A REPORT ON SOCIAL AUDIT

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LI-BIRD

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कार्यकारी सारांश

गैरसरकारी गैरनाफामूलक संस्था (गै.स.स.) को सामाजिक लेखापरीक्षण संस्थामा पारदर्शिता, जवाफदेहिता र सुशासन प्रवर्द्धन गर्ने उद्देश्यले सञ्चालन गरिन्छ । लाभग्राही र सरोकारवालाहरूको सक्रिय सहभागीता सहित यस लेखापरीक्षणले संस्था आफ्नो उद्देश्य प्रभावकारी रूपमा पूरा गरिरहेको छ वा छैन, स्रोतसाधन जिम्मेवारीपूर्वक उपयोग गरिरहेको छ कि छैन, र समुदायका आवश्यकताअनुसार कार्यक्रमहरू निरन्तर सुधार गरिरहेको छ वा छैन भन्ने विषय सुनिश्चित गर्दछ । यस प्रक्रियाले संस्था र यसले सेवा गर्ने समुदायबीच थप विश्वास निर्माणमा सेतुको काम गर्दछ ।

सामाजिक लेखापरीक्षणले संस्थाको प्रभाव, शासन प्रणाली, दिगोपन, स्रोत विनियोजन तथा विगतका वर्षहरूमा विकसित योजना प्रक्रियाको मूल्याङ्कन गर्दछ । यस कार्यको मुख्य उद्देश्य संस्थाको प्रत्यक्ष योगदान, दिगोपन, सरोकारवालासँगको सम्बन्ध तथा परियोजना गतिविधिहरूबाट सिर्जित दीर्घकालिन प्रभावको समीक्षा गर्नु रहेको छ । मूल्याङ्कनले संस्थाको शासन प्रणाली र बृहत सरोकार वाला समूहभित्र सिर्जना भएको मूल्यलाई पनि परीक्षण गरेको छ । समग्रमा, लेखापरीक्षणले संस्थाका पहल र प्रवर्द्धनले विषयगत क्षेत्रहरूमा समुदाय विकास र सामाजिक रूपान्तरणमा कसरी योगदान पुर्याएका छन् भन्ने विषयमा प्रमाणमा आधारित मूल्याङ्कन प्रस्तुत गर्दछ ।

जानकारी संकलन र विश्लेषण

सामाजिक लेखापरीक्षणका उद्देश्यहरू हासिल गर्नको लागि विस्तृत र सहभागितामूलक विधि अनुसार कार्य सम्पादन गरिएको छ । ली-बर्डका परियोजना स्थलहरूमा स्थलगत भ्रमण, प्रमुख सरोकार वालासँग परामर्श तथा लाभग्राहीहरूसँग छलफल गरी परियोजनाका गतिविधिहरू लाभग्राहीहरूको आवश्यकतासँग मेल खाने गरी सञ्चालित छन् वा छैनन् र योजनामा कत्तिको लचकता भन्ने मूल्याङ्कन गरिएको थियो । सार्वजनिक सुनुवाइ, लक्षित समूह छलफल, अन्तर्वार्ता, संरचित समूह अन्तरक्रिया तथा गुगल फर्म जस्ता डिजिटल माध्यममार्फत प्राथमिक तथ्याङ्क संकलन गरिएको थियो । यस कार्यमा लक्ष्य-उपलब्धि विश्लेषण, संस्थागत अभ्यास र परियोजना वित्तीय व्यवस्थापनको समीक्षा तथा विकास पहलहरूको दिगोपन मूल्याङ्कन पनि समावेश थियो । समुदायका सदस्य, स्थानीय सरकारका प्रतिनिधि, गैरसरकारी संस्था, नागरिक समाज, सञ्चारकर्मी, सहकारी, नियामक निकाय र परियोजना लाभग्राहीलाई सहभागी गराउँदै सहभागितामूलक, प्रमाणमा आधारित र बहु-सरोकारवाला दृष्टिकोणहरू समेटी यस कार्य गरियो ।

मूल्याङ्कनले संस्थामा रणनीतिक, निर्णय गर्ने र मार्गदर्शन गर्ने समितिहरू प्रभावकारी रूपमा सञ्चालनमा रहेको देखाउँदै आन्तरिक शासन प्रणाली मजबुत रहेको निष्कर्ष निकालेको छ । निर्णय प्रक्रिया सुदृढ छ र स्रोतसाधन सामाजिक प्राथमिकता तथा समुदायका आवश्यकताका आधारमा विनियोजन हुने पाईयो । संस्थाको कामबाट सिर्जित सामाजिक प्रभाव सकारात्मक, आशाजनक र दीर्घकालिन प्रभावोन्मुख रहेको पाइयो । संस्थाले परियोजना गतिविधिहरू सञ्चालन गर्दा

प्रभावकारिता, दक्षता र मितव्ययिता अर्थात 3Es का सिद्धान्तहरू प्रतिबिम्बित गरेको पाइयो । संस्थाले आफ्ना परियोजना र कार्यक्रममार्फत सामाजिक सशक्तीकरण, विशेषगरी महिला सशक्तीकरणमा महत्वपूर्ण योगदान पुर्याएको छ । परियोजनाका क्रियाकलापहरूमा महिलाको बढ्दो सहभागिताले सामाजिक तथा आर्थिक प्रगतिको संकेत गर्दछ ।

संस्थाले कानुनी आवश्यकताहरू र परिपालनाहरू पूर्ण रूपमा पालना गरेको छ । यसको परियोजना गतिविधिहरू स्थानीय सरकारका प्राथमिकतासँग मेल खान्छन् र स्थानीय सरकारका वार्षिक योजना तथा कार्यक्रममा समावेश भएका छन्, जसले राष्ट्रिय नीति र प्राथमिकतासँग बलियो सामञ्जस्यता देखाउँछ । संस्थाद्वारा प्रवर्द्धित पहलहरू दिगो देखिन्छन् र दीर्घकालीन निरन्तरताका लागि स्थानीय सरकारका योजना तथा कार्यक्रममा मूलप्रवाहीकरण गर्न सकिने सम्भावना राख्छन् ।

संस्थाले जवाफदेहितालाई उच्च प्राथमिकतामा राख्दै गुनासो व्यवस्थापन संयन्त्र स्थापना गरेको छ । गुनासोहरू सुरक्षित रूपमा, उचित समय भित्र, गोपनियता र संवेदनशिलताको ख्याल राख्दै सम्बोधन गरिन्छ, अभिलेख गरिन्छ, सोबाट प्राप्त सिकाइको आधारमा आवश्यकतानुसारको काम कारबाही, पुनःअभिमुखीकरण, नीतिमा आवश्यक परिवर्तनको प्रयास साथै संस्थाको प्रणाली सुधारमा उपयोग गरिन्छ ।

दातृ निकायहरूका प्रतिनिधिहरूले प्रतिक्रिया प्रदान गर्दा संस्थाको पारदर्शिता, दक्षता, समयमै प्रतिवेदन पेश गर्ने, चुस्त वित्तीय अनुशासन र जिम्मेवार व्यवस्थापन अभ्यास भएको जनाएका छन् । जसले दातृ निकायको नजरमा संस्थाको कार्यसम्पादन अब्बल रहेको पुष्टि गरेको छ ।

संस्थाले अघिल्लो वर्षको सामाजिक लेखापरीक्षणबाट प्राप्त सिकाइहरू सकारात्मक रूपमा समावेश गरेको छ, जसले निरन्तर सुधारप्रतिको यसको प्रतिबद्धतालाई जोड दिन्छ । कर्णाली, गण्डकी र सुदूरपश्चिम प्रदेशसँग समझदारीपत्रमार्फत रणनीतिक साझेदारी निरन्तरता दिइएको पाइयो । प्रमुख पहलहरूमा पाँच पालिकामा स्थानीय विपद् तथा जलवायु उत्थानशील योजना निर्माणमा सहयोग, सुदूरपश्चिम र कर्णाली प्रदेशका कृषि व्यवसाय प्रवर्द्धन तथा तालिम केन्द्रसँग संयुक्त तालिम कार्यक्रम, संघीय कृषि तथा पशुपन्छी विकास मन्त्रालयसँगको समन्वयमा राष्ट्रियस्तरको पर्यावरणीय मार्गचित्र विकास, तथा कर्मचारीहरूका लागि सामाजिक परिचालन एवं तालिम योजना र सञ्चालनसम्बन्धी पाँचदिने प्रशिक्षक प्रशिक्षण कार्यक्रम समावेश छन् । यी पहलहरूले संस्थागत विकास र सरकारी निकायसँगको सहकार्यलाई सुदृढ बनाएका छन् ।

संस्थाले शासन प्रणालीलाई थप सुदृढ गर्दै गुणस्तरीय सेवा प्रवाह सुनिश्चित गर्न केही प्रमुख उपायहरू अवलम्बन गर्न सक्छ । कार्यकारी बोर्डले निर्णय कार्यान्वयनमा सहयोग पुर्याउन तथा क्षेत्रगत अनुसन्धान र विकासलाई केन्द्रित रूपमा अघि बढाउन थप उप समितिहरू गठन गर्ने विषयमा विचार गर्न सक्छ ।

