



Quarterly Report
NEPAL: CIVIC AND VOTER EDUCATION
USAID Cooperative Agreement No. 367-G-00-00097-00
April 1 to June 30, 2001

I. SUMMARY

Although many Nepalis had high expectations that democracy would bring prosperity and development to their country, some have come to realize that without an active and informed citizenry, democracy will be unresponsive to citizens' needs. The lack of confidence Nepalis feel about their political process is due, in part, to the majority's unfamiliarity with and lack of participation in their democratic institutions. Since 1994, NDI has been partaking in a broad national effort to increase Nepalis' contribution to their governing bodies. In July 2000, with funding from USAID, NDI began civic and voter education programs in Nepal. These programs are designed to increase Nepalis' knowledge about the Nepali government and electoral systems, as well as to encourage broad, informed participation in the political process.

During this quarter, the Institute conducted a variety of civic education related activities, including: 1) coordinating meetings with donors, government agencies and local NGOs; 2) writing training materials; 3) completing the civic education textbook and teacher's guide; 4) conducting a training of trainer's workshop; and 5) planning and conducting training workshops and holding meetings.

Also during this quarter, the Institute conducted a number of voter education related activities, including: 1) meeting with the Coordination Committee; 2) producing and broadcasting radio shows; 3) producing and distributing resource manuals and voter education booklets; and 4) holding district level forums.

II. Background

A. Political Background

Democracy was restored to Nepal in 1990 after The People's Movement forced the king to relinquish absolute powers. As a result, a constitutional monarchy was formed. The 1999 general elections brought a majority government to power, while an ongoing Maoist insurgency remains a threat to Nepal's stability. Since the restoration of democracy, Nepalis have made considerable strides towards increasing the accountability and transparency of their political institutions and consolidating democratic practices.

On June 1, at least 10 members of Nepal's royal family were killed in the palace. Following the deaths of King Birendra and Crown Prince Dipendra, King Birendra's brother, Gyanendra, took the crown. During this transition period, street protests flared and curfews were imposed in Kathmandu and in other areas around the country. Because of this political unrest and insecurity, NDI's training workshops and activities were temporarily postponed.

B. Civic Education

Nepalis receive little, if any, civics training in school. As a result, the adult population in Nepal often lacks the necessary foundation for becoming active and informed citizens in their democracy. To address this gap in the education system, key leaders in Nepal's education community have been working to introduce civics training in school curriculums. As a result of their initiative, many schools around the country are now offering an elective civic education course entitled *Contemporary Society*. Unfortunately, many of the classes do not have materials for the course nor are the teachers familiar enough with civics to effectively relay the lessons to students.

In response to and in cooperation with the Ministry of Education, the Higher Secondary Education Board (HSEB), Friedrich Ebert Stiftung (FES), academicians, local and political leaders, NDI produced and is distributing civic education materials that will be used by teachers and local civic leaders for the *Contemporary Society* course. The Institute is also conducting interactive workshops and holding receptions to inform teaching professionals and civic and political leaders about the contents of the materials as well as how to effectively use these materials to relay civic messages to others.

National political disturbances slightly altered the timeline for executing the civic education training workshops. (*Please see Appendix A: Revised Workshop Schedule.*)

C. Voter Education

Although some materials about Nepal's election laws and polling practices have already been produced and distributed in Nepal, they are targeted at highly educated citizens. Because approximately 70 percent of Nepalis are illiterate, many of the materials cannot be easily communicated to an adequate number of voters. As a result, the majority of citizens know very little about how the electoral process works or how citizens can play a role in ensuring credible and fair elections. The Election Commission's (EC) establishment of 30 district offices is a positive development, which will provide Nepalis with greater access to the local election administration. However, these offices and their staff are in need of capacity building, and the citizenry in these districts need information about the role of the district offices and how the public can utilize their services. Furthermore, many of the local civic and political leaders are unaware of their responsibilities during the polling process. These circumstances have led to violations of the Election Code of Conduct, which is intended to prevent voter intimidation, vote buying, illicit fundraising and spending, and electioneering at the polling stations.

