Identity, Citizenship and Federalism: The Case of 'New Nepal'
Discussion Paper

Roopa Hinton

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Foreword

The current context in Nepal represents a period of intense and historical change and also great opportunities for civil society and citizens to participate, engage and seek to shape the 'New Nepal'. The end of the conflict and the overthrow of the monarchy in 2006, then the ground-breaking elections of the Constituent Assembly in 2008, where the great diversity of the country is reflected, and the re-writing of the Constitution, all create this ever-moving environment.

In parallel to this CARE Nepal has also been undergoing major shifts in its vision, strategies and operating model, moving towards a programmatic approach. A programme is a coherent set of initiatives implemented by CARE and our allies that involves a long-term commitment to specific marginalised and vulnerable groups to achieve lasting impact at broad scale on underlying causes of poverty and social injustice. A "programme" revolves around a specific poverty-affected population group. CARE Nepal has identified poor, vulnerable and socially excluded people as their impact populations, seeking to work with and for the most vulnerable and excluded in society.

These transformative changes in Nepal have consequences for the impact populations CARE Nepal seeks to work with and for, and also for agencies working in this context. For these reasons CARE Nepal commissioned this piece of research on the federalism debate in Nepal to understand better this issue, and its implications for civil society actors and citizens and groups CARE Nepal works with.

The in-depth research was conducted in May 2009, with the support of CARE International UK, and so some of the specificities and positions presented may be out of date. However in principle the main observations presented are felt to still have relevance to the future political and federal settlement in the country.

The opinions presented in this paper reflect the stated positions from the people and organisations interviewed, and also those of the author; this paper is for discussion only and does not represent CARE policy or position.

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Executive Summary

Nepal is at a critical juncture in its history following the end of the conflict and the overthrow of the monarchy by the People's Movement in 2006. In the context of this 'new Nepal' historically excluded groups such as Janajatis (indigenous communities), women, Dalits and Madhesis (plains-dwellers) have mobilised to demand social justice. Embedded within these mobilisations is a strong sense of disenfranchisement with the current, exclusionary political system, arguing for radical restructuring of power in the country. Interest-based politics and movements based around identity or cultural factors have become more salient within civil and political circles. Demands for new forms of governance, recognising group-differentiated rights and self-determination have led to ethnicity-based proposals for federal states. This paper explores the diverse positions of civil and political society on federalism, unpacking the ethnicity-based proposals and the growth of identity politics in Nepal. It will argue that the diversity and complexity of multinational societies challenge dominant liberal political models, requiring instead the construction of more substantive and consensual notions of citizenship and democracy.

1. Introduction

Nepal is at a critical juncture in its history following the end of the conflict and the overthrow of the monarchy by the People's Movement of 2006. Decades of suppression have come to an end with the opening up of political space giving rise to group formation and struggles to change the political culture of the country, aiming to expand notions of citizenship, national identity and social justice with many vocal groups seeing the solution to historical exclusion and injustices. Against this backdrop, the newly elected Constituent Assembly has the role of producing the Constitution for the 'new Nepal'. The purpose of this paper is to explore the implications of a federal system in Nepal for creating more substantive experiences of citizenship, expanding the enfranchisement of marginalised groups, and achieving a more inclusive political settlement in the country.

A constitution is a set of rules for government, defining the fundamental political principles, and establishing the structure, procedures, powers and duties of a government. Most constitutions seek to regulate the relationship between and within state institutions; and also the relationship between state and citizen, establishing broad rights of citizenship. Hence the new Constitution will reflect the philosophical framework underpinning the theory of justice and rights in the country. The modern era, particularly emerging from Western European experiences, placed the emphasis on the sovereignty of nation-states territorially defined and the sovereignty of the individual. This eroded the more associational nature of pre-modern Europe where group rights

mediated between governing institutions and the individual, and created a modern political regime based on individual choice and freedoms. Liberal individualism is the product of this particular history of political and economic development: the history of industrialisation, in a particular context: 'the West' (Parekh, 1993). However there are strong arguments that individualism as a way of acting and being is out of place in more communal or kin-oriented societies (ibid). Further, some scholars argue that the premise of equality and unity that underpins the liberal tradition also runs counter to the realities of multinational societies which are characterised by diversity and pluralisation of identities. These require a decoupling of the concept of 'nation-state' into the political and administrative authority of the latter (state) within a territorial boundary and the culturally significant construct of the former (nation) (Tandon, 2006). Hence there can be many 'nations' within one territorially bounded 'state', recognising the importance of multiple identities to a national identity such as citizenship.