समुदायस्तरमा, संस्थाले प्राप्त किसान समूहहरूको सञ्चालन प्रक्रियाबारे बुझाई अभिवृद्धि गरी अझ सुदृढ बनाउन आवश्यक छ, जसले परियोजना कार्यान्वयनको गुणस्तर सुधार गर्नेछ । यी समूहहरूलाई स्थानीय योजना तथा बजेट प्रक्रियामा सहभागी गराई स्थानीय सरकारसँग प्रभावकारी रूपमा संलग्न हुन सक्षम बनाउनुपर्छ । त्यस्तै, सहकारी तथा संजालमा आधारित संस्थाहरूलाई आम्दानीका अवसर विविधीकरण, बजार रणनीति सुदृढीकरण, सुशासन र पारदर्शिता अभिवृद्धिका लागि थप सहयोग आवश्यक छ । संघीय र प्रादेशिक तहमा स्रोतसाधन पहुँच वृद्धि गर्न संस्थागत क्षमता, जस्तै संस्थागत सुशासन, व्यवस्थापन दक्षता, वित्तीय व्यवस्थापन र रणनीतिक योजना सुदृढ गर्नुपर्छ । साथै, दीगोपनाको प्रवर्द्धनको लागि समुदायस्तरको स्रोत व्यवस्थापन सुधार गर्न कार्यक्रम गतिविधिमा वित्तीय साक्षरता समावेश गर्न सिफारिस गरिन्छ ।

यो सामाजिक लेखापरीक्षण केवल सामाजिक प्रभावको मूल्याङ्कनका लागि हो र यसले वैधानिक लेखापरीक्षण वा कुनै प्रकारको वित्तीय आश्वासन कार्यको प्रतिनिधित्व गर्दैन । परियोजना तहमा केही भिन्नता हुन सक्ने भए पनि ती समग्र मूल्याङ्कनमा असर पार्ने किसिमका छैनन् ।

यस कार्य अवधिभर सक्रिय सहयोग र समर्थन प्रदान गर्नुभएकोमा ली-बर्डका कार्यकारी बोर्ड, व्यवस्थापन समिति, कर्मचारी, लाभग्राही, स्थानीय सरकार, सहकारी, सरोकारवाला र दातृ निकायहरूलाई हामी हार्दिक धन्यवाद व्यक्त गर्दछौं । यस कार्य सफलतापूर्वक सम्पन्न गर्न उहाँहरूको सामूहिक प्रतिबद्धता अत्यन्त प्रशंसनीय छ ।

प्रशिध्द न्यौपाने

सामाजिक परिक्षक

Executive Summary

The Social Audit of the non-profit organization (NGO) was conducted with the objective of promoting transparency, accountability, and good governance at the organization. By actively involving beneficiaries and stakeholders, the audit ensures that the organization is effectively fulfilling its mission, utilizing resources responsibly, and continuously improving its programmes to meet community needs. This process also fosters greater trust between the organization and the communities it serves.

The Social Audit was undertaken to assess the organization's impact, governance, sustainability, resource allocation, and planning processes developed over the years. The primary focus of the assignment was to review the organization's direct contributions, long-term sustainability, stakeholder relationships, and the broader multiplier effects generated through its project activities. The assessment also examined the organization's governance system and its value creation within the broader stakeholder group. Overall, the audit provides an evidence-based evaluation of how the organization's initiatives and interventions have contributed to community development and social transformation across its thematic areas.

To achieve these objectives, the assignment followed a detailed and participatory scope of work. Field visits were conducted across project locations, accompanied by consultations with key stakeholders and discussions with beneficiaries to assess whether project activities were aligned with their needs and whether the design allowed adequate flexibility. Primary data collection was carried out through public hearings, focus group discussions (FGDs), interviews, structured group interactions, and digital tools such as Google Forms. The assignment also included a target-versus-achievement analysis, a review of organizational practices and project financial management, and an assessment of the long-term sustainability of development initiatives. A participatory, evidence-based, and multi-stakeholder approach was applied, engaging community members, local government representatives, NGO representatives, civil society organizations, media personnel, cooperatives, oversight bodies, and project beneficiaries.

The assessment observed that the organization has demonstrated strong internal governance, with well-functioning strategic, decision-making, and steering committees in place. The decision-making process is robust, ensuring that resources are allocated based on social priorities and community needs. The social impact generated through the organization's work is promising, and its activities reflect the principles of the 3Es Effectiveness, Efficiency, and Economy. The organization has also made significant contributions to social empowerment, particularly women's empowerment, through its projects and programs. Increased participation of women in project interventions indicates both social and economic advancement.

The organization has fully complied with statutory requirements and formalities. Its project activities are aligned with local government priorities and have been incorporated into the Annual Plans and Programs of sub-national governments, demonstrating strong alignment with national policies and priorities. The initiatives promoted by the organization show sustainability and have the potential to be mainstreamed into local government plans and programs for long-term continuation.

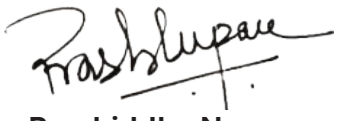
As a learning organization, it has established a comprehensive, functional, and transparent complaint-handling mechanism. Complaints are properly recorded, addressed, and discussed as part of routine accountability processes. Feedback from funding agencies further validates the organization's performance, with high levels of satisfaction expressed regarding its transparency, efficiency, timely reporting, strong financial discipline, and responsible management practices.

The organization has positively incorporated lessons learned from the previous year's Social Audit, further demonstrating its commitment to continuous improvement. Strategic partnerships have been sustained with Karnali, Gandaki, and Sudurpaschim Provinces through Memorandums of Understanding (MoUs). Key initiatives include support for local disaster and climate-resilient plan development in five municipalities; joint training programs with the Agriculture Business Promotion & Training Centre in Sudurpaschim and Karnali Provinces; ongoing development of a national-level Agro-ecology Roadmap in coordination with the federal Ministry of Agriculture and Livestock Development (MoALD); and the provision of a five-day Training of Trainers (ToT) program for staff on social mobilization, training design, and delivery. These initiatives have strengthened institutional development and collaboration with government institutions.

At the community level, farmers' groups supported by the organization should be further strengthened by enhancing their understanding of operational processes, thereby improving the quality of project implementation. These groups should also be empowered to engage more effectively with local governments, particularly by participating in local planning and budgeting processes. Similarly, cooperatives and network organizations require additional support to diversify income opportunities, strengthen marketing strategies, and enhance governance and transparency. Their institutional capacity in areas such as corporate governance, management efficiency, financial management, and strategic planning should be strengthened to enable them to access resources at central and provincial levels. Furthermore, integrating financial literacy components into program activities is recommended to promote long-term sustainability and improve community-level resource management.

This Social Audit is intended solely to evaluate social impact and does not constitute a statutory audit or any other form of financial assurance engagement. While individual variations may exist at the project level, they do not affect the overall evaluation.

We extend our sincere appreciation to the Executive Board, Management Committee, employees, beneficiaries, local governments, cooperatives, stakeholders, and funding agencies of LI-BIRD for their active cooperation and support throughout this assignment. Their collective commitment to successfully completing this assignment is highly commendable.



Prashiddha Neupane
Social Audit Facilitator

LIST OF ACRONYMS

BCT	:	Bhramin, Chettri and Thakuri Ethnic Community
CRA	:	Scaling up Climate Resilient Agriculture for Sustainable Livelihood of Smallholder Farmers in Nepal Project
FGD(s)	:	Focus Group Discussion(s),
KII	:	Key Informant Interviews
LI-BIRD	:	Local Initiatives for Biodiversity, Research and Development.
MEAL	:	Monitoring Evaluation, Accountability and Learning
PRERANA	:	Promoting Resilience and Enterprise Development through Local Resource Utilization in Nepal Project
RM	:	Rural Municipality
Rs	:	Nepalese Rupees
RERAS	:	Renewable Energy for Resilient Agri-Food Systems
SA	:	Social Audit
SRM	:	Sunkoshi Rural Municipality, Sindhupalchok or Sunkoshi Rural Municipality, Sindhuli

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Executive Summary

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1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 About the Organization

Local Initiatives for Biodiversity, Research and Development (LI-BIRD) is a non-profit making, non-governmental organization established in 1995 in Pokhara, Nepal. It has been registered with the District Administrative Office of Kaski (Regd. No. 217/052/053) and affiliated with the Social Welfare Council (Regd. No. 3394).

LI-BIRD is committed to capitalizing on local initiatives for sustainable management of natural resources for improving the livelihoods of rural poor and marginalized farmers, especially women. LI-BIRD considers itself as a pioneer organization in strengthening participatory methodologies for research and development in agriculture, climate change adaptation, biodiversity conservation and sustainable natural resource management with a focus on environmental, gender and social safeguards. organization works with following core values:

The organization has developed a seven–year strategy (2024-2030) focused on following three strategic programmes to achieve three corresponding outcomes.

Food and Nutrition Security programme aims to contribute towards strengthening resilient agri-food systems for food and nutrition security at the household level. It focuses on improving farm productivity, diversity while enhancing access to locally grown, culturally important, safe and nutritious foods.

The Biodiversity and Ecosystem Health programme works at the community and landscape levels to improve ecosystem services. It focuses on the restoration and sustainable management of degraded and critical landscapes to support resilient livelihoods and lanscapes.

The Climate Action programme aims to strengthen climate risk-informed planning and implementation to enhance the adaptive capacity and risk management abilities of climate-vulnerable communities.

Currently, there are 17 projects in operation that contribute to the achievement of the organization's strategic goals by 2030. Since its inception, LI-BIRD has successfully completed more than 200 projects. The organization has worked extensively in the field of agriculture and agrobiodiversity, community-based natural resource management, environment conservation and climate change adaptation including restoration and conservation of biodiversity, natural habitats and ecosystems. It has contributed to improving the livelihoods of the rural smallholders and marginalized communities through appropriate technological, social and policy changes.