Within this context, NDI, in collaboration with the EC and district election offices, is conducting district level forums in 15 districts, which will bring together 450 political and civic

leaders, as well as district election officials. The Institute is also conducting an extensive voter education program intended to increase citizens' awareness of and participation in the electoral process. The Institute's activities will target the general public, and will include outreach to women and various ethnic groups, as well as district leaders involved in elections. Through material production and distribution, discussion forums and radio programs, NDI will relay messages about voters' rights and responsibilities, election officials' duties, voter registration, the Election Code of Conduct and the procedures for reporting election-related violations. The program also includes general messages about the benefits of participating in the democratic process.

The timeline for executing the voter education discussion forums has been altered slightly by political disturbances. (*Please see Appendix B: Revised Forum Schedule.*)

III. PROGRAM ACTIVITIES

A. Civic Education

Coordinating Meetings with Donors, Government Agencies and Local NGOs

On April 16, 2001, NDI, in cooperation with the American Center, organized the third Civic Education Coordination meeting. The meeting brought together various INGOs, government agencies and local NGOs working in the field of civics and education. The main agenda of the meeting was to share information among participants about ongoing programs and to develop a more comprehensive strategy for introducing civic education into schools and communities throughout Nepal. Participants represented groups such as Society for the Promotion of Civic Education, Social Studies Society, Center for Studies on Democracy and Good Governance and United Mission to Nepal, the Political Science Association, Secondary Education Project, and the American Center. All the participating members agreed to develop an advocacy group in order to encourage donors and government agencies to support civic education programs in Nepal. Participants formed a committee to design a schedule for a civic education expert from the US who was brought to Nepal by the American Center in early June. (Unfortunately, due to political disturbances this expert was unable to conduct any of the scheduled meetings or activities and returned to the United States shortly after arriving in Nepal.) This committee was formed with our partner NGO, the Society for the Promotion of Civic Education (SPCE). Work on establishing an advocacy group is ongoing.

Writing Training Materials for the Workshops

NDI worked with Christine Stone, a very experienced teacher, trainer, and textbook writer who has been working in Nepal for 21 years, to draft a training manual for the interactive workshops. Upon completion, the Institute printed 90 copies of the manual. The manual is based on the textbook and teacher's guide and is intended to be used in combination with the texts. The manual consists of a 2-day agenda, training tips and a detailed training plan that includes activities to get the teachers interested in the new training methodologies. The training program allows time for teachers to discuss the benefits of such methodologies and practice

using these new techniques. It includes exercises contained within the textbook and teachers' guide as well as additional activities to help build teachers' confidence levels. (*Please see Appendix C: Civics in Nepal training manual.*)

Completing the Civic Education Materials

Although NDI worked in cooperation with partners to draft the civic education textbook and teacher's guide for the *Contemporary Society* course, the Institute played the primary role in writing the materials. Once NDI finished the first draft of the materials, the Institute received feedback from experts in the education and political communities in Nepal and abroad to give comments. Following the incorporation of these comments, NDI edited and formatted the books. NDI printed 4,000 copies of the textbook and 900 copies of the teacher's guide and began using them in the training workshops. The Institute also distributed copies to donors, government agencies, local civic related nongovernmental organizations and Nepali academics. NDI is now translating the books into Nepali. (*Please see Appendix D: Civics in Nepal textbook and teacher's guide.*)

The textbook totals about 180 pages while the accompanying teacher's manual is approximately 60 pages in length. The textbook is filled with pictures, games and activities and designed to encourage students to think for themselves and analyze issues. The books cover topics that include: Nepal's social history, how democracy works, the benefits that can be gained from democratic government, women's participation in politics, human rights as it relates to Nepali citizens and how to think through and develop effective responses to social problems in Nepal. Students will learn about democracy through interactive exercises where they identify problems in their communities, discuss ways to solve these problems, meet with political officials, practice public speaking, debate issues and practice various ways of lobbying government officials.

Conducting a Training-of-Trainers Workshop

Although political disturbances delayed NDI's initiation of the training-of-trainers sessions, the Institute began its program, in coordination with partner agencies, on June 1. The workshop was designed to teach the Institute's four trainers, who will be conducting the 13 teacher training workshops, teaching methodologies and familiarize them with the materials. In addition, the Institute invited civic leaders, teachers and principals from local schools to attend training in an effort to further promote the course, textbook and new participatory teaching methodologies that can be used for the *Contemporary Society* course and other courses.

