

## Summary of Terminal Evaluation

<b>I. Outline of the Project</b>	
Country: Nepal	Project title: Project for Strengthening the Monitoring and Evaluation System in Nepal Phase II (SMES2)
Issue/Sector: Governance	Cooperation Scheme: Technical Cooperation Project
Division in charge: JICA Nepal	Total cost (estimated at evaluation): 3.2 Million Yen
Period of Cooperation: From November, 2011 to May, 2015 (3.5 years)	Partner Country's Implementing Organization: National Planning Commission Secretariat (NPCS)
	Supporting Organization in Japan: Nil
<b>1 Background of the Project</b>	
<p>Following the 10th National Development Plan (FY2002/03– FY2006/07), the Government of Nepal (GoN) implemented the Three Year Interim Plan (TYIP) (FY2007/08– FY2009/10) and has been implementing the Three Year Plan (TYP) (FY2010/11– FY2012/13). The major focuses of TYIP and TYP were 1) broad-based and higher economic growth; 2) social development; 3) targeted programs for excluded groups; and 4) good governance to achieve the poverty alleviations. For promoting the good governance policy, GoN has implemented policies to strengthen the monitoring and evaluation (M&amp;E) system.</p> <p>Following the GoN request, the Project on Strengthening Monitoring and Evaluation System in Nepal (SMES1 Project) was conducted (2006- 2009) in collaboration with Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA), and the governmental M&amp;E system was strengthened through: i) M&amp;E human resources development; ii) creating the M&amp;E tools; and iii) improving policy makers and planning officers' understanding and support for M&amp;E.</p> <p>The GoN/JICA terminal evaluation team pointed out that more improvements were needed in M&amp;E information sharing and coordination enhancement between National Planning Commission Secretariat (NPCS) and the line ministries. Based on the GoN's request for addressing these needs, "The Project for Strengthening the Monitoring and Evaluation (M&amp;E) System in Nepal Phase II (SMES2)" has been implemented (Nov. 2011 – May 2015) by the Government of Nepal in collaboration with JICA; aiming at making the planning-M&amp;E mechanism more functional so that the feedback from the M&amp;E results might be well reflected to the planning process.</p>	
<b>2 Project Overview</b>	
<p>This project supported to promote M&amp;E and reflect the feedback of M&amp;E results into government planning. The project counterpart was NPCS, as well as 5 partner ministries and 5 pilot districts. Based on the rising attention to "Result-based Monitoring and Evaluation", this project supported to introduce and disseminate objective analysis of outputs based on indicators.</p>	
<b>(1) Overall Goal</b>	
<p>NPCS and Ministries formulate plan based on the results of monitoring and evaluation (M&amp;E).</p>	

**(2) Project Purpose**

M&E mechanism which M&E results are reflected in the planning process is improved with coordination among NPCS, Ministries, and Districts.

**(3) Outputs**

- 1) NPCS capacity of formulating result-based M&E report is enhanced based on the implementation of Result-based M&E Guidelines.
- 2) M&E mechanism of Partner Ministries according to Result-based M&E Guidelines prepared by NPC is improved.
- 3) Reporting M&E results from Pilot Districts to Partner Ministries, and NPCS, are enhanced.
- 4) Coordination mechanisms among divisions of NPCS and between NPCS and Partner Ministries are enhanced for reflecting M&E results to planning process.

