

DFID- Community Support Programme

Annual Progress Report (January 2003 – December 2003)

March 2004

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Introduction

The **Community Support Programme (CSP)** is a **Department for International Development (DFID)** programme that aims to support the immediate needs of poor communities in the Mid and Far West of Nepal.

The Programme is an Umbrella Fund, designed to deliver immediate, demand-led support to communities for the sustainable and equitable improvement of their livelihoods. The programme provides fund support to communities through several mechanisms; either directly to Communities through community-based organisations (CBOs), or with the facilitation of CSP Community Support Officers (CSOs), NGOs and other intermediaries, or other DFID funded programmes with strong links with communities. CSP will work synergistically with the efforts of other development organisations by providing complementary support.

CSP has been operating since January 2003 and will continue its support until January 2006.

This report reflects the major achievements and lessons learned from the programme during the period of one year (January 2003 – December 2003).

Programme objective

To provide immediate support for men, women and children affected by exclusion, poverty and conflict, to help them to achieve their livelihoods and human development priorities.

Target groups

Poor, marginalised and conflict affected communities and groups (displaced people, widows, orphans, elderly, disabled people etc.)

The Programme Frameworks

Goal

Poor and excluded people improve their livelihoods.

Purpose

Poor and excluded people in the mid and far west of Nepal receive support – delivered according to CSP guiding principles¹ - enabling them to achieve their livelihood priorities.

Outputs

1. Local CBOs, user groups and excluded group organisations that are representative of the community and have effective initiatives receive Programme funding and support

¹ CSP guiding principles are: transparency, participation, inclusiveness, equity, innovation, complementarity and sustainability

2. Innovative approaches implemented for working through networks and organisations with strong community connections and effective programmes in order to fund community identified initiatives
3. Initiatives funded and supported do not exacerbate, and preferably ameliorate, local level conflict
4. Experiences and best practices documented and shared with HMGN and other development partners at local, district and national level.

Core support sectors

CSP provides support for the implementation of community-led initiatives in five core sectors:

- Income generating activities
- Food security
- Small rural community infrastructures (drinking water, irrigation, foot bridges, trail etc.)
- Education (especially for conflict affected children)
- Health

Working approaches

CSP provides funds in the following different ways:

Community model: CSP funds communities directly through community-based organisations (CBOs) and community-based networks (user groups, mothers groups etc).

CSO model: CSP has Community Support Officers in six districts (Baitadi, Kailali, Mugu, Jumla, Surkhet and Rukum). The CSOs role is to support and facilitate communities in the identification of problems and priorities, development of proposals, and project implementation and monitoring.

Partnership model: In districts without a CSO, CSP supports communities with the facilitation of intermediary organisations (NGOs, other DFID funded programmes etc) which have strong links with the communities.

Delegated authority model: Other DFID funded programmes (eg. LFP) assess and fund proposals on behalf of CSP (using CSP guiding principles and criteria) in the districts in which they are working (eg. for LFP - Dang, Rolpa, Salyan and Pyuthan).

Guiding principles

Participation: CSP promotes the participation of all stakeholders, especially the beneficiaries (communities), in the process of project identification, planning, execution, monitoring and evaluation. This is crucial for successful implementation of projects at the community level.

Community led initiatives: CSP supports activities that are identified and implemented by the rural communities, as this builds the confidence and capacity of the community to solve community level problems on their own.

Inclusive and Equitable: Intervention should be as equitable as possible, ideally benefiting the whole community, and aim to reduce tensions within a society. However to reach particularly disadvantaged and excluded groups, CSP supports specially focused types of interventions.

Transparency: Transparency improves the understanding among the stakeholders and beneficiaries, helps to create a working environment for project implementation, ensures the equitable distribution of benefits, and prevents corruption. The CSP promotes public auditing methods that are relevant and pragmatic at community level.

Sustainability: After the completion of the project and withdrawal of CSP support, benefits need to be maintained or increased by developing pragmatic maintenance strategies.