In Nepal the opening of democratic space in the 1990s led to the organisation and mobilisation of historically marginalised groups, demanding social justice, understood not only economistically in terms of redistribution (concerns of equality) but also culturally, in terms of recognition of difference (concerns for equity). The rights of marginalised groups such as women, Janajatis (indigenous people), Dalits, and the Madhesis (people living in the plains) took centre stage in debates within civil and political society, and also formed one of the strategies of the Maoist insurgency in recruiting support. The demands for self-determination and autonomy for marginalised groups, requiring a radical restructuring of the political context and rules of the game, have led to the emergence of 'federalism' as a solution to historical inequities and injustices.

Research was conducted in May 2009 exploring the positions associated with the 'federal debate' in Nepal and perceptions around the intersection between federalism and marginalisation. In-depth interviews were carried out with various civil society actors from the natural resources management sector, Dalit and indigenous movements, and women's rights organisations. This national level mapping was complemented with an exploration of the perceptions and issues associated with federalism at the local level, through interviews and focus group discussions with community organisations – community forestry user groups and women's rights groups.

The paper will begin with an exploration of concepts of citizenship (section 2), and the historical trends in political economy in Nepal (section 3). The broad debates and positions being adopted within Nepalese civil and political society on federalism will be outlined (section 4), and then the implications of these debates for citizenship and the achievement of aspirations of the many marginalised 'nationalities' for inclusive citizenship will be analysed (section 5). It is the premise of this paper that multinational realities, which are characterised by diverse ethnic, racial or cultural groups, require a more nuanced understanding of individual and group identities, which are able to reflect these diversities and incorporate them into the concept of the state. This means the new Nepali state will need to address questions of whether and how to incorporate the

'rights' of different groups, balancing the demands for recognition of difference with pressing concerns of unity of the nation.

2. Citizenship, identity and federalism

The concept of citizenship has a long history in western societies, and conventionally has been associated with the granting of a legal status by a singular political authority (Tandon, 2006). The modern conception of citizenship has evolved in parallel and synergistically with the modern era's focus on capitalist development, nationalism and unity of the nation-state (ibid), displacing the importance of group right and associations in pre-modern societies (Gierke, 1900; 1934; 1939). Modern societies recognise only two sovereignties: the state and the 'free' individual (Tandon, 2006), and impose a unity which suppressed the previous diversity of pre-modern societies. Since the eighteenth century the polity that has "colonised" political theory and every day life is the nation-state (Isin and Wood, 1999). However there is a growing body of academic and practical work which has challenged modern conceptualisations of citizenship and the nation-state, particularly concerning its inherent assumptions of its universality and the unity of national identity (see Isin and Wood, 1999). Multiculturalism or multinationalism is challenging the western liberal democratic tradition's emphasis on the individual and its assumption of equality, in both the west and in southern political contexts. This section will explore different conceptualisations of citizenship, its interaction with notions of group identity and group rights, and then some linkages between this and discussions on federalism, outlining the key concepts which will be used in the paper to explore the federalism debate in Nepal.

2.1 Different conceptions of citizenship

Conceptualisations of citizenship can be separated into liberal, communitarian and civic republican approaches. These are groups of ideas with common structuring principles rather than neat, delineated categories (Jones and Gaventa, 2002). **Classical liberal theory** claims that all human beings have rights (termed natural rights by early political theorists such as Locke) by virtue of their humanity (Kabeer, 2005; Donnelly, 1989); which are universal and are guaranteed by the state. Citizenship is therefore seen as a legal-juridical status enjoyed equally by rational, self-interested individuals, granted and protected by the state (Jones and Gaventa, 2002).