**(4) Inputs****<Japanese side>**

Long-term Japanese experts: 6 persons in 5 expertise ((Team Leader/Chief Technical Advisor (Evaluation System), Deputy Team Leader/M&E (Policy and Program Level), M&E (Local Governance 1), M&E (Local Governance 2), Coordinator/Training, Planning and Management 1), Training, Planning and Management 2))

Provision of equipment: Total amount spent was about 3,638,000 Nepalese Rupee (relevant approx. 3.93 million JPY)

Local Consultant Services: 12,288,000 NPR (approx.12.65 million JPY)

Third Country Study Visit & Training in Japan: In grand total: 45 numbers

Local Cost Expenditure: 39,467,000 NPR (about 41.84 million JPY)

**<Nepalese side>**

Counterpart: NPCS (1 +NPCS Taskforce Members: 11 person), Chair and Coordinator of Sectoral Taskforce Members: 10 in total

Local Cost Expenditure: about 15,190,000 NPR

Training/Monitoring Cost Shared: about 11,258,600 NPR

**II. Terminal Evaluation Team**

<b>Members of Evaluation Team</b>	<p>The Japanese Evaluation Team;</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1) Mr. Satoshi FUJII (Team Leader), Senior Representative, Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA) Nepal Office</li> <li>2) Ms. Yuka KITAMATSU (Evaluation Analysis &amp; Planning), Representative, JICA Nepal Office</li> <li>3) Mr. Gopal Gurung (Evaluation Analysis &amp; Coordination), Associate Program Manager, JICA Nepal Office</li> <li>4) Mr. Akira MATSUMOTO (Evaluation Analysis), President, A&amp;M Consultant Co., Ltd.</li> </ol>
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	The Nepalese Evaluation Team; 1) Mr. Gokul Khadka, Program Director, M&E Division, NPCCS 2) Ms. Jamuna Mishra, Planning Officer, M&E Division, NPCCS	
<b>Period of Evaluation</b>	From November 30, 2014 to December 15, 2014	<b>Type of Evaluation:</b> Terminal Evaluation
<b>III. Results of Evaluation</b>		
<b>1 Achievement of the Project</b>		
<b>(1) Overall achievement and prospect for Outputs</b>		
During the Project, all the activities have been implemented in accordance with project work plan.		
<p>1) Output 1: NPCCS capacity of formulating result-based M&amp;E system is enhanced based on the implementation of Result-based M&amp;E Guidelines. (Achieved)</p> <p>Indicators:</p> <p>1-1) All of Result-based M&amp;E reports of P1 projects are prepared.</p> <p>1-2) Policy and Program Evaluations are conducted every year.</p> <p>1-3) Revised Result-Based M&amp;E Guidelines is instructed to Partner Ministries.</p> <p>1-1) Based on the 33rd NDAC report, 289 out of 303 P1 projects (95.4%) submitted their monitoring reports and reported the progress which comparatively improved in the 25th report, 122 out of 146 projects (83.6%).</p> <p>1-2) NPCCS conducted 7 third-party program/project evaluations in 2 in 2012/13, 3 in 2013/14, and 2 in 2014/15.</p> <p>1-3) National M&amp;E Guidelines were revised. 4,000 copies of Nepalese version and 2,000 copies of English version were printed and distributed in July 2013. NPCCS conducted a series of training for NPCCS officers, M&amp;E officers in Regional Offices, and 5 Partner Ministries and 5 Pilot Districts.</p>		
<p>2) Output 2: M&amp;E mechanism of Partner Ministries according to Result-based M&amp;E Guidelines prepared by NPC is improved. (Achieved)</p> <p>Indicators:</p> <p>2-1) Ministry M&amp;E Plans are formulated/ renewed annually.</p> <p>2-2) All of Partner Ministries hold Planning Review Meetings and regular MDAC meetings.</p> <p>2-1) All Partner Ministries renewed their M&amp;E Plans every year and submitted them to NPCCS. Partner Ministries shared their experiences and challenges in the M&amp;E Plan Formulation Workshop organized by NPCCS in March 2014.</p> <p>2-2) All Partner Ministries held MDAC Meetings 3 times a year and Review Meetings once a year.</p>		
<p>3) Output 3: Reporting M&amp;E results from Pilot Districts to Partner Ministries, and NPCCS, are enhanced. (Achieved)</p> <p>Indicators:</p> <p>3-1) At least one third of officers/staff conducting M&amp;E activity are trained.</p> <p>3-2) Technical level of officers/staff related to M&amp;E at Pilot Districts trained in M&amp;E is enhanced.</p> <p>3-3) District M&amp;E Plans are formulated/ renewed annually.</p>		