1.2 About the Social Audit

The primary purpose of conducting Social Audit for non-profit organizations (NGOs) is to promote transparency, accountability, and good governance by assessing their social and ethical performance. By involving beneficiaries and stakeholders, these audits ensure that NGOs are effectively serving their mission, using resources responsibly, and improving their programs to meet community needs and fostering greater trust between organizations and the communities they serve. Hence, Social Audit assignment constitutes evaluation of the social impact of the organization vis-à-vis the direct social impact, sustainable impact, relationship with stakeholders and multiplication effect with such relation. To evaluate the social impact from the projects to the concerned groups, it analyzes the following, but not limited to, measuring criteria.

- Effectiveness and response to the programs conducted,
- Governance, decision making and strategic development practices applied by organization to meet the fair and equitable distribution of resources,
- Program procedures, resource allocation and methodologies achieved to meet fairness, transparency in activities,
- Socio-economic impacts generated within the group, analyze the organizational policies for their impact on social audit,
- Efficiency and effectiveness in utilization of resources,
- Relationship and engagement with stakeholders, national and sub-national Government, funding agencies,
- Sustainability of the program activities.

The social audit was conducted in accordance with established social audit requirements. Key references is *A Social Audit Guideline for AIN members* (Association of International NGOs of Nepal, 2009), Social *Audit Manual* - A Guide to Support 'Beneficiaries' to Become 'Rights Holders'. Additionally, the Constitution of Nepal and the Local Level Governance Act-2074 were also taken as references for its implementation.

2. SOCIAL AUDIT METHODOLOGY

The Social Audit process applied a participatory approach to assess the organization's social performance, accountability, governance, and effectiveness in delivering programmes and achieving its missions. Key methodologies included field observations, stakeholder consultations, and participatory data collection applying tools like public hearings, Focus Group Discussions (FGDs), Key Informant Interviews (KII) and community interactions. Document reviews, project performance analysis, and digital data collection methods (e.g., mobile or online forms) were also used to validate information. Checklists with set of guiding questions were prepared before organizing discussions and KII with targeted communities and stakeholders, including representatives of the funding agencies.

Following events were conducted to attain the objectives of the Social Audit:

- Visited selected project area and conduct focus group discussions with the relevant stakeholders, beneficiaries and take primary source of data.
- Assessed the needs of the project activities, planning and delivery processes.
- Developed questionnaire to evaluate effectiveness and efficiency of project using manual or digital data collection methods,

- Organized public hearing, group discussions and KII with the concerned groups and stakeholders to gather primary data and cross verify the information received,
- Analyzed target versus achievement in sample projects and the sustainability of the development interventions,
- Review of the organizational policies, practices and accountability measures.

At the program level, the beneficiaries and stakeholders discussed to identify whether:

- Involvement of beneficiaries, community members, and stakeholders in planning and decision-making processes,
- Transparency in communication and feedback mechanisms,
- Evaluating inclusiveness focusing on women, marginalized groups and vulnerable populations,
- Assessment of community level multiplication impact from the project,
- Allocation and utilization of funds for social initiatives,
- Verification that resources are used for intended purposes,
- Assessment of the efficiency and cost-effectiveness of spending

The social audit activity engaged a diverse group of stakeholders to ensure a comprehensive and participatory assessment process. Key participants included representatives of community organization, beneficiary members, local government officials and oversight bodies, civil society organizations, media, all of whom contribute to promote transparency and accountability. In this process, co-operative members, local government, community leaders and project beneficiaries played an important role by sharing their experiences, insights, and feedback, helping to validate the relevance and impact of the project activities.

Limitations of the report

The information and data collection and verification process was completed smoothly. However, there is a limitation that the sample size covered in this report doesn't not represent all projects and organizational activities. While data have been cross- verified, fact-checked, there is a possibility that some information may not be accurately captured or communicated by beneficiaries and stakeholders during data collection due possible gaps in communication and its qualitative and subjective nature.

Additionally, the report presents a generalized evaluation of the projects based on the methodologies applied. We have not reviewed the total project implementation on individual basis, and some observations may vary at the individual project level. We had conducted the assignment to assess the social impact of the projects in the target area. Therefore, this audit report does not constitute a part of statutory audit or any other audit and quality assurance engagement where financial verification could be provided.

3. FINDINGS FROM THE SOCIAL AUDIT

3.1 Financial Transparency and Accountability

The LI-BIRD is considered as a transparent organization by its stakeholders. All activities, information and budget are regularly shared with stakeholders. The financial transactions and project costs are discussed with beneficiaries and relevant government institutions on a regular basis and reflected in local government's fiscal plans. Even during public hearings, interaction and discussions on costs and budgets are conducted with the beneficiaries. The organization's financial administration policy ensures transparency in financial management including at the project level.

In the last fiscal year, the organization expensed an average of 91.4% of the total available budget, which is considered good burn rate. Generally, actual spending between 85% and 105% of the budget is regarded as sound financial management.

The procurement is coordinated and managed by a separate unit with a fulltime Officer and is guided by Organization's procurement policy. The final decisions are based on the procurement committee's recommendations which has enhanced transparency in the decision-making process. The procurement process fully meets the standard procurement practices of the development organizations.

Similarly, the organization maintained accountability for project activities. The activities are discussed, monitored, and assessed for effectiveness. The beneficiaries and stakeholders involved in project activities have confirmed that accountability measures are properly implemented.

As an additional measure to strengthen current practices, the costs of each event could be presented to the community and stakeholders as a good accountability practice after completion of the event. This practice may further enhance transparency and effectiveness of the project activities.

3.2 Service Delivery and Program Effectiveness

In FY 2081/82, there were 20 projects implemented in 34 municipalities and 33 rural municipalities representing 25 districts spanning across six provinces, reading a total of 23,717 beneficiaries directly. LI-BIRD operates with synergy across all programmes to achieve its impact outcomes and overall goal. Its strategy, policies and programme operational guidelines are aligned to ensure effective service delivery and program efficiency. The details of the programmatic reach is presented in the table below.

Province	District	MC	RMC	Total R/MC	Total Beneficiaries	Total Indirect	No. of projects
Sudurpaschim	6	10	12	22	10,956	14,592	7
Karnali	5	5	9	14	6,116	6,676	9
Lumbini	4	10	3	13	3,802	11,887	3
Gandaki	2	1	5	6	1,928	26,429	4
Bagmati	3	1	2	3	565	5,651	3
Madesh	5	7	2	9	350	-	1
Total	**25**	**34**	**33**	**67**	**23,717**	**65,235**	**20**

3.3 Stakeholder Participation in Planning and Implementation

The organization follows a highly effective and community-driven planning process that begins at the implementation level, ensuring that project activities directly reflect local needs and thematic priorities. Beneficiary groups, local governments, and social influencers are actively consulted, and strong coordination with local authorities and NGOs helps prevent duplication of efforts. The organization's planning approach is rooted in self-realization, empowering beneficiaries to take ownership of decisions, and is supported by a Strategic Plan (2024–2030) designed to ensure consistent and effective implementation across diverse geographic and cultural contexts.

The socio-economic considerations of the community are central during project design and planning phase. In our interactions, none of the participants raised any concerns about polarization, discrimination, and favouritism during planning and resource allocation process. With active complaint handling mechanisms in place, any concerns raised have been effectively addressed by the organization.

The organization promotes group planning and decision making at beneficiary level to ensure that resource allocation reflects local needs and priorities. Groups are linked with beneficiary cooperatives and government bodies for sustainability, and enhance access to resources and opportunities. The organization emphasizes community based resource mobilization focusing on their empowerment to actively participate and influence in decision-making and responsible resource allocation. Efforts are made to strengthen beneficiary groups by helping them identify their needs and enhance their skills and capacity. During site visits, majority group members participated in discussion were women and individuals representing marginalized communities.

These groups observed functioning effectively. However, they can further empowered to engage strategically with local governments and able to align their plans with local planning and budgeting processes to access available public resources and services. Similarly, cooperatives and network organizations which are the crucial for sustainability of project activities can be strengthened to diversify income opportunities, enhance marketing strategies, and promote good governance and transparency. Furthermore, these institutions can be supported to build capacity for accessing resources ensuring sustainable community development.

3.4 Resource Allocation and Mobilization

The resource allocation process follows a group distribution model whereby marginalized communities are empowered to make joint decisions through shared knowledge and skills. At the implementation level, groups are formed to foster participation and ownership among local stakeholders. The resource allocation are based on beneficiaries' interests and collective decision-making, ensuring fair allocation with priority given to marginalized communities. These groups are empowered through capacity-building activities and continuous support, enabling them to actively participate in planning and decision-making processes. These priorities are set by the community itself through regular meetings and information sharing.

Through regular on-site support, consistent follow up and monitoring, the groups have developed confidence and self-reliance in decision making. During site visits, beneficiaries confirmed that they conduct regular meetings, plan and distribute project support equitably and document them in the form of minutes. There is constant monitoring of the activities which were shared by the beneficiaries during site visits.

Although beneficiary groups are functioning well, the need for further strengthening was also identified. Additional plans and measures such as targeted training for women leaderships, and improved value-chain understanding would enhance their role in addressing individual and community needs sustainably. Strengthening both the groups and duty-bearers will help ensure the continuation and sustainability of the project activities and results.

3.5 Resource Leverage

LI-BIRD emphasizes collaborative engagement among communities, project team and government agencies and other relevant stakeholders to achieve multiplier effects and sustainable impact. In FY 2024/25, the organization recorded resource leverages of NPR 26,360,582, of which NPR 20,173,973 was mobilized from government sources to support community-focused activities. At the programme level, resource leverage with sub-national governments wherever feasible and necessary.