16 teachers, principals, teacher trainers from government agencies (such as the HSEB and the Curriculum Development Center) and NGO leaders attended the workshop. Throughout the two days, attendees participated in a variety of games and activities. Participants were given time to design and teach their own lesson plans and discuss effective questions to ask in class. During the workshop, participants became more familiar with the text and teacher's guide and learned captivating ways to teach the books and engage students' interest.

Planning and Conducting Training Workshops and Meetings

Following the training-of-trainer's workshops, NDI began conducting teacher-training workshops in Pokhara on June 18. The Institute organized the workshops in cooperation with the HSEB, who assisted in selecting locations, sending out invitations and identifying participants. More than 35 teachers and principals from Parwat, Baglung, Kaski, Pokhara, Tanahun, Gorkha, Syanja and Palpa districts attended each of the three workshops held in Pokhara. In addition, the Vice Chairman, Member-Secretary and Acting Director of the curriculum department from the HSEB attended and made brief presentations to welcome participants and offer their support for the program. Two trainers who participated in the training-of-trainers program led the workshops in Pokhara. During each workshop, they repeated the lessons and activities that were conducted during the training-of-trainers program. NDI designed pre- and post-workshop questionnaires that the Institute is requesting workshop participants to complete. (*Please see Appendix E: Workshop Questionnaires.*) These questionnaires will assist the Institute during its evaluation of the program.

NDI held a meeting for approximately 14 civic and political leaders and media representatives; this first meeting was held in Pokhara on June 23. The goal of these meetings is to increase local support for the *Contemporary Society* course and advertise the textbook and new training methodologies. The Vice Chairman, Member Secretary and Acting Director of Curriculum from HSEB praised the textbooks and teaching methodology and discussed the need for the expansion of civic education curriculum through school curricula. The Institute also received a great deal of positive feedback for its efforts to coordinate and collaborate with HSEB. Additionally, there was discussion of how to expand the number of schools using the *Contemporary Society* curriculum.

B. Voter Education Program

Meeting with the Coordinating Committee

NDI has held several rounds of meetings with the Coordination Committee, a group formed to provide input on voter education program activities. During these meetings, committee members discussed the logistical preparations and participant lists for the 15 district forums as well as the design of the materials and forums. Committee members additionally finalized the list of the resource persons for the 15 district forums.

Producing and Broadcasting Radio Shows

The Institute wrote, produced, and began broadcasting 20 radio episodes of five-minute mini dramas throughout the country in nine local languages (in addition to Nepali). The dramas relay messages about: 1) citizens' constitutional rights regarding elections; 2) the voter registration and identity card process; 3) voting procedures; 4) citizens' rights and responsibilities in a democratic society; and 5) the Election Code of Conduct, including protest and claims procedures. These dramas began being broadcasted on May 5, 2001 from Radio Nepal's central and regional broadcasting centers. The dramas are being aired once a week in each language. Running for 20 weeks, the total airtime will be 1,000 minutes. Radio is estimated to reach up to

80 percent of Nepali citizens and is a particularly effective means of reaching the illiterate population.

Producing and Distributing Resource Manuals and Voter Education Booklets

After formal approval by the EC, NDI printed 1,500 copies of a comprehensive Resource Manual, which provides summaries of pertinent election laws relevant to the forum participant groups. The manual serves as a focus for discussion during the district forums, but more importantly, it is designed to provide an ongoing resource for election officials, political party leaders, civic activists, and other critical players in the election process.

The EC formally approved a draft voter education booklet submitted by NDI. The Institute printed 20,000 copies of a voter education booklet, containing easy to understand messages aimed at the general public. The booklet relies heavily on illustrations to convey information to the semi-literate public. The Institute is distributing these booklets primarily through district election offices but also provides them to reliable political and civic leaders for distribution. By July 2001, NDI will have distributed up to 20,000 copies of this booklet. The voter education booklet includes easy-to-understand summaries of pertinent election laws, information about how to register and vote and the importance of elections.