3-1) As for RBME Training, SMES2 conducted a baseline survey on the number of positions in charge of M&E in district offices. The number of positions in charge of M&E in district offices was 191. In total, 537 officers were trained. 43 officers (105%) in Kavrepalanchowk, 46 officers (121%) of Sindupalchowk, 40 officers (91%) of Dolakha, 40 officers (118%) of Ramechhap, 22 officers 65% of Sindhuli attended RBME Training. Sindhui District Taskforce decided to train the core M&E officers only. Overall, more than one third of the officers were trained.

3-2) Self-assessment of district officers on their understanding on RBME increased from 2.59 (2011) to 4.00 (2014), their ability of implementing monitoring field visits increased from 2.69 (2011) to 4.09 (2014), and their knowledge on how to fill in the reporting forms increased from 2.69 (2011) to 3.84 (2014) in 5 Likert scale. Therefore, it was found statistically significant.

3-3) The Pilot districts formulated district M&E plans and renewed annually. Following the plans, district taskforces conduct field monitoring visits and other M&E relate activities.

4) Output 4: Coordination mechanisms among divisions of NPCS and between NPCS and Partner Ministries are enhanced for reflecting M&E results to planning process. (Partially achieved)

Indicators:

4-1) Revised Result-Based M&E Guidelines is completed.

4-2) 3 times of NDAC meeting for reflecting the M&E results in planning process is held.

4-3) At least one sensitization workshop with relevant stakeholders for sharing M&E results is held.

4-4) At least one policy forum for enhancing awareness and understanding of decision makers based on lesson learnt from M&E practices is held.

4-1) National M&E Guidelines were revised and distributed in July 2013.

4-2) NDAC has been regularly held since 2011.

4-3) To share the achievement and challenges of each M&E Taskforce, Synthesis Taskforce Meeting was held in 2012 and 2013.

4-4) 4th M&E policy forum was held on September 2013 and 5th forum on September 2014. Each time, prior to the policy forum, Evaluation networking meeting was held and the result of discussion was reported at the policy forum.

These seminars, meetings, and forums have promoted the participants and stakeholders' understanding on M&E. However, positive effects to enhance M&E coordination mechanisms were limited to a certain extent.

## **(2) Prospect to achieve the Project Purpose**

Project Purpose: M&E mechanism in which M&E results are reflected in the planning process is improved with coordination among NPCS, Ministry and District. (Achieved)

Indicator

1) Analysis report based on the M&E results is submitted to NDAC regularly.

2) M&E report by NPCS is utilized by PMO, MoF, and Partner Ministries for planning.

3) TYP review documents include description of M&E results.

Analysis reports including monitoring results of P1 projects were submitted to NDAC regularly.

Considering the current levels and prospects of achievement on the defined four (4) Outputs as well as the respective indicators, it is evaluated that the M&E mechanism has been improved with coordination among NPCS, Ministries, and Districts.

### **(3) Prospect to achieve the Overall Goal**

Overall Goal: NPCS and Ministries formulate plan based on the results of monitoring and evaluation (M&E)

Indicator: 1) Periodic Plan is formulated based on the results of M&E.

2) Sector Plan (Annual, Periodic) is formulated based on the results of M&E.

3) Increase the number of approved project/program based on the M&E results.

There has been this practice of implementing “Periodic Plan” for three-year plans in Nepal, and Annual Development Program has been formulated under the plan since 1956/57. (A total of 12 periodic plans have been implemented while there have been two plan holidays in the period since the first plan was brought in 1956)

In the most recent plan, 13th plan (FY 2013/14-2015/16) has been brought into implementation as per the decision of the GoN (Cabinet), which was based on the discussion on the draft periodic plan in the National Development Council meeting. Overall, sincere efforts were undertaken for the planning process to be more informative, realistic and practical by improving various aspects of NPCS, Central Bureau of Statistics and research and development sectors.