Among the communities visited, the Pingdanda community seed bank in Sindhupalchok successfully secured government funding with technical support from the project team. However, in some project areas such as Sindhuli, farmers were only dependant with the project had limited access to resources from other stakeholders including government. In this particular Rural Municipality, local government had adopted a policy to minimize duplication of beneficiaries due to which farmers are receiving resources only from the project. Their access to sustainable resources from the Local Level Government were limited. Due to this policy, their access to resources from local government remained limited though diversified resource sharing is integral to long term project sustainability. In the public hearing event, the Vice Chairperson had stated the need to match the resources and the need of timely monitoring for efficient use.

Organization has also coordinated with Provincial Governments for various resource leverage. Key achievements as a result of such coordination include the establishment of strategic partnership agreements with Karnali, Gandaki, and Sudurpaschim governments, strengthening policy coherence and intergovernmental coordination. The organization also played a key facilitative role in the development and localization of sector-specific policies, notably the Pollination Strategy with the MoLAMC in Karnali Province, and Agrobiodiversity and Organic Farming Strategy and Action Plan with MoLMAC in Gandali province.

3.6 Project Outcome linked with the Program Activities

LI-BIRD operates through three strategic programmes – Agrifood systems, Biodiversity and Ecosystem Health and Climate Action. Every project outcome and activities are aligned to achieve these strategic programme goals. All project activities and outputs are linked with the project outcome, organizational goals and its sustainability plan. Project activities are regularly monitored and their effectiveness are assessed by the MEAL team in accordance with organizational framework.

During field visit to the RERAS project in Sindhuli, CRA III project in Sindhupalchok and PRERNA project in Kaski, it was observed that field activities were closely aligned with the organizational core objectives and generated direct benefits to beneficiaries. Targeted activities were generally achieved and there were no activities found to be performing below acceptable standard.

The farmers were well aware about climate resilient farming practices and emphasized on the importance of using organic fertilizers and bio-pesticides instead of conventional chemical inputs. As a result, the use of chemical fertilizers and pesticides has significantly reduced as reported by participating farmers. Similarly, with the use of pest repellents and trap techniques, farmers were able to manage crop insects without degrading the environment. Project has also promoted organic compost and tricho-vermicompost production at farm and group levels in Kaski to scale production to market oriented enterprises by strengthening and mobilizing local Community Forest User's Group (CFUG) and cooperative. Additionally, the establishment of community seed banks has contributed local seed conservation and improving access to quality seed at community level.

Picture 1: Farmers in front of Tricho-vermicompost produced by them

3.7 Beneficiary and stakeholder feedback

Beneficiary groups comprise of individuals from smallholders and marginalized community. Of the total 23,717 beneficiary households reached in FY 2024/25, 80% were women and 20% were men. In terms of ethnic diversity, 15.2% were Dalits, 43.1% were Janjati 0.3% were Muslim, 0.2% were from other communities and 41% from Brahmin/ Chhetri/Thakuri. In total, LI-BIRD reached 441 persons with disability (approximately 2% of the total beneficiaries) during the year. Implementing targeted interventions to support income diversification and promote dignified livelihoods.

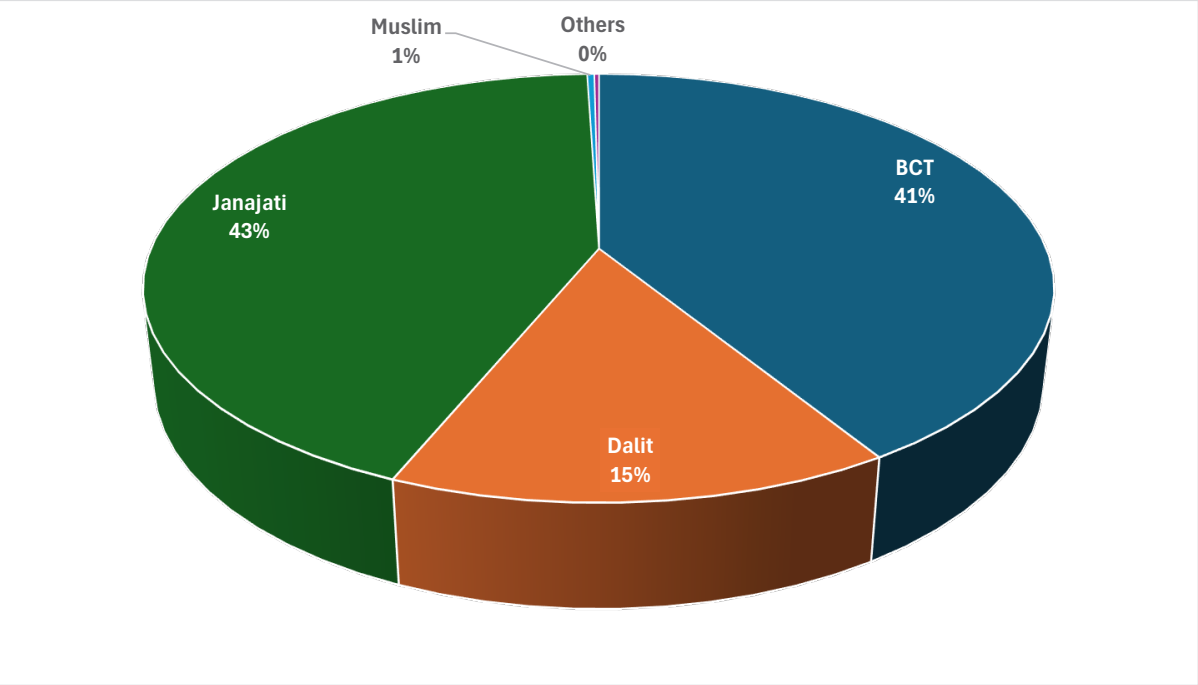

Figure 1: Proportion of beneficiaries by ethnicity

Beneficiaries in the visited project areas expressed that they were satisfied with project activities. Both beneficiaries and stakeholders have observed improvements following project implementation. A farmer from Sindhuli stated that individuals who were previously engaged in unproductive activities such as gambling, and drinking have reduced such behaviours and are now more focused on farming and productive work. This has indicated a positive impact of project intervention in the local community.

Participating farmers have also experienced improvement in their income from farming with enhanced social status. Most farmers reported an annual earnings increase ranging from NPR 10,000 to NPR 25,000 through farming activities. Previously, many farmers depended solely on seasonal harvests and their land often remained fallow during winter due to water scarcity. Though providing irrigation service is a costly intervention, the project provided match fund and coordinated with the relevant stakeholders including local governments and mobilized local resources to find solutions. This issue still persists despite continuous effort in some communities.

However, the training provided to farmers could be further strengthened, as some participants were not fully confident in applying the skills and learnings gained during the training. Revisiting the training approach and providing follow up support could practical application and overall effectiveness.

Some farmer's group have expressed expectations that are unrealistic and extend beyond the project scope. For example, in Sindhuli, where electricity supply is unstable, farmers have requested to support for solar water-lift systems for sustainable irrigation. These expectations should be addressed through mutual dialogues, clear communication of project scope and coordinated planning with other stakeholders.

3.8 Social and Gender Empowerment

The project sites are located in remote villages with limited access to basic services including market, agricultural technologies and services. The social awareness and learning levels were also relatively low prior to project as reported by project participants. As shared by the women beneficiaries, they had lower access to the decision making at household and were largely dependent on the earning their family members for their expenses.

After the project implementation, significant progress was observed in social awareness and gender empowerment aligned with project objectivies. Most of the project beneficiaries (about 80%) comprised of women. During Focus Group Discussions (FGDs) in Sindhuli, Sindhupalchwok, and Kaski, the majority of women participants reported notable improvements in their social awareness and self-confidence. Their increased earning capacity though it is small has enhanced their role and position in household decision making and social position.

The local level Government representatives in our discussions also acknowledged these changes, noting that women's social empowerment in project area has been better compared to nearby non-project areas. The women beneficiaries of PRERANA project in Kaski, who have been producing trichoderma vermicompost were applying entrepreneurship skills learnt from the project activities. With project support, many farmers are moving towards market oriented sustainable farming practices in project areas. They said that the farming and entrepreneurship skills had made them self-reliant and enhanced their ability in decision making. Further, they are actively searching for the market opportunities on their own further strengthening their social and economic empowerment.

Increased economic engagement has also contributed to reducing negative social behaviours such as gambling as reported by participants in visited sites. In Sindhupalchwok, farmers reported increased confidence to reach out and collaborate with local level Government for accessing additional programmes. In Sindhuli, several farmers have accessed agricultural equipments such as hand tiller and other agri-supports, from local government. This progress has indicated a growing sense of awareness and building agency as a result of project interventions.

3.9 Co-ordination with Local Level Governments

There was effective coordination with the local government for all project activities, including obtaining necessary approvals. In all sites, local government representatives were engaged from the design stage. Governments were consulted during project planning and implementation phases. Resource sharing and avoidance of duplication has been found discussed to ensure effective partnerships.

In the visited sites, the project activities were well integrated into the annual work plan, ensuring alignment with local development priorities and facilitating their smooth implementation. Additionally, we have observed an effective coordination and resource leveraging between and among project, local governments, and with multiple projects to enhance efficiency and ensure achievement of the outcomes.

However, not all groups formed under the project are formally registered with local governments. As a result, access to local government resources and services remain limited to some groups. To address this gaps, groups should be formed with the possibility of registration thereby improving their eligibility for accessing public resources and support services. Representatives from the local-level government highlighted the following key observations regarding the project and its activities:

"The activities of project have brought economic reforms in the area. I am happy to see that people who once wasted their time in unproductive things like gambling are now cultivating vegetables in such quantity. I will support for the marketing of such vegetables if they are in bulk"

– Mr, Kapil Kumar Koirala, Vice Chairperson, Sunkoshi RM, Sindhuli.

