date and from this deposit how much was distributed to both male and female.
- Village Committee- information regarding what kind of free health services are given to the female population of this village committee
- Foreign Employment Office Department- information regarding which countries are open for foreign employment and how many of these countries have free visa and both way ticket.

Laxmi Baral and Sarita KC, representatives from the LGBTIQ group at the training in Kathmandu shared their practical experience of difficulties they have to face due to the lack of information. The problems they have been facing for their recognition due to lack of clarity in policies. Srijana Pun Magar and Sabina Lama



Ms. Yasodha Timsina distributing certificate to the participants at Dhading ToT

shared their experiences of difficulty in entertainment sector because of the lack of proper information. As there are diversities within women, but the accepted definition of the gender is unable to address all the diversities within women properly. They described in clear terms the definition of LGBTIQ and the practical difficulty of the definition to cover all the groups that are solely covered by the term LGBTIQ. There is also the relation between entertainment sector and its consequences that forced women to choose foreign employment and trafficking but as Agni Gurung, a returnee stated the problems created from the foreign employment are so complex that the existing laws and policies are unable to address them. Personal problems triggered from the foreign employment are the emerging issues nowadays. A lot of problems have been arising in personal affairs/relationships due to long gap between spouse and children. The problems can't be limited to the men or women alone; rather it is a human problem. There

is also a nexus between the domestic violence against women, unsafe migration and trafficking. One of the Participants from the entertainment sector shared that she was raped by her own husband for having two daughters. As a result of domestic violence, she was forced to choose the entertainment sector becoming a victim of internal migration.

A case was shared by one of the trainee in Dhading regarding domestic violence that forced her to go for foreign employment. She was tortured by her mother-in-law and thought she would be better off if she goes for foreign employment. This story highlights the nexus between foreign employment and domestic violence.

List of participants of TOT:

S.N	District	Program Date	Total Champions and their Diversity
1	Sindhupalchowk	12th-14th Dec, 2017	11 (Brahmin-1, Chhetri-3, Janajati-7)
2	Kathmandu	15th-17th Dec, 2017	17 (Brahmin-6, Chhetri-3, Janajati-7, Muslim-1)
3	Dhading	20th-22nd Dec, 2017	10 (Brahmin-2, Chhetri-2, Janajati-6)

Please find the electronic copy of the training guideline in Annex 7.

III. CAPACITIES

Capacities of the women from diverse groups like entertainment sector, LGBTIQ, people with disability, CSOs, returnee women migrant workers and their family members, lawyers, media persons, local elected representatives were enhanced through orientation and training on RTI. They have been aware regarding their rights that have been provided by the constitution. They have also got information regarding the Women's Entitlements by the government .. Besides, the government officials also get aware about the importance of scope of Right to Information. In total, hundred and twelve participants have been capacitated from the inception workshop.

The three days TOT provided to the 41 RTI champions was an eye opener for all the trainees'. In the pre and post test conducted during the training, almost all the participants responded that they had no idea at all before and after the training they have understood what is right to information and where it can be applicable including how to write the RTI application.

During the project period, orientation was also provided to the project staffs through which their knowledge on RTI, migration and trafficking cases has been enhanced. Furthermore, the stories and experiences shared by the target beneficiaries and other stakeholders related to foreign employment and trafficking were very informative which can help in addressing these issues in the project.

IV. KEY PARTNERSHIPS

During the course of project implementation, MAG has been in close coordination with NIC, Ministry of Women, Children and Social Welfare (MoWCSW), Kathmandu Metropolitan City, FNJ, and Freedom Forum at the central level of which a project Advisory Committee has been formed to provide guidance on the implementation of the project.

Similarly, at the local level, MAG has excellent coordination and partnership with DCC; District Administration Office (DAO); Women and Children Office; District Federation of Nepalese Journalists (DFNJ); Media; Municipalities; Local Elected Representatives and returnee women migrant workers of which an Advisory Committee has also been formed to guide the project at local level.