Liberalism has been strongly criticised for conceptually and practically ignoring the fact that inequalities and pre-existing power relations mean that some people are more equal than others (Jones and Gaventa, 2002); and as such 'equality' actually masks and maintains these inequalities (Isin and Wood, 1999). The extension of citizenship rights to include economic and social rights is supposed to redress these inequalities (Lister, 1997). It is also argued that citizenship should

be seen more substantively as a practice not just a legal status (Kabeer, 2005; Isin and Wood, 1999), as many rights emerged and evolved through localised struggles against power and oppression (Stammers, 2005). These critiques have led to alternative conceptions of citizenship, such as communitarianism and civic republicanism.

In **communitarian** thought an individual's sense of identity is produced only through relations with others in the community of which he or she is part, centred on the notion of the socially-embedded citizen, community belonging and priority of the common good (Jones and Gaventa, 2002; Isin and Wood, 1999). **Civic republican** thought attempts to reconcile liberalism's notion of the self-interested individual with the communitarian's focus on community belonging and the common good. It emphasises the importance of community to individual identity and the obligation of citizens to participate in communal affairs, also recognising that basic resources are necessary to enable this participation. As this suggests much civic republican writing promotes deliberative and participatory forms of democracy, in contrast to the liberal emphasis on representative political systems (Jones and Gaventa, 2002). The group is the defining centre of identity, and by integrating rights into this framework it promotes the notion that the group is the logical focus of rights definitions and claims making processes (ibid).

2.2 Identity and citizenship

In all three traditions the polity or group which dominates is the nation-state (Isin and Wood, 1999). The 'nation-state' and 'nationalism' are powerful imaginaries that frame people's perceptions of social and political space and identity (Anderson, 1991). The project of constructing a nation-state attempts to confer an identity on its citizens, and in so doing demands a singular national identity (Tandon, 2006). However this does not reflect the diversity of multinational societies, where many 'nations' exist within the territorial boundary of a single 'state', and also individuals can cohabit several 'nations' simultaneously (Tandon, 2006; Gellner, 2001; O'Byrne, 2003).

Citizenship and identity have often been conceived as contradictory with the former having universal claims and the latter particularist ones. However it is more constructive to see them as interrelated, with group identities forming around struggles and claims for recognition of citizenship rights (Isin and Wood, 1999). In reality people have multiple and multilayered identities (Heater, 2004; Mouffe, 1992; 1995; Sen, 2006) or what Mouffe calls "subject positions" (Mouffe,1992), such as female, Hindu, Nepali, Madhesi, dalit. The combination of these positions, which are defined by individuals' sense of identification and individual experience, can affect people's world views, how they are treated and their position in society, leading to a differential experience of citizenship both as a status and as a practice. These differences in experience of citizenship have led to mobilisations of marginalised groups demanding for the

mutual restructuring of identities and the polity, and not just accommodation (Isin and Wood, 1999).

Multinational states pose challenges for classical liberal theories of rights, by requiring a theory which recognises differences and the diversities of identities (Young, 1990; Kymlikca, 1995). Indigenous peoples' struggles for recognition and self-determination have brought to the fore the need for group-differentiated rights (Young, 1990; Kymlicka, 1995). However group struggles can often risk essentialising 'groups', something seen for ethnic identities and the struggles of indigenous populations to define themselves in terms of 'peoples'. Mouffe's analysis of identity cautions against this, illustrating the constructed and fluid nature of identity. Furthermore Bordieu (1894, 1987) asserts that groups are the product of symbolic and practical struggles for recognition, whereby group identity is constructed through socialisation of dispositions (perceptions, thoughts and actions) which structure and organise practices and representations of the world. The durability of these dispositions and hence their ability to perpetuate can create the illusion of essential or natural traits.