Based on the results of M&E, every year, a series of annual budget discussions are held at NPCS with participation of respective ministries, MoF and NPCS.

Whether the number of approved project/program can be increased depends on the self-reliant effort.

At this moment, the overall goal is expected to be achieved within 3 years after the project as planned.

However, some indicators require further clarification and other ministries need to be effectively involved in M&E activities in order to attain the overall goal.

## **2 Summary of Terminal Evaluation Results**

### **(1) Relevance : High**

The relevance of the Project was regarded very high when the Project was formulated, and continues to be high even at this terminal evaluation stage for the following reasons. The Project is aligned to national policies and goals as reflected in the periodic plan in Nepal. The Project is also highly relevant with needs of target groups, cooperation policy of the Japanese Government and project design/approach.

1) Relevance in terms of consistency with Nepalese policies and programs

The Project is consistent with the national policy and strategy of GoN as below.

First, GoN focused on result based planning and placed priority on M&E in the approach paper of the current national plan (13th plan, 2013-2016).

Second, the newly revised National M&E Guidelines 2013 explains M&E as high priority by formal governmental documents, and addresses all the ministries and agencies of the government to follow appropriate methods and process to monitor and evaluate policies, programme/projects.

Third, NPCS and partner ministries have emphasized M&E as one of the main mandates and they have been

implementing M&E plan preparation and capacity development.

#### 2) Relevance to related organizations and target groups' needs

The target groups of the Project are NPCCS, 5 partner Ministries, and 5 pilot districts. They are relevant to implement the Project as counterpart organization and implementation agencies in order to strengthening the capacity of the key agencies to enable the Ministries and NPCCS to formulate plans based on the results of monitoring and evaluation, thus, the Project seems to meet their needs and willingness.

#### 3) ODA policies of the Government of Japan (GOJ)

“Country Assistance Policy for Nepal (January 2013)” prepared by Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MoFA) of Japanese Government set areas on support for improvement of governance (democracy process) as high priority in assistance program for Nepal that contributes to promoting the country’s social, equitable and economic development.

In the JICA Country Analytical Work (2013), program for strengthening government administrative capabilities is one of JICA cooperation programs in Nepal. This program aims to develop awareness of the central government on ownership and to strengthen planning and implementation capacity, policies and systems for effective development programs. The Project has been formulated in line with the ODA policies of GOJ.

#### 4) The Project approach and its strategy

The innovative Project approaches have contributed to improve “predictability” of funding in M&E activities of respective counterpart in order to improve “transparency” and “accountability”. In favor of disclosure of M&E activity budget, each counterpart could expect how much they can use for M&E trainings, field visits, formation of M&E plans and other activities in advance. It is clearly observed that, through this approach, (i) Work (Activity) plans were truly jointly made, (ii) Project activities were financed jointly (JICA side contributed most, but counterparts also contributed by a certain degree by their own budget, and (iii) Project activities were taken by strong initiative of respective counterpart with support of the Project.

#### 5) Long-term cooperation experience with Japan

Having had a successful experience from previous project (SMES1), this SMES2 Project was requested by the GoN to JICA to provide a technical assistance to NPCCS. Based on the GoN's request for addressing the fulfillment and needs, further improvements in M&E information sharing and coordination enhancement between NPCCS and the line ministries were necessary. Therefore, it can be said that SMES2 is built on the success of the former project; it is designed to provide a hands-on assistance without reinventing the wheel. In addition, the organizations selected as pilot and partner organizations are already familiar with SMES1 and JICA, and having those ministries and districts as pilot and implementation organizations increases efficiency.