Holding District Level Forums

NDI conducted an orientation of district election officers and two pilot forums in Rupandehi and Lalitpur districts during the previous reporting period. Based on feedback from these events, NDI began its planning for 13 district discussion forums. Ten of these forums were completed during this reporting period. These districts include: Kanchanpur, Kailali, Doti, Rautahat, Makwanpur, Dhankuta, Morang, Saptari Kaski and Dang. Participants were selected in consultation with the central and district election commissions, political parties, and the district level NGO federations.

Special efforts were made to include women and care was taken to ensure political party balance. The forums were targeted to accommodate 30 participants each. NDI did achieve good balance from the major political parties at the forums, and this will continue to be an ongoing objective for the Institute during upcoming forums. Of the total 357 participants in those 11 districts, 23 percent of the participants were women.

The vast majority of invited participants attended each forum. In all the districts, participants included local level civic and political leaders, district and local government officials, the District Election Officer, and the staff of the district election office. The District Chief Judge, the District Development Chair, the Chief District Officer, the Mayor, the Deputy Mayor, the Superintendent of Police, and the Deputy Superintendent of Police were invited to attend the inaugural sessions in all the district forums, and most of these officials did attend in each district. Member of Parliament Mrigendra Kumar Singh of the Nepal Sadbhawana Party attended the forum in Saptari District. NDI was pleased to welcome USAID Democracy and Governance Program Manager Bishnu Adhikari and USAID Program Officer Bhuwan Pratap K. C. to the Doti forum.

Participants filled out pre- and post- forum questionnaires. (*Please see Appendix F: Forum Questionnaires.*) The participants' written and oral evaluations provided positive comments on virtually all aspects of the forums. The resource manual used during the forum was highly praised. The forums were covered by national television and radio and featured in a number of national and local newspapers.

NDI is currently working on logistical preparations for the final three forums, which were originally scheduled for June, but were postponed to July due to the tragedy surrounding the Royal Family.

IV. RESULTS AND ACCOMPLISHMENTS

In keeping with the goals of the proposal, the work this quarter has addressed the following objectives:

Objective: To work collaboratively with Nepali agencies to increase the population's general knowledge of the electoral system.

Objective: To promote awareness of democratic norms and human rights in Nepal.

A. Civic Education

- Materials for the civic education workshops were completed in coordination with NDI's partner organization and have been distributed to Nepali academics, teachers, principals, donors and civic related NGOs.
- NDI successfully completed the training-of-trainers program, three teacher-training workshops and one reception to promote these new training materials and methods.
- NDI's coordinating effort resulted in participating organizations sharing information and discussing ways to cooperate.
- Meetings held with donors, political leaders and civic groups are helping to garner support for future civic education related programming in Nepali schools.
- The Institute is continuing to build strong relationships with local organizations and government agencies involved in civics and education.
- Interest in NDI's current civic education program has spawned wide discussion among Nepali of the need to multiply civic education curriculum in the Nepalese education system.

B. Voter Education

- The Election Commission is engaged in outreach work to educate Nepalis about elections.
- The production of 20 radio dramas was completed and began broadcasting on May 5 and continues running on a weekly basis and will continue for 20 weeks.
- The Election Commission formally approved the resource manual, and NDI printed 1,500 copies of it. The Institute is distributing the manual to participants during the forums and using it as a centerpiece for forum discussion.
- The Election Commission formally approved the voter education booklet, and the Institute printed 20,000 copies of it as well as distributed the booklet to the general public primarily through district election offices.
- NDI successfully completed ten district forums in Kanchanpur, Kailali, Doti, Rautahat, Makwanpur, Dhankuta, Morang, Saptari Kaski and Dang, and is preparing for the final three to be held in July.
- District forums have been well attended and received positive feedback from different levels of government from.