The challenges to integrating group rights are foremost to avoid essentialising groups and also to protect against the potential "oppressive power of groups" (Bordieu, 1986). Kymlicka has made one of the most serious attempts to present a theory of group rights, however his typology of minority rights still struggles with these challenges. This typology includes rights to self-government, rights to financial support and protection for minorities, and guaranteed seats for minorities in central institutions. He distinguishes between the rights of groups to limit the liberty of individual members ('internal restrictions') and the right of a group to protect against the power of the majority over minorities ('external protections'). For Kymlicka the former is not acceptable however the latter is considered desirable.

However Kymlicka's framework, based on a reductive two-nationality (Anglo- and Franco-lingual communities) model of Canada, struggles to accommodate the complexities of multinational societies (Isin and Wood, 1999), for example measures such as self-government rights for linguistic "majorities" would necessarily create "minorities" who may face increased exclusion and who could also have claims for self-government rights within his typology. Further his model does not address the discrimination faced by "minority groups" – understood as those who are not from the first colonisers – who are in reality expected to integrate into the dominant political and economic systems (ibid).

Indigenous groups' struggles for recognition and self-determination have generally been expressed as demands for greater representation, recognition of difference and federal or regional autonomy arrangements, rather than aspirations for separate statehood (Diaz-Polanco, 1997; Sieder, 1999). It is important to understand then the implications of federal arrangements for promoting these demands. Federalism is argued by its proponents to represent a form of power

sharing, deepening representation and participation of diverse groups, pluralising governance and respecting diversity (Burgess, 1993).

2.3 Federalism and multinational citizenship

Multinational societies containing distinct ethnic, linguistic, regional or religious communities tend towards constitutions with multiple veto points and extensive power sharing (Norris, 2005), so as to facilitate accommodation and cooperation (particularly among elites). It is believed that through power sharing and the recognition of diversity that unity of diverse national communities can be preserved. Federalism (along with proportional representation) represents a form of power sharing recognising autonomy of political units. A multinational conception of federalism has the potential to extend beyond a simple division of powers along a centralisation-decentralisation continuum (Lalande, 1978), tackling socio-political dimensions of difference as well (Burgess, 1993). This recognises the existence of the many nations (communities) within a nation state, and the particularities of their needs and interests, respecting cultural, linguistic and ethnic forms of diversity (Gagnon, 2001). Contrastingly mononational federalism sees diversity purely in economic terms, and hence the institutional focus is economic disparity, class conflict, and centre-periphery issues.

Another associated distinction in federalism discourse is that between symmetrical and asymmetrical federalism. Symmetrical federalism exists where there is no distinction made in rights and roles between different states within a federal system, whereas in the latter differential powers or autonomy exist between states, reflecting the diversity of needs or capacities between states, which is arguably more consistent with multinational realities.

In summary, citizenship and identity are crucially interrelated, with identity being called upon in struggle for the expansion and restructuring of citizenship in multinational contexts. However the discussion of Mouffe and Bordieu illustrates the risks of concretising specific identities, and creating the notion of 'real' groups; while the difficulties in applying Kymlicka's group-differentiated rights framework in a pluralised society demonstrates that in this area there are still more questions than answers. The case of federalism in Nepal and its implications for the construction of inclusive forms of citizenship will be explored further in this paper, analysing the challenges and opportunities of this historical moment.

3. Historical analysis of exclusion in Nepal

Nepal is home to a multitude of different ethnic and caste groups. There are 103 groups in total who are largely Hindus, Buddhists, Animists, and Muslims (Pradhan and Shrestha, 2005). The 2001 census recorded 106 languages and dialects many of which are spoken by a small number of