**(2) Effectiveness : High**

Effectiveness of this Project is high by the following factors. According to the project work plan, significant volume of activities has been conducted by support of the Project team. They include: (i) total 1,629 officials have been trained; (ii) total 72 Taskforce Meetings have been held at three levels (NPCS, Ministries and Districts); (iii) total 11 M&E Plans have been prepared as planned; and (iv) total 383 officials joined and experienced field monitoring visits for various program and projects. These activities have increased related persons' understanding and involvement in M&E activities, which led to strengthening coordination mechanisms between stakeholders and the achievement of the project objective.

**(3) Efficiency : High**

The efficiency of the Project is evaluated as high. The inputs from the Japanese and Nepalese sides have been provided according to PDM and work plan except assignment of counterpart personnel which had frequent staff changes. The inputs of the Project were appropriate in terms of quantity, quality, and timing at most levels, as well as follow ups and briefings to newly transferred posts. All inputs allocated have been fully utilized for project implementation. The Project is efficient in terms of input supply leading to good results.

**(4) Impact : not determined**

There are relative difficulty in measuring the impacts through quantitative and even qualitative indicators due to the comprehensive activities of the Project characteristics and also the time necessary to derive visible impacts within the Project period. However, the significant impacts observed are as follows:

**1) Prospects of achieving the Overall Goal**

Through the Project implementation, it is envisioned that the overall goal of this Project will be accomplished, namely "NPCS and Ministries formulate plan based on the results of monitoring and evaluation (M&E)." This could be reached within 3-5 years after project completion by self-reliant efforts of the implementing agencies (NPCS and Ministries). However, some indicators require further clarification and other ministries need to be effectively involved in M&E activities in order to attain the overall goal.

As stated above in III.1-(3) (indicators for Overall goal), the Project has been formulating plan based on the results of M&E. As revised M&E Guideline is already approved by NPC and the utilization has been started, overall goal of the Project is expected to be achieved substantially.

**2) Spillover effects**

The good practice which was driven through the Project intervention are;

- a) Synergy effect on institutional development (capacity building), such as in-service training and create awareness on M&E for various stakeholders (harmonization of different donor support training),
- b) Address issues/ aspects on "Ownership", "Transparency", "Accountability" and "Credibility" concept and culture in Nepal (focus on better governance issues),

- c) Increasing awareness and consciousness on M&E as a learning, accountability and transparent tool in overall development cycle,
- d) Revitalizing the presence of the M&E divisions/sections in NPCS and the partner ministries, and
- e) Networking and M&E human resources development in public and private sectors

There are no negative impacts foreseen at this moment.

#### **(5) Sustainability : High**

The sustainability of this Project is high as evidenced by the following factors;

##### 1) Policy Aspect

The policy support is likely to remain even after the end of the Project.

GoN has been engaged in the development of M&E and in facilitating the creation of an enabling environment and enhancement in the capacity of M&E. Therefore, the sustainability from policy aspect will be high.

##### 2) Technical and Human Resource Aspect

In human resource aspect, a large number of officials have already been trained, and their recognition of M&E and associated M&E skills and knowhow have been improved. Thus it is expected that trained officials would continue conducting M&E and disseminate their knowledge to others as resource persons. However, it is further required to develop institutional and national capacity in respective organizations. In order for the M&E culture to take root or become mainstreamed in Nepal, further institutional strengthening is indispensable and it is also required to take measurements to realize a further enabling environment.

##### 3) Institutional and Budget Aspect

GoN has adopted the tangible policies and strategies for M&E with expansion and institutionalization of M&E in Nepal. Within this policy context, M&E has gradually become fixed as culture not only in the target ministries and districts of the Project, and NPCS has a leading role and responsibility to promote continuous M&E activities.

However, in the institutional aspect, it is still long way path to be reached.

In financial aspects, it is expected that NPCS and partner ministries would reserve a certain budget for M&E activities. Some activities, including trainings and field visits, have been financed jointly by the Project and respective governmental agencies. However, there are still challenging issues to secure the M&E budget separately, therefore, it is required to make continuous efforts from respective ministries to create awareness on M&E for support and seek budget for M&E activities.

