Dialogue and Dissemination

The fourth major component is dialogue and dissemination of the research results. Through a series of dialogue and consultation workshops at national, provincial and local levels, the research aims to share the research findings with wide range of stakeholders including government bodies, civil society, international development agencies and public. The dissemination will also be made through various media outlets including print, radio, and webs for facilitating greater use of the information for planning, policy making, research and public awareness.

Major Outputs

The research has four major outputs as follows:

- A report on the "State of Social Inclusion in Nepal" will demonstrate the social inclusion/exclusion status by gender and social groups through the use and analysis of comprehensive indicators to build a broad multidimensional picture;
- A monograph on "Earthquake Resilience in Nepal: Issues and Challenges", will describe the micro-dynamics of exclusion, status and barriers to inclusion, and measures needed to improve resilience capacities (absorptive, adaptive, and transformative) for marginalized households/communities through the analysis of the 2015 earthquake reliefs and recoveries/reconstructions as a case study;
- A monograph on "Inclusive Governance in Nepal: Issues and Challenges", will describe the micro-dynamics of exclusion, status and barriers of inclusion and ways for promoting representation of members of excluded groups in decision making in accordance with the federal design; and
- A series of working documents on various sub-themes, and policy and media briefs to inform the policy-making bodies, general public and scholarly communities, to be disseminated through a series of dialogues and workshops.

Project Management and Coordination

The CDA of TU is the lead institution for this project. The core Research Management Team (RMT) comprises the Head of the CDA serving as the Project Coordinator, a Research Director, and two other Principal Investigators. Collectively, this team has many years of high quality academic and applied research experiences, and they will lead the technical tasks of the research activities, and provide overall management and administration oversight. The Team will also engage experts from within the CDA, and will work in collaboration with other Academic Departments and Research Centres at TU.

To ensure ownership at the highest level and help expedite the effective implementation of the research work and its critical findings, a high level Project Advisory Committee (PAC) will also be constituted. Close collaboration with the National Planning Commission, the Central Bureau of Statistics, and other government and non-government development partners will also be undertaken.

The Team will also engage national and international reviewers from among social scientists and subject matter specialists, who have substantial experience and expertise on study of Nepali society and development processes. Their inputs in the research project from the design phase to final analysis of the research will help ensure the quality of the outputs.

Research Period and Support

The research project has commenced on 1st May 2017 and will be completed by 30th April 2020. This study has been made possible with support provided by the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID).

Photo by: Kamal Maden
(from Right to Left photo no. 1 (Limbu woman), 2 (Dhimal woman) and 9 (Desuria Tharu woman)

CONTACT

Telephone Number: (977 1) 4423549

Email: info@tucda.edu.np

Website: www.tucda.edu.np

Central Department of Anthropology
Tribhuvan University

A STUDY ON THE STATE OF SOCIAL INCLUSION IN NEPAL

Central Department of Anthropology, Tribhuvan University
May 2017

Central Department of Anthropology
Tribhuvan University

Introduction and **Objectives**

The study on the 'State of Social Inclusion in Nepal' (SOSIN) is a pioneering research effort being undertaken by the Central Department of Anthropology (CDA) at the Tribhuvan University (TU), in Nepal. It builds on the research entitled 'Social Inclusion Atlas and Ethnographic Profile' (SIA-EP) carried out by the then joint Central Department of Sociology and Anthropology (CDSA), TU from 2011-2014.

The primary objective of this research project is to generate empirical data and furnish sound analysis on the state of social inclusion in contemporary Nepal. It aims at generating comprehensive quantitative data to measure social inclusion at the national level, complemented by in-depth ethnographic studies on micro-dynamics of exclusion and barriers to inclusion. The study is expected to help the promotion and monitoring of the progress on social inclusion as both a desired outcome, and required strategy, for sustainable growth and inclusive democracy in Nepal. This academic enquiry is focused on understanding the pervasiveness and nature of deep-rooted, age-old, social, economic, political, and gender inequalities in Nepali society, and identifying practical ways and strategies to combat them.