"The social work of Project is appreciable"

- Mr. Aasharam Rana, Chairperson, Laljhadi RM, Kanchanpur.

"The activities are good and we are very happy with the project activities"

- Acting Ward Chairperson, Sunkoshi RM, Sindhupalchwok.

"It is amazing that the Project has achieved such important activities at such low cost. These activities are better than the achievements of our rural municipality"

– Mr. Milan Kandel, Agriculture Division Head, Sunkoshi RM, Sindhupalchwok.

3.10 Sustainability of the Project Activities

The sustainability of the organizational activities and organization itself is evident due to several contributing factors. The beneficiaries of the project activities have shown a clear willingness to continue the initiative, ensuring long-term impact even after project completion. Market development for products has created economic opportunities and encouraged local entrepreneurship. The projects have provisioned committees and repair fund practices established for capital projects like in lift irrigation scheme have promoted local ownership and maintenance of assets. Furthermore, the organization's connection

with corporate structure, such as cooperatives or network organizations, has enhanced financial and institutional stability. By aligning its achievements with governmental work plans and programs, the organization has also secured better coordination, support, and policy integration, further strengthening its sustainability.

Further, the Strategy Plan 2030 is followed by the organization based on three organizational core strategic programs. To meet is strategic objectives, organization has been following the procedures mentioned below:

- Developed incentive-based solutions to support sustainable landscape restoration and influence policy upscaling.
- Promoted market-led approaches including community seed bank and other measures for sustainable biodiversity use and improved livelihoods.
- Supported localization of national climate policies (NAP, NDCs, LDRCP, LAPA) at the local level in few projects.
- Established climate-resilient model villages as demonstration and learning centers.
- Strengthened and expanded strategic partnerships with national and international organizations in agrobiodiversity, climate-resilient agriculture, and agroecology.
- Established demonstration and learning sites as knowledge hubs for sustainable agrobiodiversity and climate-resilient agriculture.

Sustainability can be further improved through several key measures. Linking the initiatives with financial motivation and enhancing financial literacy among beneficiaries will encourage better resource management and long-term commitment. Strengthening connections with corporate structures, such as cooperatives and network organizations, will support market development while promoting greater transparency and accountability. Additionally, connecting farmer groups with local-level budgeting practices will enable them to access local resources, influence planning processes, and ensure the continuation of activities through institutional support. The participants in the project for production tricho-vermicompost project in Pokhara stated that they will increase the activity if they are efficiently linked to the market. If the market is properly linked, they will continue it sustainably. The market linkage for agro-entrepreneurship is also a key for the sustainability of projects.

Upon interaction with the General members and Executive Board members, it was also discussed that the organization has developed a continuity plan with introduction of new funds, their sources to ensure continuity of project activities. These funds are created with long term sustainability whose interest and returns will cover the non-project expenses of the organization in a longer period.

4. ORGANIZATIONAL GOVERNANCE

4.1 Function and Inclusivity of the Executive Board

The Executive Board is responsible for overall decision making withing the organization. The board is actively engaged in sustaining the organization and project activities in the changing scenarios. During the interaction with the General Members and Board during the annual general meeting, Executive Board were considering the need of sustainability fund to make the organization effective and sustainable. Apart from strategic visioning and oversights, the Board has limited involvement in the day to day activities of the organization.

The organization is governed by an Executive Board of 7 members (4 woman representative and 3 man representative) with balance in expertise. For transparency and equal opportunities, the Executive Committee is selected in every 3 years by voting in Annual General Meeting. To ensure impartiality in election and governance, independent election officer is appointed, usually represented by a Legal Advisor. The voting is governed by a special voting guideline, and the representation is from diverse background. In general, the governance and strategy of the meeting is impartial. There is a minimum requirement of 2 executive committee meetings in a year, but the committee has met more than the minimum meeting frequency in previous reporting period.

The Executive Board is made up of people with different skills and knowledge in areas like local ecology, social and gender studies, agriculture sociology, and law. This mix of expertise helps the Board make better decisions. The Board also values gender balance in leadership. The Chairperson is a man, and the Vice-Chairperson is a woman. The Board is only engaged in strategic planning of organization. Board has been providing guidance to the Management Committee but is not involved in regular operations.

4.2 Role and Function of the Management Committee

The organization has established a nine-member Management Committee to carryout and oversee its day-to-day operations. The Management Committee is led by the Executive Director (Mr. Bharat Bhandari), and is composed of qualified professionals with diverse expertise. The team members bring knowledge and experience in Agriculture, Environmental Science, Biodiversity Management Crops and Horticulture, Plant Protection, Economics, Accounting and Finance. The combination of skills and expertise ensures effective management and implementation of the organization's activities. The committee diversified and is inclusive in nature. The composition of management team can be seen as follows:

Figure 2: Composition of management by gender (left) and by ethnicity (right)

If there is any future need to expand the Management Committee in future, it is suggested to prioritize candidates from marginalized community such as Dalit or similar groups, subject to availability and expertise. Management Committee makes decisions in cost effective manner and is actively engaged in the planning and resource allocation processes. The entire project is supervised by the Management Committee. Three Strategic Programme Leaders with support from Heads of Programme coordinate the programme development and implementation under the respective strategic areas.

4.3 Effectiveness of Committees

Apart from the fully functioning Board, there is only one board-level committee: the Audit Committee. This committee is actively engaged in financial monitoring, internal audits, and risk management. It consists of three members who are members of the executive board. Both internal and external audit functions operate under the oversight of the Audit Committee.

Currently, the organization does not have any additional board-level committees. However, based on emerging needs, it would be advisable to establish standing board-level committees, like Sustainability or Continuity Committee, to provide more focused and effective guidance. At present, all such decisions are made by the Board. Delegating some of the responsibilities to specialized committees could enhance decision-making effectiveness and support the sustainable development of the organization.

In addition, two management-level committees have been formed: the Procurement Committee and the Complaint Handling Committee, along with other operational committees as required. The Procurement Committee is responsible for decision-making related to the procurement of goods and services. The Complaint Handling Committee addresses complaints related to the organization. These committees meet and make decisions as needed, depending on the frequency and nature of issues arising.

5. HUMAN RESOURCE COMPOSITION AND DIVERSITY

During the social Audit period, LI-BIRD had a total of 125 staff members, of which 60% are women. The employees possesses relevant educational qualifications and professional experience. The organization is adequately staffed and is operating with the minimum necessary personnel at it field office as observed during site visit to Sindhupalchwok, Sindhuli and Kaski districts. The gender and ethnicity composition of the employees is presented as follows:

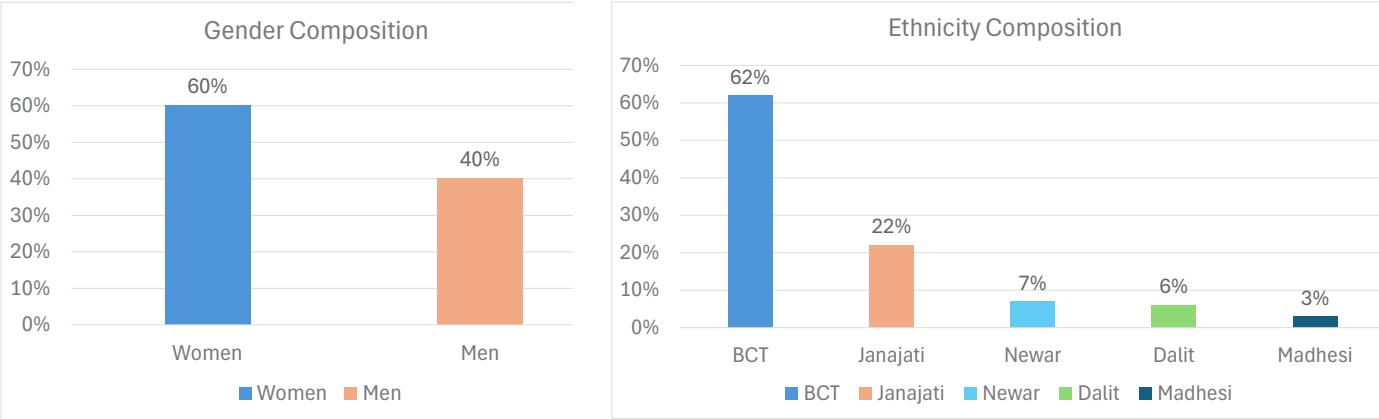

Figure 3: Composition of employee by gender (left) and by ethnicity (right) as of August 2025

Organization has the practice of awarding additional points to women and individuals from marginalized communities during recruitment process. In future vacancy fulfilment, greater emphasis should be placed on achieving ethnic balance, subject to availability of candidates with relevant expertise.

Based on our sample review, the employees involved in the project are capable of managing and implementing project activities. The project objectives and activities are well understood among staff members. Moreover, their continuous engagement with the community enhances the effectiveness of project implementation and ensures that resources are utilized appropriately.

The visited staff adhere to organizational code of conduct, and none of the employees observed during the review were found to have acted contrary to general ethical standards. This was validated through cross-verification with beneficiaries, government officials, and other stakeholders during multiple consultation sessions.

6. ADEQUACY AND EFFECTIVENESS OF THE POLICY

The organization's activities are guided by various policies that are appropriately established to support its general operations. These policies facilitate day-to-day activities and provide an adequate level of guidance and oversights in the regular functioning of the organization.