### **3. Contributing factors for achieving the Project Purpose**

According to the individual/group interviews and self-evaluation questionnaire results conducted during the Terminal evaluation study, the following factors were observed as contributing factors for achieving the Project Outputs and the Project Purpose.

#### 1) Good guidance and leadership of NPCS

- 2) Provision of matching fund
- 3) Development of new National M&E Guidelines
- 3) Existence of human network

#### **4. Hindering factors to the achievement of the Project Purpose (hampering factors)**

The following aspects are evaluated to be hindering factors both in terms of the effectiveness and efficiency of the Project implementation.

- 1) Frequent and untimely staffs transfer

#### **5. Conclusion**

As a result of Project work in the Project on M&E in Nepal since November 2011 till present, the expected outputs have been produced. The Project has high relevance, effectiveness and efficiency. On the other hand, there are relative difficulty to measure the impacts through quantitative and even qualitative indicators due to the comprehensive activities of the Project characteristics and the time necessary to derive any visible impacts within the Project period. However, the Team observed that the Project brings several diversified changes/ impacts through the Project period. With these reasons, it is considered that the Project is well managed and has achieved its purpose. It is presumed that GoN gives priority in accelerating M&E, which can expectedly continue to be positioned as high priority; therefore, the sustainability of policy aspect will be high.

In human resource aspect, M&E skills and knowhow have been improved among trained officials and it is expected that they would continue conducting M&E and disseminate their knowledge to others as resource persons. However, it is further required to develop institutional and national capacity in respective organizations. In order for M&E culture to take root or become mainstreamed in Nepal, further institutional strengthening is indispensable and it is also required to take measurements to realize a further enabling environment.

The Project has been implemented successfully without any major or critical problem and will mostly achieve its outputs by the end of the Project period. Prospect of achieving the Project purpose is evaluated as high, thus, it is concluded that the Project will be terminated as stipulated in the R/D.

#### **6. Recommendations**

The Team has made the following recommendations based on the results of the Evaluation:

- (1) Secure opportunities for M&E training by institutionalizing M&E training module in various governmental trainings.

Implementation of M&E trainings in the Project showed positive effects on promoting the understanding and improving the M&E practices at various levels of the government. Due to the limited period of the project as well as frequent transfer of personnel, further opportunities for M&E training were requested by many project members in respective levels. Since M&E training is not included in the general modules of most of the government trainings at present, this should be mainstreamed and institutionalized not only by M&E division of NPCCS, but also in governmental training institutions. NPCCS is expected to play a vital role in enhancing this institutionalization of M&E training in the

government.

(2) The project initiative of “District M&E Plan” should be incorporated in DDC Annual plan to support the sustainability of District Taskforce activities.

The District Taskforce has been a platform to share M&E experience among partner agencies as well as smoothly introduce newly assigned officers to on-the-job M&E opportunities. The merits of taskforce were also seen in examples of joint problem solving when multi-sectional problems were found through field monitoring. In response to opinions that District Taskforce activity should be continued based on these merits, some actions will be necessary to strengthen their sustainability. Bridging between the present ad-hoc to permanent structure could be an option, such as incorporating the District M&E plan into the DDC Annual plan, and merging the District Taskforce into the DDC level supervision and monitoring committees. Overall, these actions will enforce the further institutionalization of M&E culture and should be welcomed.

(3) Importance of feedback needs to be promoted for quality improvement of M&E.

Although signs on improvement of monitoring and reporting could be seen in ministerial and district levels, lack of feedback was observed as a substantial disincentive for the further development of M&E. Feedback is crucial to not only assure the quality of monitoring, but to also eventually lead the monitoring results to accurate reflection on planning. Factors that could promote the feedback culture in the government could be restating its importance through sensitization as well as improving technical environments for easier information sharing such as implementing trainings, establishing incentives and introducing ICT systems to facilitate timely feedbacks.