V. EVALUATION/CONCLUSIONS

Civic Education

NDI's civic education program has been very successful so far. The Institute has built close relationships with its local partners and received a great deal of positive feedback from Nepali academics, civic leaders, government representatives, teachers and principals on the effectiveness of the civic education materials and the usefulness of the training workshops. Our partners in the country are pleased to be working with us and regularly seek our feedback and advice. Through meetings and distribution of materials, NDI has helped to inspire interest and commitment among donors, government agencies and local NGOs for introducing formal and informal civic education programs throughout Nepal. The coordinating effort among donors, government agencies and local groups working in the field of civic education has been successful so far. There is always good attendance at the meetings and a large amount of interest in the effort.

Voter Education

By broadcasting radio shows and distributing voter education booklets, NDI is helping to increase the public's knowledge of the electoral system. NDI built close relationships with local level NGOs and district election offices during the implementation of the forums. District election offices are being strengthened, increasing their profile in the community and building good relations with civic and political leaders. The Institute is continuing to receive positive feedback from forum participants and requests to extend the program to additional districts and

to lower levels. NDI also continues to receive praise from forum participants and the general public for the materials and requests for additional handbooks and manuals.

VI. FUTURE ACTIVITIES

To address the objectives outlined for this grant in the proposal, NDI will continue to engage in civic and voter education activities. For the civic education program, NDI will complete its teacher training workshops and hold two additional receptions, in Lahan and Biratnagar districts. The Institute also plans to work with our local partner, SPCE, to hold a book-launching event in Kathmandu where the Deputy Speaker and former Nepali Ambassador to France will be the keynote speakers. Finally, NDI plans to hold one more coordinating event at the end of July. For the voter education program, NDI will continue airing the radio programs, complete three additional district forums and begin an evaluation of the program. The Institute looks to expand upon the network basis it has established and continue to engage in further civic and voter education related democracy programming.

NDI/NEPAL
Civic Education Workshops
(June 18 to July 30, 2001)

Date		Number and Districts	Venue	Districts Invited
June 18-19 Monday-Tuesday	Aashar 4-5	1 st workshop in Pokhara	Kanya Campus	Parwat, Baglung
June 20-21 Wednesday-Thursday	Aashar 6-7	2 nd workshop in Pokhara	Kanya Campus	Kaski-Tanahun
June 22-23 Friday-Saturday	Aashar 8-9	3 rd workshop in Pokhara	Kanya Campus	Gorkha-Syanja-Palpa
June 28-29 Thursday-Friday	Aashar 14-15	4 th workshop in Biratnagar	Aadarsha Vidhyalaya	Morang, Ilam
July 1-2 Sunday-Monday	Aashar 17-18	5 th workshop in Biratnagar	Aadarsha Vidhyalaya	Jhapa
July 4-5 Wednesday-Thursday	Aashar 20-21	6 th workshop in Biratnagar	Aadarsha Vidhyalaya	Sunsari, Terathum, Dhankuta
July 12-13 Thursday-Friday	Aashar 28-29	7 th workshop in Lahan	Shree Pashupati Aadarsha Madhyamik Vidhyalaya	Dhanusha, Sindhuli
July 15-16 Sunday-Monday	Aashar 31 Shrawan 1	8 th workshop in Lahan	Shree Pashupati Aadarsha Madhyamik Vidhyalaya	Sarlahi, Mahottari, Bara, Parsa, Rautahat

July 18-19 Wednesday-Thursday	Shrawan 3-4	9 th workshop in Lahan	Shree Pashupati Aadarsha Madhyamik Vidhyalaya	Siraha, Saptari, Udaypur, Khotang, Okhaldhunga
Date		Number and Districts	Venue	Districts Invited
July 23-24 Monday-Tuesday	Shrawan 8-9	10 th workshop in Kathmandu	To be announced	Kathmandu
July 25-26 Wednesday-Thursday	Shrawan 10-11	11 th workshop in Kathmandu	To be announced	Kathmandu-Lalitpur
July 27-28 Friday-Saturday	Shrawan 12-13	12 th workshop in Kathmandu	To be announced	Lalitpur, Bhaktapur
July 29-30 Sunday-Monday	Shrawan 14-15	13 th workshop in Kathmandu	To be announced	Dolakha, Rasuwa, Nuwakot, Dhading, Ramechhap, Sindhupalchowk