Innovativeness: CSP promotes interventions that deal with community development issues in novel ways; have a clear benefit over traditional or existing approaches.

Complementarity: CSP support should serve as a complementary activity to the already existing program and help contribute towards a synergetic impact.

Implementation strategies

Proposal submission: The proposals submitted to CSP should come from the communities, either independently or with the facilitation of CSOs, NGOs or other partner organisations, and should address the communities' priorities as determined by the whole community. Proposals from CSO districts are submitted to the CSO, in other districts they are submitted to CSP in Nepalgunj.

Proposal assessment: The proposals will be assessed by CSP using a set of standard criteria based on our programme objectives, target groups, core support sectors and guiding principles. However there is flexibility in this assessment to take account of the specific situation and circumstances of a community. CSOs make an initial assessment of proposals submitted to them. If it is a large scale, expensive, technical, complicated or contentious proposal (or there are other factors which the CSO requires advice), the CSO will pass it to CSP in Nepalgunj for further assessment. If necessary the proposals are assessed by a technical professional.

Implementation: CSP does not directly implement activities. Communities are responsible for the implementation of their own projects. The project is managed by a Project Management Committee. Committees must be representative of the ethnic/caste and gender diversity of the community, and members of all groups and political parties should be welcome to participate.

In CSO districts, CSOs support communities in project implementation. In the other districts, CSP works directly with communities or works through the facilitating organisation (NGO), which performs a similar role of the CSOs.

Community contributions: Community contributions in any form (financial, labour, time etc) are essential in the implementation of identified community projects, to increase ownership accountability, and sustainability. CSP encourages communities to access resources from DDC and VDC wherever possible.

Monitoring: The community Project Management Committee oversees the project and monitors progress, submitting regular reports to the CSOs or CSP. CSP also requires that project activities are made transparent to the whole community through public auditing procedures and that a notice board is erected in the community with updated information on the project and expenditure. CSP, CSOs and consultants provide additional monitoring through project visits.

Project Evaluation: On completion of the project, the community, or other facilitating organisation (NGO), evaluates the success and impact of the project and submits a Project Completion Report. Public auditing is mandatory on the completion of the project. CSP reserves the right to include any project it funds in an external review.

Chapter B: Achievements highlights

Office set up and human resource development

Officially, the programme is started from January 1, 2003. Low profile Programme office is established and started to operate from June 2003 in Nepalgunj. Fund Coordinator, Deputy Fund Coordinator and Associate Professional Officer were recruited on June 2003. The remaining staffs were recruited in different times (Annex. 1.). DFID-Nepal and the Programme provided induction training to all staff after the recruitment.

During the period, necessary procedures and documents for funding have been prepared and used. Nepali proposal format, criteria for proposal screening, programme brochure, other administration and financial arrangements have been developed according to the DFID-Nepal standard procedures for funding intermediary and communities.

Informing all stakeholders about the CSP

CSP has organised a formal meeting with all potential stakeholders (DDC, CDO, NRA, NGOs, CBOs, Government line agencies) at district level. The purpose of this meeting was to brief all stakeholders about the CSP's objective, working approaches, guiding principles etc.

In addition to formal ways, CSP adopted various possible means to disseminate its information to the community level. VDC secretaries, village health workers, school teachers, political leaders and project and programme staff are the key means through which information have been communicated to community people. Experiences show that school teachers and health workers and VDC secretaries have played a vital role to communicate regarding the CSP at community levels.

CSP funds reaching districts

CSP has provided funds for the implementation of community initiatives in 14 districts of mid and far west of Nepal (table 1).

Table 1. CSP's funds receiving districts

Development Region	Districts	No. of community led initiatives funded
Mid west	Rukum	2
	Surkhet	5
	Banke	3
	Bardiya	1
	Kailali	1
	Dang	1
	Jajarkot	1
	Dolpa	1
	Humla	1
	Kaikot	1
Far west	Dadeldhura	2
	Doti	3
	Kanchanpur	1
	Bajura	1

Types of the initiatives funded

CSP funded a total of 30 initiatives identified and requested by the communities during the period (Table 3.). Irrigation rehabilitation, school building construction and health & sanitation supports are the major sectors approved by CSP. Only two initiatives related to drinking water were funded. In case of school building construction, the school management committees have directly accessed the funds from CSP.