people (ibid). For example, 58 languages are spoken by less than 10,000 speakers. While the data of the census are not without critics they provide an overview of the high levels of diversity in Nepal. According to the 2001 census *Pahadis* (hill dwellers) constitute 66.2% of the population, Madhesis 28.4%, and "others" 5.4%. The caste groups (9 in the hills and 43 in the Terai) comprise 58.6% of the population, the ethnic groups (25 in the hills and 19 in the Terai) comprise 36.4% and others comprise 6.2%. No single caste or ethnic group forms a majority in Nepal. The largest single group is the Chhetri who constitute 15.8% of the population. Chhetri along with Bahuns are high caste Hindus. The exact number of Dalits is not certain but one estimate is that they constitute 12.9% of the population, of which 55% live in the hills. A number of cleavages can be made of the Nepali population, gaining salience as classifications over time. The three most prominent ones are:

i.   Hierarchical caste structured groups (jats) and the egalitarian ethnic groups (Janajatis)
ii.   The "high" castes and the "low"
iii. Pahadis (people living in the hills area) and Madhesis (people living in the plains)

These classifications are overlapping and in many cases an individual will fall across these functional divides. For example, a person can be a Madhesi and a Janajatis, as one denotes a geographical sense of identity that has salience in Nepal and the latter denotes an ethnic identity.   These classifications are useful firstly because they broadly capture some of the important subject positions which can be important constitutive parts of individual and group identities, hence allowing a deeper understanding of the factors that lead to inclusions and exclusions in social, economic and political realms. Secondly these classifications very broadly can be related to levels of human capabilities, freedoms and empowerment.

Historical and hierarchical structures and exclusionary practices have resulted in minority populations being severely disadvantaged. There are differences between the country's three ecological regions, for instance the hills at 0.512 have the highest human development indicator (HDI), followed by the Terai (0.478) and the mountains (0.386). Hill castes such as Bahuns and Chhetris and ethnic groups such as Newars and Thakalis have a higher HDI than most other ethnic groups and Dalits. Hill ethnic groups have higher literacy rates than Madhesi ethnic groups; and Madhesi Dalits are far worse off in terms of HDI indicators such as literacy than hill Dalits. Cross cutting these categories of ethnicity, caste, region, religion, and poverty levels is gender, reflecting the patriarchal nature of the social systems, which severely restrict women's agency. The situation of women from disadvantaged ethnic groups and castes is even worse, as their social indicators are far below the national average for women. For example, the literacy rate of Dalit women is only 12%, however this masks a disparity based on region and caste, whereby hill Dalit women have literacy rates of 14.7% and Madhesi Dalit women are as low as 4%.

Much of this inequality has its roots in the construction of a shared national identity following the unification of Nepal by Prithvi Narayan Shah, ruler of the Gorkha province, in 1768. This unification and the subsequent project of nation building during the Rana regime (1768-1950) has had a profound consequence for diverse groups and is cited as the point at which social relations and access to resources changed for indigenous groups (Janajatis): this has also been called the *parbatisation* (hill-based Hindu culture) of Nepal. The Rana regime was primarily focused on heavy extraction of the peasantry by the state and ruling groups (Regmi, 1965). According to Stiller (1973) the exploitation of the peasantry had its basis in the land-military complex developed during the Gorkha conquest, whereby Shah promised lands to his military, swelling his army. Economic and political power was concentrated in the hands of a high caste Hindu, hill based elite, enabling them to exercise cultural and social control through the imposition of a universal civil code based on Hindu religious and legal texts. This civil code essentially classified different groups, recognising diversity, but was ontologically structured defining the social position of different groups on the basis of ethnic, caste, religious and gendered identities.

Following the Rana regime and a brief experience of democracy came the Panchayat regime (1961-1990). At the start of the Panchayat regime the state abolished the legally sanctioned hierarchy and discrimination based on caste, ethnicity and religion, seeking to establish a homogeneous national identity. Ethnic and caste affiliations were discouraged in the name of patriotism and nation-building (Gellner, 2007). Cultural affiliations were seen during this time as an impediment to nationalism, modernisation and development. As such there was a concerted effort to construct a homogeneous *Parbatiya (Pahadi)* culture and language, exacerbating existing inequalities between the various ethnic groups and castes, and between men and women (Pradhan and Shrestha, 2005). With the restoration of democracy in 1990, ethnic groups and Dalits aspired to an egalitarian and plural society in which they would be treated on an equal footing (ibid). Lawoti (2007) argues that the increase in democratic space brought on by the adoption of democracy and the 1990 Constitution resulted in an increase in contentious politics in Nepal, giving voice to the discontents of these marginalised populations. It is in response to this long history of exclusion and the persistence of a hegemonic cultural identity in Nepal which has given rise and increased the importance of identity in the current political discourse.