Besides, the group of champions who are from the diverse groups within the women, and from different communities and profession, they will also be working to achieve the project goal adding their experiences and expertise.

V. KNOWLEDGE MANAGEMENT

A comprehensive but crisp guideline was developed to provide training to the RTI Champions for the use of RTI taking technical support from UN Women and NIC. The RTI Champions have been capacitated to guide and encourage the target beneficiaries first by providing orientation to them based on the guideline and later to file RTI applications. The guideline along with the booklet titled 'Information Related to Women Entitlements' will also be distributed to the target beneficiaries and concerned CSOs and Government offices in future programmes.

The expertise of Ms. Yasodha Timsina, information commissioner and spokes person of NIC has been used for preparing the guideline to deliver ToT to the RTI champions. The training guideline and project reports have been shared through the website of MAG for the public reference.

Moreover, various publications of NIC were disseminated to the champions including booklet on 'Information related to Women Entitlements'.

VI. CHANGES IN THE PROJECT STRATEGY

Some of the changes that occurred during program implementation are:

- Due to parliamentary and provincial election, CSOs were not allowed to conduct any program in some of the district and this rule was strictly applied in Dhading . So, MAG had to organize Dhading Advisory Committee Meeting and Programme Inception Workshop a month later than planned timeframe. According to the workplan it was planned for the month of November but due to such circumstances MAG conducted the program on 5th and 6th December 2017.
- The capacity development program (ToT) held in Kathmandu had a slight increment of 7 trainees'. According to the TOR, there should have been 10 trainees in each district but MAG was obliged to increase the number because the women were self motivated to participate in the training. MAG takes this as a positive change because with the increment in number, the participation became very inclusive and the discussions shared were also very fruitful.

VII. KEY CHALLENGES AND LESSONS LEARNT

Key Challenges:

- According to the Social Welfare Council rule, before conducting any program in the district, CSOs need to take approval from the DCC. In addition, according to the State's new structure, the DCC's power has been transferred to the Municipality. MAG applied for the project during this transitional phase of government. Thus, it took more time to get the approval.
- High security alert was in place due to frequent bomb blasts happening during the election period. Despite the threat and security challenges, MAG continued conducting the program successfully.
- Overall, due to elections, MAG had some difficulties during project implementation. Nevertheless, the quality in delivering the programs was not hampered.

Lesson Learnt:

- The selection criteria set for RTI Champions which must consider at least 50% participation representing LGBTIQ, Janajatis/Indigenous, Madheshis, Dalits, people with disability, survivors of trafficking and unsafe migration, men and women is an excellent strategy. But when applied in practice, it was a bit challenging for the resource persons to make them understand and give training. Since, the champions were not from the same educational

background, the trainers had to put extra effort in simplifying the concept of RTI as per the need of diverse partners.

- Also, since these RTI champions are the ones who are going to give orientation to other women beneficiaries, they would need further refresher course to maximise results.
- It was assumed that there will be political stability after the elections. But, now due to conflict within the political parties, restructuring of federal government is taking additional time which is affecting the project implementation.

VIII. NEXT STEPS

- MAG has already appointed an information officer based on the discussion and recommendation from Sindhupalchowk inception workshop. MAG has been a partner to so many alliances where it will encourage the partner organizations to appoint an information officer.
- MAG will facilitate the RTI champions from Kathmandu to file RTI applications. This will be shared with the district project coordinators and the replication of this activity will be made in the respective districts by filing RTI application by the champions themselves followed by the target beneficiaries.
- MAG is planning to have coordination meeting with Forum for Women, Law and Development (FWLD) prior to providing orientation of RTI to the government officials since FWLD is reviewing laws and policies related to trafficking and migration which will be beneficial while designing the orientation to government officials.
- MAG will make a presentation on RTI with the partner organization of the project FWW.
- *Second Quarter Plan is attached in Annex 8*