Table 3. Type of the initiatives funded by CSP.

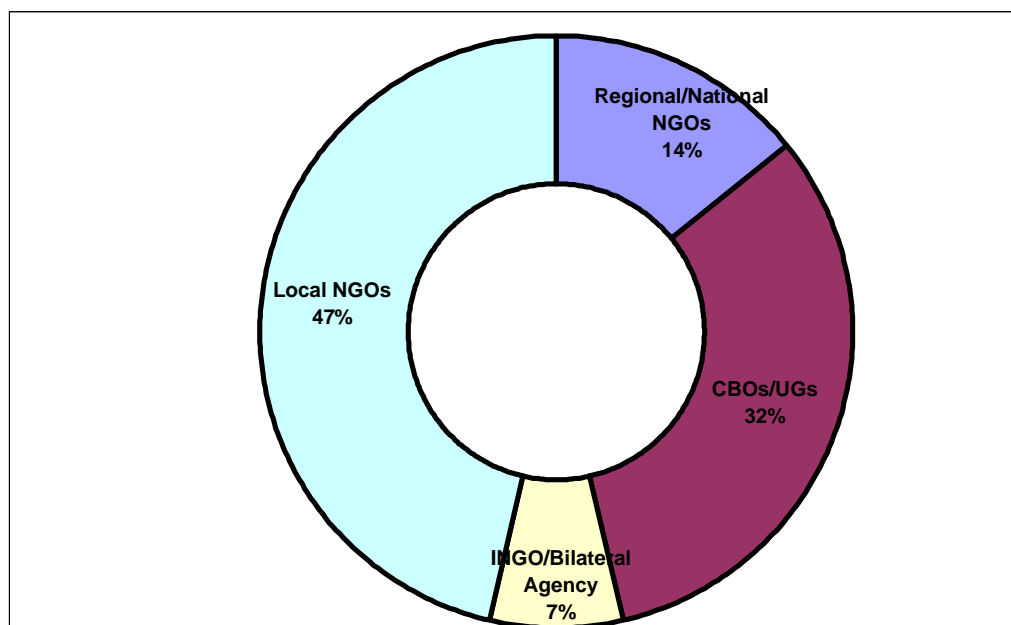
Types of initiative	Number approved & funded
School building	6
Irrigation	8
Drinking water	2
Health & Sanitation	6
Income generating activities	1
Water mills	2
Skill development training	0
Humanitarian supports	4
Transportation support	1
Total	30

Types of intermediary organisations

A total of 28 different types of intermediary organisations have been funded for the implementation of community led initiatives in 13 districts of mid and far west of Nepal. Table 1 indicates that out of the total intermediary organisations funded, 9 were CBOs who directly accessed the funds for community initiatives. Similarly, 13 were district based NGOs, 4 were national/regional NGOs and 2 were INGO/bilateral agency. Trend analysis reveals that number of CBOs accessing funds from CSP is tremendously increased.

Out of the 27 organisations funded, women were in lead positions only in 3 organisations. Similarly, dalits and Janajatis were in 3 and 4 organisations respectively.

Figure 1. Types of intermediary organisations funded during the year 2003.



Number of Benefiting Community Members

Total 38,304 intended community members (10,077 households) are expected to benefit directly from the initiatives funded. Out of the total members, 50.3% are women.

