



TIPPING POINT - NEPAL

PHASE 1 EVALUATION FINDINGS



POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS

ENGAGE CIVIL SOCIETY AND THE PUBLIC TO PROMOTE UNDERSTANDING AND ENGAGEMENT WITH NEW GOVERNANCE STRUCTURES

Following elections in 2017 and the restructuring of government administration systems, the government of Nepal has an opportunity to engage civil society and the public to promote understanding of the working and mandates of new governance structures and to ensure that key stakeholders (including non-governmental organizations) are able to work with federal, provincial and local bodies to achieve common goals. The evaluation shows some positive examples of how building relationships between the project and local governments has helped to garner resources for girls and to work with structures such as the Village Child Protection Committees (VCPCs) to promote girls' rights, which contributes to achieving national goals such as ending child marriage by 2030. A systematized approach to resource allocation to ensure girls' rights are fulfilled would include gender responsive planning and budgeting at municipal level.

IMPLEMENT THE NATIONAL STRATEGY AND ACTION PLAN TO END CHILD MARRIAGE

In 2016, the Nepal government adopted a national strategy to end child marriage. The strategy presents opportunities for concrete action to tackle the root causes and consequences of child marriage. A draft plan of action to implement the strategy has been submitted to the government by the Girls Not Brides (GNB) Network of Nepal. The government should take steps to approve the action plan, including ensuring adequate consultations and review of the plan by relevant ministries and civil society stakeholders and providing dedicated resource. Additionally, the government can support accountability and coordination mechanisms for implementation at federal and local level. Community leaders, religious leaders, men and boys, civil society organizations, and multiple levels of government have shown a willingness to engage in and support efforts to end child marriage and would benefit from inclusion in consultative processes in order to have a feasible and effective national action plan to end child marriage.



CREATE/STRENGTHEN PLATFORMS FOR YOUTH, INCLUDING GIRLS, TO ENGAGE IN GOVERNMENT POLICY PROCESSES AND DECISION-MAKING

A key finding from the evaluation is that, in some communities, girls have been able to positively engage with government representatives and service providers, including schools, public health posts, and the Village Development Committee (VDC) offices, leading them to involve girls in programs and seeking girls' opinions on how the programs should be run. As the new decentralized system of local and provincial governance starts being implemented across the country, the government should create or strengthen platforms or processes for meaningful engagement of adolescent girls and young people in decision-making and policymaking at all levels. This engagement will help ensure that youths' needs and rights are represented and promote youth leadership and civil engagement. The National Youth Policy can provide an initial framework for this work, coordinated by the Ministry of Youth and Sports.



INTEGRATE AND SCALE UP STRATEGIES TO CHANGE DISCRIMINATORY NORMS AS PART OF GOVERNMENT PROGRAMS

The findings of the evaluation show the promise of approaches aimed at shifting discriminatory norms and expanding community perceptions of the potential roles and contributions of girls to their communities beyond household duties. There is an opportunity for new government actors at federal and local level to increase support for such promising approaches and strategies, including through collaboration and support for efforts by youth and civil society organizations to mobilize communities and through integration of norm change strategies and approaches within large-scale development programs across various sectors.

ENSURE THAT GOVERNMENT SERVICES, INCLUDING HEALTH SERVICES, ARE YOUTH-FRIENDLY

With the development of a new adolescent health and development strategy (2017), government bodies and departments at local and federal levels have an opportunity to promote and strengthen adolescents' and young people's access to critical health and social services, especially in remote and marginalized communities. It is critical for the government to integrate services for adolescents into existing sexual and reproductive health

services, quality assurance, and funding.¹ Girls highly valued Tipping Point's focus on sexual and reproductive health knowledge, particularly for menstrual management, indicating that there is an unmet need among adolescents for timely and youth-friendly health and social services.

STRENGTHEN THE PROVISION OF AGE-APPROPRIATE AND COMPREHENSIVE SEXUALITY EDUCATION

The government's current efforts in collaboration with the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) to develop a new comprehensive sexuality education curriculum are welcome. Tipping Point staff reported that discussing sexuality was one of the most challenging aspects of their work, noting that schoolteachers are not currently providing adequate sexuality education to students and that there continues to be some resistance in communities to these efforts. The government should ensure adequate resources and capacity for delivery and implementation of the curricula in schools but also ensure outreach to out-of-school girls and boys, parents and community members to reduce taboos around sexual and reproductive health and rights and equip adolescents to make informed decisions.

INVEST IN SKILLS TRAINING FOR GIRLS AND YOUNG PEOPLE IN MARGINALIZED COMMUNITIES TO EXPAND CHOICES AND CREATE ALTERNATIVES TO CHILD MARRIAGE

The government should invest in life skills training and vocational programs for adolescent girls and young people, particularly those out of school, to create viable alternatives to early marriage. Evaluation respondents reported highly positive views of girls who contributed to household income through income generating activities such as sewing, reversing views of unmarried girls as a "burden" on their families. Skills training strategies should include diverse ways to connect young people from remote and marginalized communities to vocational, livelihoods, and employment opportunities and markets and supporting infrastructure and access to services and programs that can transform the geographic isolation of communities.



1 <http://www.who.int/bulletin/volumes/95/2/17-020217/en/>

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