Updated June 11, 2001

Appendix B

**NDI/NEPAL
Voter Education Program**

Revised Forum Schedule (Mid-Western Districts)

Date		District	No. of participants	Resource Person
June 28-29	Asad 14-15	Dang	30	Mr. Chinyanarayan Shrestha, Under Secretary, EC Mr. Yamlal Adhikari, Section Officer, EC
July 1-2	Asad 17-18	Banke	30	Mr. Chinyanarayan Shrestha, Under Secretary, EC Mr. Yamlal Adhikari, Section Officer, EC
July 4-5	Asad 20-21	Surkhet	30	Mr. Chinyanarayan Shrestha, Under Secretary, EC Mr. Yamlal Adhikari, Section Officer, EC
July 11-12	Asad 27-28	Palpa	30	Mr. Purusottam Sapkota, Joint Secretary, EC Mr. Lokdarshan Pandit, Section Officer, EC

Updated June 22, 2001

**NDI/NEPAL
CIVIC EDUCATION PROGRAM**

Workshop Evaluation Questionnaire

Please take time to complete this form and return it to NDI before you leave. We would greatly appreciate complete responses to the questions, as this will help us to evaluate the effectiveness of this workshop and design future programs.

Please note that it is not necessary to write your name on this form. We request that you write honest comments; your responses will be kept strictly confidential.

1. Please rate the overall quality of the workshop?

Excellent Good Fair Poor

2. How beneficial did you find the workshop?

Very Beneficial Beneficial Not very beneficial Not Beneficial at all

3. Did you think the workshop was fun and interesting?

Yes No

4. Was the format and the design of the workshop effective?

Very effective Effective Not very effective Not effective at all

5. Were the teaching methodologies used during the workshops different from what you are accustomed to?

Yes No

If so, in what way?

6. Will you be using the teaching methodologies used during these workshops in the *Contemporary Society* course or in other classes in the future?

Yes No

7. What are the most memorable topics you learned during the workshop?

8. How do you define civic education?

9. Do you think civic education is important?

Yes No

10. How would you rate the textbook *Civics in Nepal*?

Excellent Good Fair Poor

11. How would you rate the teacher's guide to the textbook *Civics in Nepal*?

Excellent Good Fair Poor

12. What aspects of the textbook and teacher's guide do you find useful?

13. Do you have any comments or suggestions on ways to improve the textbook and teaching manual? If so, what are they?

14. Is Contemporary Society taught in your school already?

Yes No

If "No" then would you want it to be taught in your school?

Yes No

15. Is there anything you can do to help introduce the *Contemporary Society* course in your school?

Do you plan to perform these tasks?

Yes No

NDI/NEPAL
VOTER EDUCATION PROGRAM

Pre-Forum Assessment Questionnaire

1. *Personal*

a. District VDC/Municipality Ward

b. Name Age..... Sex.....

c. Educational Background

- 9-SLC Intermediate Bachelors Masters
 Others (Specify)

d. Name of the Political Party/Organization/Government agency to which you belong:
.....

e. Your position:

f. Your main three responsibilities in this position:

1.
2.
3.

g. No. of years involved in politics/civic activities/government job.

- 1-2 3-5 6-10 more than 10

2. Did you play any role in the last election?

- Yes No

If yes, please mention your roles:

1.
2.
3.

3. What is your role in regard to the registration process?

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

I don't know

4. Name three legal or constitutional qualifications to become a voter in Nepal.

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

I don't know

5. Name three legal or constitutional qualifications to become a candidate for the Member of Parliament in Nepal.

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

I don't know

6. What are three major provisions of the election code of conduct?

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

I don't know

7. Name three major responsibilities of political parties while organizing party meetings and mass conferences?

- 1.
- 2.

3.

I don't know

8. Name three effective methods of educating voters in your area regarding their rights and responsibilities.

1.

2.

3.

I don't know

9. Have you received any formal training about your roles and responsibilities?

Yes

No

If yes,

Where

When

From whom

10. In your opinion, what are three steps that should be taken to make the election process more free and fair?

1.

2.

3.

I don't know

11. What do you expect to learn from this two-day discussion forum?

1.

2.

3.

I don't know