4. The "federalism debate" in Nepal

Proposals on federalism can be simplistically separated into either a territorial subdivision versus a socio-cultural subdivision of the country (Sharma, 2007). Territorial subdivisions can be made based on topographic subdivision (mountain, hills, Terai), or zonal division (eastern, central, western, mid-western, and far-western regions), or a certain combination of both. A socio-cultural division draws federal boundaries based on ethnic, cultural, and linguistic factors. This

section will explore the current positions on this debate in Nepal, understanding the drivers of the federalism narrative. The former modes of division are argued not to address any grievances of the marginalised socio-cultural groups (ibid) and according to indigenous groups' representatives would signal a "continued conspiracy" of the state policy of cultural homogenisation.

The pre-Comprehensive Peace Accord (CPA,2006) Nepal was a highly unequal political society, with the locus of power centralised in Kathmandu privileging a Hindu, Pahadi (hill), Bahun and Chhetri caste, male hegemony to the exclusion of Janajatis (indigenous communities), Dalits, women and Madhesis (plains-dwellers). This centralised and exclusionary state left these 'other' groups feeling alienated from decision-making and access to resources and position. The democratic era (1990-2002) opened up spaces for voice and mobilisation around these discontents, increasing "contentious politics" in the country (Lawoti, 2007); within the spectrum of contentious politics the Maoist's conflict campaign drew on and gave an avenue for the expression of these discontents, especially using the slogan of self-determination and autonomy of indigenous nationalities to build their armies (Sharma, 2007; Gellner, 2007; Lawoti, 2007). The People's Movement of 2006 aspired for greater citizen voice and participation in politics, perceiving the unitary system as synonymous with centralisation. A clear assumption of people during this time was that federalism could bring increased voice and representation in politics in a way that the decentralisation reforms of the late 1990s had not.

A number of criteria for forming federal boundaries have featured over time in the proposals from political parties and civil society including ethnicity, regional, geographic integration and geographic distribution, economic viability, the availability of natural resources, right to self-determination, sovereignty, pattern of use of languages and the centrality of national unity.

4.1 Ethnicity-based federalism

Ethnicity has featured in a number of the proposals including those of the CPN-Maoists and CPN-United Marxist Leninist (UML) political parties and in the demands of Janajati organisations such as Nepal Federation of Indigenous Nationalities (NEFIN). These ethnic demands have cultural recognition, self-determination and social justice at their heart. NEFIN, as the collective voice of Janajati groups and their organisations, is a powerful lobby, and has been able to build on the political momentum for Janajati rights created by the Maoists conflict campaign and the rise to power of CPN-Maoists in the Constituent Assembly. This section will explore NEFIN's proposal in more detail, also outlining some of the perceived concerns with ethnicity or language as the basis of federalism, unpacking conceptually and practically the linkages between identity (and identity politics) and citizenship in Nepal.

NEFIN, as the main collective voice of the Janajati nationalities, is arguing for the state structure to be built around ethnicity, language and geographical location. The demarcation of state boundaries they suggest would give indigenous groups a natural inhabitation over which they have historical claims, based on their livelihood and cultural practices. From a historical perspective NEFIN sees seven separate states: Limbu, Rai, Thama, Magar, Tharu, Newar and Gurung. Their model does not mean the governance of one ethnicity over the others in that area, but instead it is presented as having "the unity of Nepal at its heart". They posit that other ethnicities can come together around a shared identity and can demand recognition of cultural rights but these would be without territorial claims. This arrangement would take into account these communities' interests and rights so they do not feel any kind of discrimination on the basis of caste or ethnicity.