A prolonged political transition and instability, preceded by violent political conflict, has adversely affected Nepali society, economy and development. Thus, disparities in welfare outcomes based on gender and social identity have persisted or even widened to a considerable extent. The exclusion of people in participating meaningfully in social, political and economic life of the society is the key reason for such inequality and instability. Exclusion is too costly and is an impediment to economic growth; it further perpetuates poverty and powerlessness among marginalized and disadvantaged people. Consequently, "social inclusion" has been taken up as a national agenda of priority with the new 2015 Constitution of Nepal envisioning an inclusive state, inclusive democracy and inclusive society, as clearly stated in the Preamble. (See below).

The Preamble of the 2015 Constitution of Nepal

"Ending all forms of discrimination and oppression created by the feudalistic, autocratic, centralized, unitary system of governance, recognizing the multi-ethnic, multi-lingual, multi-religious, multi-cultural and diverse regional characteristics, resolving to build an egalitarian society founded on the proportional inclusive and participatory principles in order to ensure economic equality, prosperity and social justice, by eliminating discrimination based on class, caste, region, language, religion and gender and all forms of caste-based untouchability."

The phenomenon of a heightened aspiration for identity and cultural recognition as well as its correlation with life chances, and a sense of belonging to a wider national society have emerged as important scholarly and policy concerns. This research, with its various components, aims to help address these concerns through systematic analysis of empirical materials.

The SOSIN research project envisages five major outcomes as outlined below:

- Greater and systematic use of disaggregated data by the national government and international development agencies, to better understand, plan and monitor the status of gender equality and social inclusion;

- Institutionalization of methodologies relevant for assessing social inclusion, in particular, creating a necessary condition for the adoption of a National Survey on Social Inclusion by the Government;

- Healthy and productive public debate on social inclusion to recognize the critical importance of inclusion in governance, economic growth and development;

- A nuanced understanding of earthquake recovery and resilience capacity, and the causes and consequences of exclusion in governance; and

- Contribution to support a new generation of social science researchers for high quality empirical research.

Research **Components**

This study has four interrelated components, each of which complements and supplements the others.

Nepal Social Inclusion Survey (NSIS)

The NSIS aims to generate primary information on the status of social inclusion and human development through a national level sample survey. The work will not only provide a comprehensive database disaggregated by ethnicity, caste and gender but also valuable experience for refining and institutionalizing national studies for assessing the status of social inclusion periodically. The survey data will help understand the multidimensional nature of social inclusion using selected indicators within the social, economic, political, cultural, and gender dimensions. This round of new data will also help to assess overall changes from the baseline of the 2012 Nepal Social Inclusion Survey, which will be of great value for planning and monitoring for the different government agencies, as well as supporting additional multi-disciplinary and interdisciplinary scholarly analysis in the social sciences of Nepal.

Resilience Capacity of the Community

This study will contribute to the understanding of social inclusion in relation to post-disaster household and community resilience capacity by analysing the 2015 earthquake as a study case. The study aims at better understanding the extent of the influences of gender and social identity on a household or community's ability to respond to and recover from major shocks. More specifically, it seeks to answer how gender and social identity influence a household's ability to absorb, adapt to, and transform from disaster events. Finally, it explores the scale and scope of intentional and unintentional exclusion from reconstruction support. The study combines both quantitative and ethnographic/qualitative methods, producing new knowledge about the existing status and micro-dynamics, including perceptions, attitudes, and resilience capacities, which will inform promotion of improved inclusion in earthquake and other disaster recovery and reconstruction.

Inclusive Governance

The study of governance and inclusion is highly pertinent in the context of federalization of the country and its associated challenges. The 2015 Constitution, despite its weaknesses as indicated by several disadvantaged communities, has paved the way for federalization and inclusive representation. Participation of members of historically underrepresented groups and women in the political bodies and in decision making positions at local, provincial and federal governing bodies, and transformative inclusion at the grassroots level, particularly in community-based institutions, is going to be critical for instituting inclusion, with subsequent ramifications on accountability and good governance. This study will use combined methods of quantitative analysis and grounded ethnography of peoples' experiences and views, conduct an analysis of state policies, and a review of international experience. These insights will help create a better understanding of the problems and potentials for future planning, including on reservation and affirmative action policies.