In our assessment, we found that organizational activities are carried out in accordance with the applicable policies. The organization currently has the following policies in operation:

a. LI-BIRD Personnel (Administrative) Service Regulations 2064 (2007)
b. LI-BIRD Operational Guidelines for Projects and Programs, February 2022
c. LI-BIRD Financial Regulation, 2006 (Amended in 2018)
d. LI-BIRD Procurement Policy 2018 (Amended in 2024)
e. LI-BIRD Gender Equality and Social Inclusion Policy, 2011 (Amended in 2021)
f. LI-BIRD Conflict of Interest Policy, 2016 (Amended in 2023)
g. LI-BIRD Child Protection Policy, 2018
h. LI-BIRD Whistle Blowing Policy, 2018
i. LI-BIRD Safeguarding Policy, 2019
j. LI-BIRD Complaint Handling Policy, 2021 (Amended in 2025)
k. LI-BIRD Environmental and Social Safeguard Policy, 2021 (Amended in 2024)
l. LI-BIRD Anti-Money Laundering and Combating Financing of Terrorism Policy, 2022 (Amended in 2025)

In our assessment, the existing policies are adequate and promote inclusion, balance, and prevent corruption and unethical practices. However, It would be beneficial for the organization to introduce the following additional dedicated policies which are generally considered as practice:

Emergency/disaster response policy: A formal policy outlining procedures for identifying and responding to vulnerable areas and communities is suggested to introduce as it fits with the organizational goals to safeguard and build community resilience. Additionally, preparing a project-wise disaster risk matrix would help ensure that teams remain prepared and responsive in emergency situation. However as a good practice, organization has already set up a dedicated emergency response fund which is commendable.

A dedicated policy for Anti-Corruption: Although, anti-corruption measures are currently incorporated and handled as a part of the Financial Policy, Complaints Handling Policy and Procedures and AML/CFT Policy, it is suggested that that having a separate policy would help to strengthen governance and accountability.

Furthermore, the organization's policies demonstrate following positive and commendable practices:

1. Collective decision making: Management Committee makes major decisions including staff hiring, promotion, level adjustment and grade adjustment of staff, and for procurement procedures.
2. Maternity benefits: The organization provides 90 days of paid maternity leave, exceeding the 60 days mandated by the Labour law, which is in accordance with the Secured Maternity and Reproductive Health Related Act, 2075.
3. The conflict of interest, Gender and Social Inclusion and financial discipline are incorporated in all relevant policies.
4. Organization has also developed a comprehensive Operational guideline for Projects and programmes and Risk Management Matrix applicable to projects and programmes.

A) Employee related policy effectiveness via LI-BIRD's Human Resource and Administration Policy

The policy currently specifies "Dashain Holiday" by name. In consideration of the organization's secular values and adherence to national law, it would be more appropriate to name it as "festival allowance" rather than referring to a specific festival. This approach would safeguard the interest of employees who observe different cultural and religious festivals as per their preference.

B) Gender-Equality-and-Social-Inclusion-Policy-2011 (revised 2021)

The organization has generally practiced maintaining balance in recruitment to promote GESI within the workforce. The organization can strengthen recruitment policy and practices by identifying priority GESI areas where organization needs to focus more in future recruitment process.

C) LI-BIRD Sub Grant Partnership Toolkit, 2025

The criteria for sub-partner selection could be made clearer. Terms such as "disadvantaged group" are subjective, instead of which using 'marginalized group" would provide more clear and consistent definition.

It is also suggested to form a committee for the selection of sub-grantees which is responsible for scoring and selection of sub-grantees and could function as either an ad-hoc or standing committee, depending on the organization's needs.

D) Complaint Handling Policy and Procedures

The Complaint Handling Committee should report at least annually to Executive Board, detailing the number of complaints lodged during the period and their resolution, and the status of any unresolved cases. This practice would enhance transparency and accountability in the organization's complaint handling process.

E) AML-CFT Policy and Procedures 2022

An AML/CFT related supplementary form could be included as an annexure to the policy. This would standardize the process and make it more convenient and consistent for use each time.

6.1 Institutional Practices

6.1.1 Organizational Supervision for Check and balance

The organization has a three-member Audit Committee composed of board members to ensure effective oversight and transparency in its operations. An independent consultant is engaged to perform the internal audit function, guided by a comprehensive Internal Audit Manual that outlines procedures and standards for systematic auditing.

Additionally, the organization has established a robust Internal Control Mechanisms to enhance supervision and accountability across all levels. Regular monitoring and evaluation of project activities are also carried out to assess progress, ensure compliance, and support continuous improvement in performance.

6.1.2 Complaint Handling Procedure

The organization has a Complaint Handling Policy in place to ensure transparency and accountability in its operations. Recently, organization has addressed several complaints with proper documentation, demonstrating its responsiveness to issues raised.

Additionally, multiple channels for lodging complaints are also available. This procedure should be clearly communicated in every site office and staff e to ensure accessibility for all beneficiaries and stakeholders. Further the details of dedicated complaint handling procedure should be made available to beneficiaries through notice board, poster, organization's website practices, facilitating easy access to institutional complain procedures.

6.1.3. Annual organizational Compliances

The organization has completed its registration and renewal processes in a timely manner and has met all other relevant government compliance requirements. The table below summarises the status of the organization's compliance with Government requirement for non-government organization and its own policy requirements.

Particulars	Status
Annual Registration & Renewals at District Administration office and Social Welfare Council	Updated
Annual General Meeting	Regular
Board Meeting	Meeting regularly and frequency is more than statutory requirement
Audit of the Financial Statements	Regular
Approval of Programs & Policies by local level Government	Regularly Updated before program implementation

In addition, the organization has contributed Rs. 75.35 lakh of tax (tax deducted at sources) to the Government revenue. As a responsible non-governmental organization, it has duly fulfilled its obligations.

7. RELATIONSHIP WITH FUNDING AGENCIES AND THEIR REFLECTIONS

LI-BIRD's funding agencies have indicated that the project activities are highly effective and efficient in achieving intended outcomes. They also appreciated for organization's commitment and timely reporting and have raised no concerns regarding transparency and accountability, reflecting strong financial discipline and responsible management practices.

This feedback was collected through a structured questionnaire survey shared with sampled group of funding agencies via email communication. The responses of each question are summarized in the table below:

Response 1	Response 2	Response 3	Response 4	Response 5
Question 1 : How do you rate the effectiveness of project activities of LI-BIRD? (Average rating 4.4)				
5	4	5	4	4
Question 2: How do you rate the efficiency of project activities of LI-BIRD? (Average rating 4.4)				
5	4	5	4	4
Question 3: What is the average frequency of reporting from LI-BIRD?				
>1 month but Within 3 months	Monthly	>3 months but Within 6 months	>3 months but Within 6 months	>6 months but within a year
Question 4: Does the reporting requirement for transparency, accountability and compliance meet with the general practices of transparency, compliance and accountability?				
Yes, to a very high extent, the reporting requirements for transparency, accountability, and compliance align well with the general practices of good governance and organizational integrity. The structured and timely reporting processes not only ensure adherence to donor and legal standards but also promote internal accountability and transparency in project implementation.	Yes, very much	Yes.	Yes	Yes, fully meet the requirements

Response 1	Response 2	Response 3	Response 4	Response 5
Question 5: Do you think the role of LI-BIRD is effective in building partnership and facilitating coordination for increase access of project communities to Governmental Resources and Services? You can also add a comment on how LI-BIRD is helping your organization to meet your organizational goals and priorities ?				
Yes, I believe the role of LI-BIRD has been highly effective in building partnerships and facilitating coordination to increase the access of project communities to governmental resources and services. Through its strong local presence, technical expertise, and collaborative approach, LI-BIRD has successfully bridged the gap between communities and government line agencies. Their facilitation has enhanced the visibility of community needs and enabled smoother access to relevant services and schemes that support local development. Moreover, LI-BIRD's work has significantly contributed to the organizational goals of our organization particularly in promoting sustainable livelihoods, resilience building, and inclusive development. By integrating climate-smart agricultural practices, strengthening community-based organizations, and promoting inclusive participation, LI-BIRD has supported our shared mission of empowering marginalized groups and enhancing their socio-economic well-being. Their strategic alignment with our thematic priorities and collaborative implementation style has strengthened our impact on the ground.	LI-BIRD, excellent in implementation and they are doing good in coordination but I think they have the capacity to do much better	Yes, LI-BIRD has played an effective role in strengthening partnerships and creating linkages with government agencies, which has improved communities' access to resources and services. Their support has also aligned well with our organizational priorities, especially in promoting sustainable livelihoods	Yes, LIBIRD has a good reputation for its technical capacity, and we share the common goal for adaptation and resilience. It demonstrates flexibility in operation. It will be good if it can further strengthen its financial spending capacity and speed, and also be efficient for short-term and emergency response-related interventions.	
Question 4: Any additional comments on the LI-BIRD as a partner organization?				
LI-BIRD has proven to be a reliable, committed, and technically competent partner organization. Their participatory approach, strong field presence, and ability to engage with both communities and government stakeholders have greatly enhanced the effectiveness and sustainability of joint initiatives. LI-BIRD's professionalism, transparency in operations, and alignment with shared development goals make them a valuable partner. We appreciate their collaborative spirit and look forward to continued partnership to achieve greater impact at the grassroots level.	They are one of the good organizations in Nepal, we look forward to working with them in understanding how the global development context is changing and how we should be adapting to it.	LI-BIRD has consistently demonstrated reliability and commitment as a partner organization. Their strong technical expertise, effective community engagement, and evidence-based approaches have greatly contributed to achieving project outcomes. I highly value their professionalism, transparency, and collaborative spirit	NA	LIBIRD is a highly professional organization with strong expertise in resilient agriculture and demonstrates well-coordinated collaboration with government and private institutions.