NEFIN's proposal explicitly states that other communities' rights would be recognised, their representation in local and state decision-making bodies ensured, and their access to resources facilitated. In reality their proposal means that the current modes of governance and exercise of power would have to change particularly with regards to natural resources management. While representation and access to natural resources of other communities would be ensured, the argument seems to be for prerogative rights of dominant or 'majority' Janajati groups to specific resources based on their livelihood patterns and cultural norms. Hence in the Limbu state the Limbu communities would have prerogative rights over communal lands meaning they own and manage these resources, but they must ensure the access of other communities. The nature of the resource would vary across the states depending on the indigenous community which is in the 'majority' in that area as the cultural practices and livelihood patterns vary across Janajati communities; however the principle of prerogative rights would carry across states. The access of other communities would then be negotiated through inter-community interactions. This raises a danger associated with ethnicity-based proposals for federalism, as in Nepal the levels of ethnic, linguistic and cultural diversity are so high, including a long history of internal migration, that no state would have a significant numerical majority from one ethnic group. Nepal is a multicultural or multinational country, hence it is important that the language of federalism promotes and values difference.

There are many perceived risks associated with a federal system based on ethnicity, linguistic or cultural factors, both in the specific case of Nepal and expressed in the wider literature. At the time of the research "national integrity" was central to the Nepali Congress proposal highlighting a widely felt fear that federalism, and in particular ethno-linguistic federalism, could generate what has been called in the literature a "dynamic unravelling of the nation-state in which demands for increased autonomy lead eventually towards secession (Norris, 2005: p.11). There are fears that by drawing state boundaries along these cleavages the result will be to perpetuate them and make them more salient in the lives of citizens, risking further polarisation and divisions within the country and potentially more violence ("Balkanisation" of Nepal). It could

also cause the further marginalisation of certain states on the basis of ethnicity due to poor representation of these state structures and the diversity of populations in the federation.

In Nepal, the project of nation-building after the unification in 1768 led to the imposition of a "unified national identity" aiming to suppress the multiple group identities in the country, imposing a hegemonic Nepali identity (with its associations with 'male', 'Nepali language', 'hill' or 'Pahadi' and 'Hindu religion' subject positions). During the democratic era from 1990-2002 civil society and associational life pluralised and multiplied, and identity politics has been the vehicle of group struggles for social justice. Federalism has, for some groups, become both the means and end outcome for the expression of these struggles. The ethnicity based demands of actors such as NEFIN are essentially concerned with redressing the injustices and inequities of the current political regime, whereby citizenship has never been experienced universally or equally in Nepal, and it is widely felt that unless there are fundamental changes to politics and power, this hegemony will continue in the new Nepal. There is a strong need for pluralisation of spaces for civic engagement, both vertically with government, but also between citizens and groups, capturing a horizontal dimension of citizenship (Tandon, 2006). Habermas argued for the importance of informal, non-state public spaces where matters of public concern could be raised, shared, debated and contested by citizens (Marden, 2003). Through this type of deliberative, consensual communicative actions the different struggles to challenge the current political regime in Nepal could have greater, synergistic impacts.

Ethnicity is an important principle for identification, organisation and mobilisation in Nepal today, but it is also a contentious one. There is always a strong risk that ethnic identity politics structures people's political preferences in only one way – according to ethnicity. Such critiques of ethnicity as an organising principle of federalism have their roots in the relationship between identity and citizenship. The analysis of Mouffe and Bordieu in Section 2 together argue for the constructed nature of individual and group identities, including ethnic identities, rather than an essentialised or biological basis to ethnicity. Prior to the strict classification of groups in an ontological system during the Rana regime, the Janajati communities were fluid political and social units, not the fixed biological or naturalised classifications assumed today. While ethnicity has been one very important exclusion factor in Nepal's post-unification history, there are also other crucial ones: gender, caste-system, religion, and regional (plains-dwellers). Ethno-federal demands are unable to deal with the claims of other group struggles. Further, by institutionalising ethnicity in federalism, one subject position is essentialised and made "objective" or "real". In his historical analysis of group and individual rights in Nepal, Gellner (2001) argues that there needs to be an emphasis on both cultural and biological hybridity, recognising that people can belong to more than one ethnic, caste and religious groups, and allowing for the flexibility of group identification, and also the dynamic and evolving nature and culture of groups themselves.

