

SAMPLE INDIGENOUS PEOPLE'S DEVELOPMENT PLAN

A. General

1. The term indigenous people (IP) in the Nepali context is taken to refer to *janajati* or ethnic groups which maintain a cultural, social and linguistic identity distinct from the mainstream or dominant culture. The *Nationalities of Nepal* (2000) lists 61 ethnic groups spread across the entire country. Small distances create wide differences in social situations, so that some subproject areas may have homogenous populations belonging to one or another ethnic group, making a national minority, but a local majority. In other areas the population may be totally heterogeneous.

2. The Project targets areas that comprise populations with high percentages of ethnic groups, hence ethnic issues were found insignificant as the beneficiary group comprise an ethnic local majority but a national minority. In Harinmari subproject for instance, the entire population has characteristics of an indigenous population, since all are Maithili speakers and belong to a local Terai culture which is different from the dominant Nepali speaking culture. The Tharus represent a second sub-culture of its own distinct from the locally dominant Maithili-speaking Hindu caste society consisting of Yadavs, Telis, and several disadvantaged occupational caste groups. The Tharus comprise an ethnic group with a population of 32% in the community of which 28 households (28 percent) are landless, 24 households (24 percent) have less than 0.5 ha 27 households (27 percent) have between 0.5-1.5 ha, and 4 households (4 percent) have holdings greater than 1.5 ha. The Tharus represent 22% of the landless in Harinmari, and represent a sizeable chunk of the area's poverty. Therefore, identification of minority ethnic groups will be done within the local context to ensure inclusion of smaller disadvantaged ethnic groups. Where small disadvantaged ethnic/caste groups are identified ADB's *Policy on Indigenous Peoples* will be applied and will build on the organizational model of each ethnic group's FMIS. A sample indigenous peoples's development plan (IPDP) is prepared as a precautionary measure and as a guide to be integrated in SIP. All IP activities will be carried out as part of the normal subproject development activities.

3. Subprojects will be selected from applications from WUAs that have levels of participation that reflect the make up of their larger communities. The identification of indigenous people will be based on population data submitted by the WUA on its initial subproject application. The initial social assessment should provide an overview of the ethnic population characteristics in the project area, a profile of the economic activities of each of the groups, land tenure, identification of the existing problems in performing economic activities, and of local capacity dealing with indigenous groups. Differences in economic status often crosscut ethnic groups with the exception of disadvantaged occupational caste groups (*Dalit*). Thus the pattern encountered here of having both wealthy and poor Tharus in a single community is not an uncommon situation for all ethnic groups in Nepal. In Harinmari, then, the analysis would discern no effect due purely to ethnicity, or any differential effect due to the subproject.

4. The IPDP will be integrated into the normal subproject implementation plan. They involve a Project approach which sets up criteria to maximize the participation of indigenous peoples and their inclusion within WUAs, in all subproject activities and training programs as well as part of Project and SO staff. Ethnic issues will be resolved or compensated through normal Project mechanisms. If issues remain unresolved, then the subproject will be deemed infeasible unless there are extenuating circumstances that require further action.

B. Implementation Strategy

5. The implementation strategy for the indigenous people's development plan is outlined as follows.¹

- (1) Initial project identification made through WUA application procedure will include collection of social data, including ethnic/caste population data. The WUA submitting subproject applications will be required to be participatory both in membership and on the executive committee, reflecting the ethnic/caste and gender composition of those operating farms in the command area of the existing and anticipated irrigation system. Participating WUAs must be registered.
- (2) NGOs will be encouraged to identify and maximize the hiring of qualified members of local ethnic groups, including women to work as Community Organizers (CO), Farmer Trainers and other Project technical staff wherever possible.
- (3) Projects accepted for appraisal would be given a follow-up assessment, which includes verification by the CO of WUA social data, size of the local ethnic people and whether they are proportionally represented in the WUA. The CO ensures the participation of ethnic groups in all subproject activities, as well as their participation in training programs and evaluations.
- (4) The CO will assess whether the WUA has been able to resolve any water disputes in the existing irrigation system, if a system exists, and should note whether any of these are due to ethnic factors.
- (5) The CO will try to determine the leadership of the ethnic group(s), and will convene a separate meeting with them and whatever additional members wish to attend. If the local ethnic population is small and not already well represented in the WUA, representatives of the ethnic group attending the meeting will be asked to identify a spokesperson to attend all future WUA/subproject activities to represent the interests of the local ethnic group. If the group is adequately represented, a member of the group on the WUA will be identified to act to represent those interests as well.
- (6) The subproject design is carried out with the support of the WUA. Design activities will include a participatory walk-through including members of the WUA management committee, locally interested men and women farmers, Project technical staff, as well as the representatives of the local ethnic group. Specific issues that may affect an ethnic group will be formally noted at this point.
- (7) If the issue is not resolved at this point, then the subproject will be rejected as infeasible.

¹ More specific actions are included in the feasibility study report of the Harinmari Subproject and kept in a separate file.