Response 1	Response 2	Response 3	Response 4	Response 5
Question 5 : Any additional comments on the LI-BIRD as a social organization?				
As a social organization, LI-BIRD has demonstrated a strong commitment to inclusive and sustainable development. Its work is deeply rooted in community needs, with a focus on empowering marginalized groups, promoting social equity, and enhancing local resilience. LI-BIRD's emphasis on participatory approaches, innovation in agriculture and natural resource management, and advocacy for climate-resilient practices reflects its dedication to long-term social impact. The organization's ability to blend scientific knowledge with indigenous practices has further strengthened its role as a catalyst for positive social change.	Very good on agri-food systems	LI-BIRD is a socially responsible organization, well-regarded for its participatory approach, deep community engagement, and commitment to sustainable development practices	The recent policy from SWC restricts national NGOs as local implementing partners so it might be good to reflect on that.	They have actively operated as a social organization at both local and national levels, contributing to community development and policy advocacy.

8. REVIEW OF PREVIOUS SOCIAL AUDIT FINDINGS

The organization has demonstrated significant progress in strengthening its institutional performance and development impact by actively addressing the recommendations from the previous social audit cycle.

Some of the notable progresses include the continuation of strategic agreements with the Karnali, Gandaki, and Sudurpaschim provincial governments, thereby enhancing policy alignment and intergovernmental collaboration. The organization also played a key facilitative role in the development and localization of sectoral policies, most prominently the Pollination Strategy with the Karnali Province Government supporting practical implementation at the grassroots level.

Additional policy contributions were made in five municipalities – Joyaral Rural Municipality in Doti, Krishnapur Municipality, and Laljhadi Rural Municipality in Kanchanpur, Barbardiya Rural Muncipality in Bardiya and Gurbakot Rural Municipality in Surkhet – through the facilitation of Local Disaster and Climate Resilient Plan (LDCRP) development and related local capacity building. A number of joint training programmes were organized with the Agriculture Business Promotion and Training Center in Sudurpaschim and Karnali provinces targeting to government extension workers.

At the federal level, the organization has been actively engaged in developing a national Agroecology Roadmap engaging multi-sectors and stakeholders including Ministries of Agriculture and Livestock Development. Additionally, a comprehensive five-day Training of Trainers (ToT) programme on social mobilization, training design and delivery was conducted for staff with an objective to enhance their capacity for quality service delivery.

Collectively, these achievements reflect the organization's commitment to continuous improvement, responsive learning, and enhanced effectiveness in the service delivery.

9. CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

9.1 Conclusion

The organization has demonstrated a strong commitment to promoting food and nutrition security, biodiversity conservation, ecosystem health, and climate action in an effective, efficient, and economical manner. Its governance practices are sound and functional, with minor areas where further improvement can enhance overall performance. The organization has developed key policies required for organizational governance and sustainability and has found implementing them effectively while implementing its programmes.

The planning process remains highly participatory, with deep engagement at the community level and decision-making driven by local needs and priorities. With nearly 80% women beneficiaries, primarily from marginalized communities, the project has been significantly women-led and inclusive in its approach.

The sustainability of project activities, coupled with positive and impartial relationships with local governments and community stakeholders, reflects the organization's

integrity and long-term vision. With a few targeted improvements, the organization is well-positioned to further strengthen its impact and reinforce the effectiveness of its development interventions in the years ahead.

9.2 Recommendations

Some of the recommendations from Social Audit can be summarized as follows:

A) Enhanced Accountability

» As an additional measures, the costs associated with each event or programme could be presented at the end of the event.
» The annual summary of operations and major achievements of all the committees could be reported to the Executive Board and/or General Assembly, enhancing the accountability and effectiveness of such committees.

B) Programme Effectiveness

» The groups formed for activities can be further empowered to engage effectively with local governments and align with local budgeting practices to access available resources.
» Cooperatives can be further oriented to diversify income opportunities, enhance marketing strategies, increase access to governmental resources, and promote good governance and transparency to ensure long term sustainability.
» The beneficiaries' groups can be further strengthened by providing targeted training on women leadership development, and improved understanding on value-chains and markets, enhancing their ability to address beneficiary needs sustainably.
» The training provided to farmers should be reinforced as some participants require follow up support to best utilize the benefit and learnings from the training.
» The high expectation of farmers regarding project support should be addressed through discussion, dialogue and continuity plans of existing project activities.

Additionally, digital channels for lodging complaints should be clearly communicated to every site office and staff to ensure accessibility for all beneficiaries and stakeholders.

C) Sustainability of the Project

» Linking the project activities with financial motivation and financial literacy will encourage better resource management and foster long-term commitment among participants.
» Farmer groups should be familiarized with local-level budgeting practices, enabling them to access local resources, influence planning processes, and ensure the continuity of activities through regular support and services.
» Market development of Vermi-compost in the PRERANA is essential for project sustainability. While promoting the agro-entrepreneurship programmes, market linkage should be integrated as a key project activity to ensure long term viability.
» All farmer groups formed under different projects are not registered in the local government authorities. Accessing government resource is dependent on group registration. To address this, all groups should be registered and link with local government's service delivery mechanism.

D) Policies and its Effectiveness

» Key policies such as Human Resource and Administration Policy, Gender-Equality-and-Social-Inclusion-Policy-2011, Sub Grant Partnership Toolkit, Complaint Handling Policy and Procedures, and AML-CFT Policy and Procedures 2022 should be reviewed on a regular basis and revised to address the emerging compliances requirements and organizational needs. In Addition, the organization could consider developing specific policies on Emergency and Disaster Response and Anti-Corruption to further strengthen its governance and risk management.

10. ANNEXES

ANNEXURE - I : LIST OF STAKEHOLDERS CONSULTED

During our engagement, following stakeholders were consulted

- General Assembly members of LI-BIRD
- Executive Board members
- Funding agency partners
- Employees of LI-BIRD

CRA Project

- Acting Ward Chairperson, Sunkoshi RM
- Social organization Co-ordination Department, Agriculture Department, SRM
- Agricultural Technician, Agriculture Department Thokarpa section
- Vice Chairperson of Pingaldada Farmers Co-operative
- Farmers from various groups

RERAS Project

- Vice-Chairperson, Sunkoshi RM
- Agriculture Department, SRM
- Farmers, Lift Krishak Samuha

PRERANA Project

- Ward Chairperson
- Members from farmer group
- Prangarik Co-operative Society

ANNEXURE - II : SUPPORTING DOCUMENTS

We have reviewed following documents in order to generate this report:

- Meeting minutes of the committees, farmer groups and other network organizations
- Documentation of organization, and Seed Bank,
- Organizational policies, practices and general observation of compliances,
- Audit report of the organization,
- Published policies and plans of the organization,
- Organization's Website
- Official statements of the organization

ANNEXURE – III : Summary of Social Audit

Project	Scaling up Climate Resilient Agriculture for Sustainable Livelihood of Smallholder Farmers in Nepal Project (CRA Project)
Location for Social Audit Event	Pingdada Sana Kishi Co-operative, Sunkoshi RM, Sindhupalchok

A. Project Status

The project has been working in 5 municipalities of three districts including Sindhupalchwok District which was chosen for the Social Audit program. In the SRM of Sindhupalchwok, the project was implemented in ward numbers 2, 6, & 7. Out of the total implementation area, social audit event and joint monitoring was conducted in ward number 2 of the RM. Project has covered a total of 25 households in the area, and the total beneficiaries can be tabulated into many pivot points as follows:

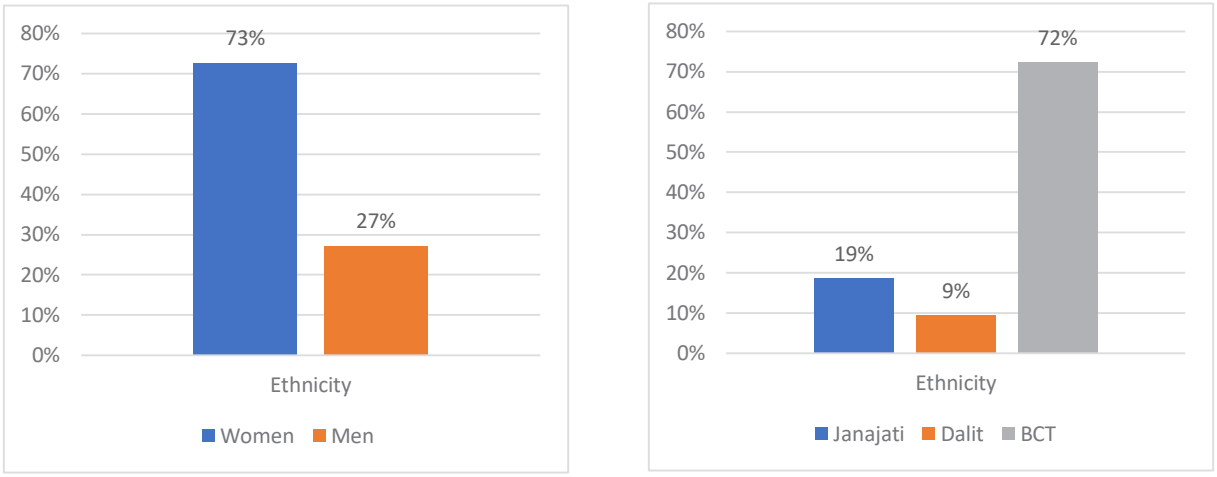

Figure 4: Composition of project beneficiaries of the CRA project by gender (left) and by ethnicity (right)

B. Report on Visit to Project Activities and Discussion with Stakeholders

We visited the Paryabaraniya Namuna Kafle Krishi Samuha (which is a exemplary village) located in ward 2 of the Sunkoshi RM. The farmers in the group had effectively started revised farming practices taught by the project. The farmers had started practices like vermi-compost, bio-fertilizers and pesticides which were known to them as the climate resilient farming practice. They had adopted climate based agricultural practices and had good produces from such practices harvesting tomato, cauliflower, and other vegetables. The produces had earned them good where few farmers earned around Rs. 15,000 from the harvest. Similarly, the farmers have also received goth-sudhar sheds and have also collected the wastage of cattle for biological pesticides. The beneficiaries have started adopting the practices and have significantly reduced the usage of chemical fertilizer. Despite having a fairly cultivable product, the farmer groups were struggling with effective marketing of its product. Beneficiaries have tried for support from local governemnt but have not received any resources. Further, we also viewed the seed bank which was previously established and well operated in the premises of Pingaldanda Farmers Co-operative. The seed bank is operating well and following sustainable practices.