(4) Evaluation is still at initial stage of institutionalization and requires further development

Recent evaluation activities such as the third-party evaluation show that independent consultants are required to enhance their technical capacity to improve the quality of their evaluation works. It is also clear that further accumulation of experience within the government is necessary to give accurate facilitation and supervision to these evaluation activities. Utilization of evaluation results in decision making would also become an issue as the evaluation culture is developed. Since the evaluation practice has just commenced in Nepal, practical methods should be further studied not only limiting to third-party evaluation, and discussions should be accelerated within government.

Evaluation primary focuses to utilize the recommendation/lesson learnt, and to bring the feedback for the formulation of development plan, monitoring and effective program/project management. Therefore, management response and action plan should be strictly followed up through national instructional mechanism (NPPR, NDAC/MDAC, and Ministry/Department. Program/Project Management) in concerned agency/ies and also the results of evaluation activities should be shared and discussed among various stakeholders in opportunities such as the policy forum.

(5) The strategy for realizing the Project Overall Goal should be prepared. Appropriateness of Indicators and Means of Verification of Overall Goal in PDM should also be discussed

The Project PDM states “NPCS and Ministries formulate plan based on the results of M&E” as the Overall Goal of the Project. Overall Goal is generally expected to be realized in 3 to 5 years after project completion by self-reliant efforts of the implementing agency (NPCS and Ministries). Positive signs to realize this goal can be seen in promoting environment such as the publishing and dissemination of M&E Guidelines as well as the M&E Plan made mandatory for all ministries. In order to ensure further realization towards the Overall Goal, NPCS should start ground works before the termination of Project.

Another issue may be the contents specified as Indicators and Means of Verification of the Overall Goal. The ambiguity or mismatch of the present contents may bring difficulty for accurate future post-evaluations and it is preferable to further elaborate or adjust these through NPCS and project team discussion. If amendments are necessary in the wording of the PDM, the changes will be discussed and agreed upon by the final JCC.

(6) M&E Act is essential to promote M&E culture a step further

There were various occasions during the terminal evaluation where limitations were seen in the project impact as the M&E divisions were generally in weak position within the government. Overall M&E culture can be strongly promoted through the realization of M&E Act and is anticipated to be realized in long-term.

## **7. Lessons Learnt**

(1) Importance of improving the M&E mechanism between the ministries, departments and district agencies

In order to realize good M&E mechanism, interactive coordination between various levels of government is essential. The Project activity primarily focused on strengthening each levels of the government in the area of M&E. In addition, one interaction seminar inviting officials from ministries, department and district agencies was held in the third project year for the synergy effect of mutual interaction. The seminar contributed in getting feedback in revising the training module, overcome the shortcomings and explanation on M&E guidelines etc. This implicates the importance of including interactions between stakeholders for overall M&E mechanism building, not only in donor projects but also in regular governmental practices.

(2) Frequent transfer of officials in M & E division limited in enriching the quality of M&E of individual and institution to carry out its activities

Transfer of officials is a regular phenomenon in the government system in Nepal. As M&E division/section are seen as low profile job, officials often opt for transfer to other divisions. The training implemented by the project enhanced the capacity of individuals on basic M & E. However, due to the frequent transfer, individuals could not enhance their level of M&E to a higher level. This limited the enhancement of capacity of individual and the institution.

(3) Deeper M&E understanding and practice can lead to motivation

M&E is often taken as a subject of less importance and an area which can be done by anyone easily. After receiving training on M&E and practically implementing joint monitoring visits, it was realized that M&E requires special expertise and has concrete positive effects in project management. Trained officials were able to utilize the results of monitoring visits and these experiences led to their strong motivations and interest in implementing M&E. This contributed in increasing its' importance and thereby raising the awareness on M&E.