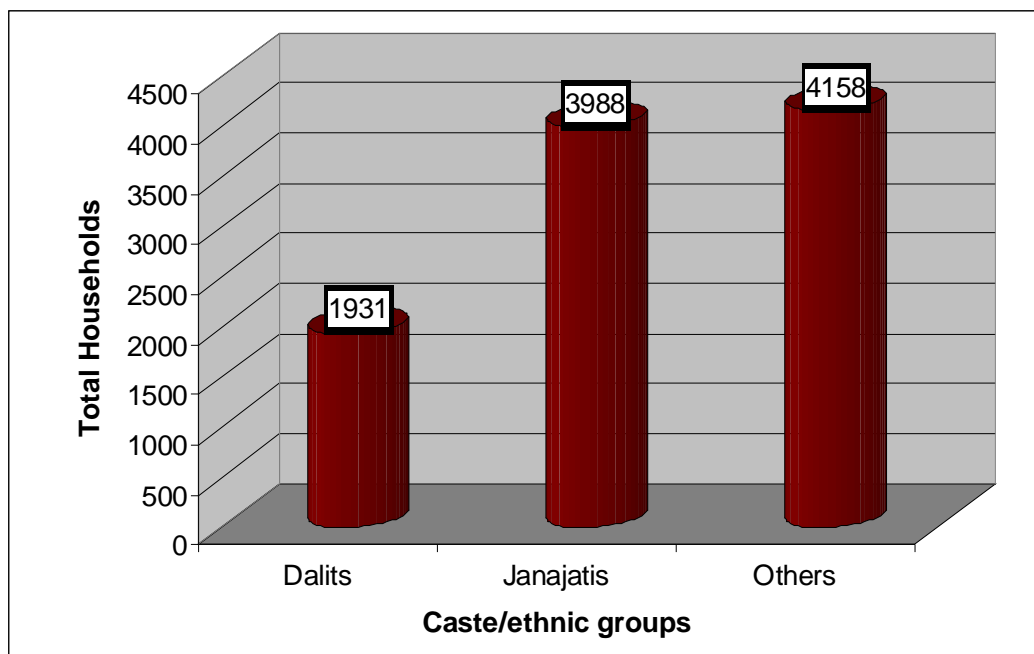


Figure 2. Total participating households by castes/ethnic groups.

Caste and ethnic groups wise about 19% households of Dalits, 39.5% of Janajatis and 41.2% of other castes are expected to benefit from the initiatives funded (Figure 2.). These figure also more or less same as

Table 5 reveals that only 11% of the total intermediary organisations funded by CSP had the women in leadership position. Similarly, Dalits and Janajatis were heading 12% and 15% intermediary organisations funded b y CSP.

Funding situation

A total 20.4 million rupees have been approved for 30 different proposals. Out of the total amount approved, about 9.8 million rupees (about 48% of the total) have been made available to the communities for the implementation of the initiatives during the period.

Different funding modalities

CSP has been providing its funds to the communities through four different ways:

- **Direct community model:** Out of the 30 initiatives funded, CBOs/UGs directly accessed the funds for 18 initiatives during the period.

- **CSO model:** Field staff have been recruited and started to work from November in Rukum, Surkhet, Jumla, Mugu, Baitadi & Kailali districts. Only one CBO was able to get the fund with the help of CSO because of short time.
- **Partnership model:** All together 9 NGOs and CBOs have accessed the fund from the CSP under the partnership model. Seed Sector Support Projects, Rural Access Programme and Helvetas are the key partner organisations that facilitated communities to get the funds under the partnership model.
- **Delegated authority model:** Livelihood forestry programme one of the DFID funded programmes has been working under this modality. MoU between LFP and CSP was signed on October 2003.

Chapter C: Learning & recommendations

- Directly providing funds to CBOs/UGs for the implementation of community led initiatives has been found one of the most effective ways to address the pressing and immediate needs of the poor and excluded communities. It has also positively contributed to reduce the corruption.
- In the present context, a public information board with project details including financial information has been found very effective means for maintaining acceptable level of transparency at community level.
- An umbrella fund has been found very effective for complementary supports to the other DFID and non-DFID projects and programmes for synergy impact at households level and also to help the excluded groups of people (landless). Examples are collaboration with SIMI/INF in irrigation, and SSSP in irrigation.
- CSP staff recruitment from the same district has further making it possible to reach to the excluded, deprived and rural communities in the present context.
- Most of the NGOs, which are led by the elites, are not happy with CSP funding approaches. CSP needs to develop a ways to use this group of people to help the poorest of the poor.
- In general, NGOs that are linked by other DFID and non-DFID projects/programme to CSP for funds have been found working only in the district headquarter. Whereas, CBOs/UGs have been found perfectly addressing to the immediate needs of the rural communities. Therefore, CSP should review the funding approaches under the partnership model.