Picture 2 : Agricultural practices followed by farmers

Project	Renewable Energy for Resilient Agri-Food Systems RERAS Project
Location for Social Audit Event	Tin Khopre, Sunkoshi RM, Sinduli

A. Project Status

The project has been working in 11 municipalities of four districts including Sindhuli District which was chosen for the Social Audit program. As per the objective of the project, the project has been using the renewable energy for the sustainable agricultural practices in the municipality. In the SRM of Sindhuli, the project was implemented in ward number 2, 3, 4, 5, & 6 of the RM, which had altogether 7 rural municipalities. Out of the total implementation area, social audit event and joint monitoring was conducted in ward number 2 of the RM. Project has covered a total of 252 households in the area, and the total beneficiaries can be tabulated into many pivot points as follows:

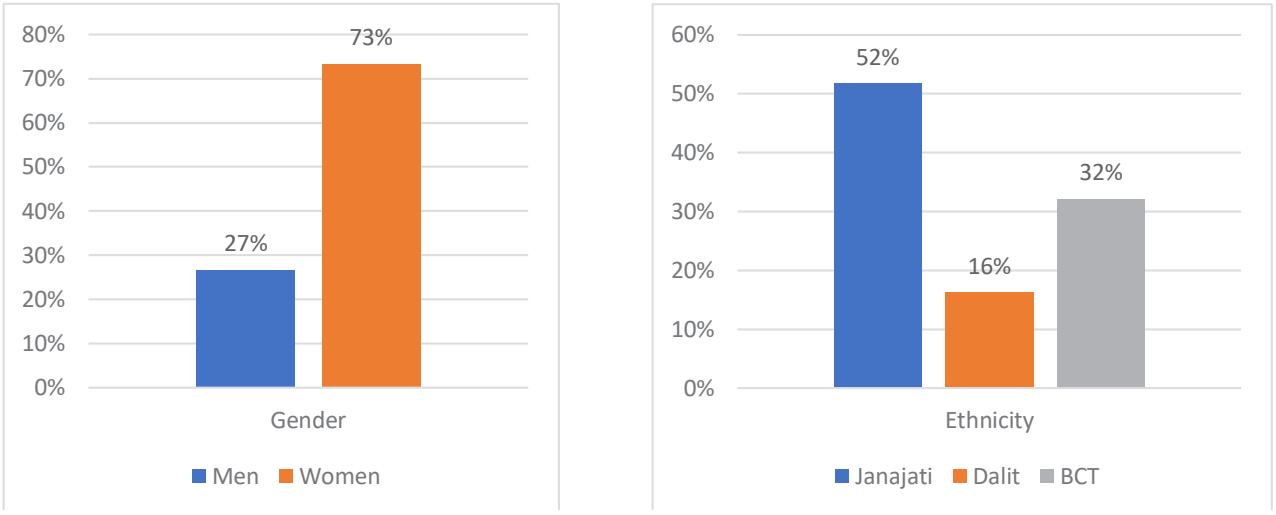

Figure 5: Composition of project beneficiaries of RERAS project by gender (left) and by ethnicity (right)

B. Report on Visit to Project Activities and Discussion with Stakeholders

We visited the Namuma Krishi Samuha and Teenkhopre Lift Krishak Samuha both located in ward 2 of the Sunkoshi RM. The farmers in Jagaran Krishak Samuha had just started revising their farming practices from the project activities. They discussed that they had started the practices good, but it was too early to find the farming outcome as they had just started the revised agricultural activities. The group was a female led group which had also empowered women in the decision making of the group. We visited and observed that the farming practices were followed which were in accordance with the practices promoted by the project. The farmers were well aware of the climate resilient farming practices and mentioned the importance of using organic fertilizers and pesticides compared to the traditional chemical fertilizers and pesticides used. The consumption of such chemical fertilizers was reduced substantially by the farmers. Similarly with new trap techniques, the farmers were able to trap the harmful insects without degrading the environmental norms.

Picture 3: Solar Traps used by the farmers

Picture 4 & 5: Discussion with the farmers and new agri-practices followed.

The farmers currently were associated only with the farmer group with limited access to resources from other sources. Specifically, the RM had adopted a policy to reduce the redundancy of beneficiaries due to which the farmers were receiving the resources from the project itself at the moment. Their access to sustainable resources from the Local Level Government were limited. The farmers have not started calculating their income, expenditure and investment amount to make self-sustainable long term relationships.

The groups further discussed that there was fair allocation of resources within the group. The group requests the resources and allocates it fairly and evenly based on the needs. They also minute their documents regularly. The groups seemed empowered in proper decision making process and requesting their own requirements. The groups, however, need a session to make them aware about the power and responsibilities of chairperson, treasurer and secretary of the group as they seemed unaware about its role.

Further, the farmers also mentioned that the project had a bottleneck of water resources for regular farming. Sunkoshi RM due to its geography, receives lesser rainfall compared to other area. Due to this, the farming activities in future might be severely affected by this. The current water lift project of RM relied on electricity which too is severely affected in the area and the cost of such lift is higher (around Rs. 500 per hour).

C. Discussion with Lift Krishak Samuha

The visit and discussions were done jointly with the Vice-Chairperson of the RM and agriculture division head of the RM. The farmers in Lift Krishak Samuha had some notable agri-outputs. They had adopted climate based agricultural practices and had good produces from such practices harvesting tomato, cauliflower, ladyfinger, and other vegetables. The produces had earned them good where few farmers earned around Rs. 20,000 to Rs. 25,000 per harvest. Similarly, the majority of the groups seemed to have properly followed the revised practices in a climate adjustable manner. Bio-pesticides and fertilizers were used substantially lowering the usage of the chemical fertilizers and pesticide.

Picture 6 & 7 : Agricultural Harvest by farmers of Lift Krishak Samuha

In addition, the groups were also provided with a water lift project which collected water from the Sunkoshi River into a concrete pond with capacity of 70 thousand liters. There are two of such ponds constructed. The pond covered a total land of 75 households via 30 outlets. The water usage was effective for the vegetable production.

Picture 8 & 9 : Water Pond and the land cultivated by such water.

The pond was helpful to majority of the farmers as it has covered a wide range of household for vegetable farming but might not be sufficient for crop farming. Given below is a photo a range of land which has benefitted from the pond.

Picture 14 : Range of land covered by the pond water.

Despite having a fairly cultivable product, the farmer groups were struggling with effective marketing of its product. Many earning lower sales from their seasonal produces and not being able to access the market easily. The vice-chairperson of the RM discussed this point during the joint monitoring visit.

Project	Promoting Resilience and Enterprise Development through Local Resource Utilisation in Nepal PRERANA Project
Location	Hall of Prangarik Co-operative in Kaski

A. Discussion with farmer group

The farmer groups have successfully adopted tricho-derma-based vermicompost production, generating around 1–1.5 tones of quality output while still being in the learning phase, with several members already capable of training others.

To enhance effectiveness, some of the farmers suggested that annual plans and project procedures of the project should be discussed with cooperatives annually.

Market linkage remains a key challenge, as proper market identification and buyer connections are essential for long-term sustainability. Although farmers currently have access to markets, they are seeking better prices than the prices being offered currently. For this, providing financial literacy, costing, and market-oriented trainings would strengthen their capacity and improve project outcomes. Additionally, branding and retailing support is needed to promote agro-entrepreneurship, which can be done via resource-sharing mechanisms with local level Government to increase resources leverage.

Glimpses during Social Audit

ANNEXURE - IV: List of Questions discussed in the Social Audit Program and Focus Group Discussions

Following questions were raised during our interaction with the beneficiaries and the stakeholders:

1. How was the group formed and how was the beneficiary selected?
2. Willingness of the people from the society to join the group and factors affecting their involvement? Can the social impact be multiplied?
3. What are the Social & Economic Impact from the project activities? What are the indirect improvement in decision making in the family and society?
4. How is the resource allocated within the group?
5. What is the process of requesting support from the organization?
6. Do you recognize and can you point out the employees of the organization?
7. Regularity of Group Meetings and whether they collect fund from the groups or not? If they collect such funds, how is it accounted? How much has it accumulated to?
8. Can you share the resources with organization if you have increased economic impact from the project?
9. Is there any grievance which you have expressed but not addressed by the organization?
10. What is the co-ordination status with the local level Government?
11. If market is accessible have you accessed it? If not what is needed to make it accessible?
12. Do you think the project activities are in line with the requirement of the society? Was the project activity enforced to you?
13. Has there been any instance where you think organization could have done better in terms of transparency or effectiveness of project activities?
14. Could you note any instance where you could have done the activity more effectively or economically?
15. Do you know about the Governmental budgetary process? When should you take your plans and procedures to the Government?
16. In the changing scenarios, how do you think co-operatives can address your needs in the longer term?
17. List three challenges that you will face after project phases out.
18. List three major motivation and three major hindrances to run this project activity.

The question with other stakeholders and funding agencies are already discussed previously in this report.

For more informaiton

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