- At least three visits to the project sites (before approval of proposal, during the implementation & after the completion of the project) either by CSP staff or its consultant have been found adequate to maintain acceptable level of quality of the works for funding agency like CSP.
- Excluded groups specifically women's, dalit's and janajatis representation in the leadership is still not adequate.
- According to the Do NO Harm principles, CSP follows the equidistance principles. It means that CSP puts local bodies and insurgents at same distance. This has helped to expand the supports in the remote areas of the district.

Annex 1. Staffs list with their designation and appointment date.

S.N.	Name	Designation	Based at	Appointment date
1.	Moti Prasad Thapa.	Fund Coordinator	CSP office Nepalgunj	9 th June 2003
2.	Rohit Odari	Deputy Fund Coordinator	CSP office Nepalgunj	2 nd June 2003
3.	Robert Fitter	Associate Professional Officer	CSP office Nepalgunj	2 nd June 2003
4.	Keshav Prasad Shrestha	Head of Admin & Finance	CSP office Nepalgunj	1 st September
5.	Youb Raj Basnet	Admin & Finance Officer	CSP office Nepalgunj	18 th August 2003
6.	Rajani Chaudhary	Community Support Officer	DPO, Kailali	4 th November 2003
7.	Raju Ram Tiruwa	Community Support Officer	DPO, Baitadi	14 th November 2003
8.	Bam Bahadur Khadka	Community Support Officer	DPO, Rukum	17 th November 2003
9.	Shubha Devi B.K.	Community Support Officer	DPO, Surkhet	17 th November 2003
10.	Bhuvan Sejuwal	Community Support Officer	DOPO, Jumla	17 th November 2003
11.	Samjhana Shah	Community Support Officer	DPO, Mugu	17 th November 2003
12.	Laxmi Malla	Office Assistant	CSP office Nepalgunj	4 th August 2003
13.	Nar Bahadur GC	Driver	CSP office Nepalgunj	1 st July 2003

Annex 2. List of the visitors during the year 2003

1. Mr. Pankaj Kumar Dev, Programme Officer DFID-Nepal Kathmandu Office visited CSP to help the newly established office to set up the accounting procedures.
2. Ms. Rebecca Calder, Social Development Advisor from Kathmandu visited CSP Nepalgunj office in the connection of inception report preparation.
3. Mr. David Wood, DFID-Nepal Head visited Nepalgunj office and also the project sites in Bardiya and Banke districts from 18 – 20 November 2003.

Annex 3. List of the training, workshops and meetings attended during the year 2003.

S.N.	Training & workshop	Place	Trainees	Date
1.	DFID-Nepal & CSP Induction Training	Kathmandu	R. Fitter M. P. Thapa R. Odari	9 – 17 June 2003
2.	Tools & Procedures for Effective Development workshop	Kathmandu	M. P. Thapa R. Odari	
3.	Sustainable Livelihoods and poverty reduction training	Pokhara	M. P. Thapa R. Odari	
4.	DFID –Nepal Induction Training	Kathmandu	K. P Shrestha Y. Basnet	23 – 24 October 2003
5.	Do No Harm approaches training	Kathmandu	R. Fitter M. P. Thapa R. Odari	
6.	Poverty Targeting training	Nepalgunj	All CSOs	20 – 21 November 2003
7.	Do No Harm approaches Training	Nepalgunj	All CSOs	23 – 24 November 2003
8.	Basic risk management training	Nepalgunj	All CSOs	18 – 20 November 2003