A further anxiety expressed, especially among the natural resources sector, is that ethnic identity politics is driving out real and pressing concerns of poverty and economic justice. Ethnicity based federalism, particularly in the Terai (depending on how territorial 'ethnic majorities' are defined) could worsen the situation of marginalised groups such as women and Dalits, such that ethnicity-based federal proposals alone would at best not redress the discrimination faced by other marginalised groups. The preoccupation with cultural and political rights was also felt by some to be refocusing the debate away from economic redistribution and poverty eradication, and risking cooption by regional elites who are felt to be vying for position and power.

However, these arguments risk reducing demands for social justice to redistribution and class struggles only (Young, 1990; 1997). The struggles of Janajati groups and Dalit movements for group recognition and identity are concerned with challenging the status quo of Pahadi domination in Nepal and are arguably equally important compared to the class-based struggles for economic redistribution. Class is interwoven with other forms of discrimination but it is not always the most important or direct focus of group struggles. The different forms of 'capital' are so interrelated, in fact, that economic and redistributive concerns cannot be dealt with meaningfully unless inequalities in other forms capital (social, cultural, natural and human) are also addressed (Bordieu, 1986). As such the demands of Janajatis should not be seen as crowding out economic justice and claims of the poor but instead as attempts for an effective share of power in society, not just accommodation in the status quo through redistribution but that which Isin and Wood (1999) call the *politics of recognition*.

5. Analysis of "federalism debate"

The previous discussion highlights the exclusionary nature of Nepali society, both historically and currently. The Nepali state (monarchic, autocratic, and democratic alike) has been described as predatory (Bhattachan, 2000) and collusive at all levels, which is argued to perpetuate exclusion. The dual concepts of citizenship and nationalism have been used as instruments of dominance and homogenisation in the country. As such the demands of different marginalised groups represent calls for recognition of difference, both through the expansion of citizenship rights and hence inclusion in the current system, and also for some groups through the radical restructuring of the current system of how power is held and exercised. The very diversity of Nepal, and the divergent interests and demands makes the current situation highly complex. Across these demands is a thread of continuity, demanding more equitable and effective sharing of power, wrestling it away from central elites.

This section will explore how the rhetoric of federalism does or does not reflect these demands for sharing power, both in terms of devolution of power from the centre to the local, and in terms of how the debate on federalism addresses issues of equity and inclusion. These are two central

dimensions against which the ultimate federal settlement will be judged in the future to understand if it has meaningfully altered the political culture in Nepal.

5.1 Devolution

There is a long history of decentralisation efforts in Nepal however the real devolution of power and strengthening of institutional structures was not successfully pursued by the government, including during the last 12 years of democracy in Nepal (1990-2002) (Gurung, 2003; Sharma, 2007). The perceived failure of decentralisation reforms in Nepal with power remaining highly concentrated in the central bureaucracy left marginalised groups such as women, Dalits and Janajatis feeling alienated from decision making and access to resources and position, and meant that decentralisation lost its currency with the public. This created the environment of deep discontent with centralised governance, providing a platform the Maoists' conflict campaign could use to build their armies, changing the slogan from decentralisation to one of self-determination and autonomy of indigenous nationalities (federalism).

Furthermore, there are currently no elected representatives at the local level as the elected body was not renewed in 2002 when local elections were called off due to the conflict. Now instead of the elected body there is one Village Development Council (VDC) Secretary, a Health Officer and Agriculture Officer comprise the VDC. In addition VDC and District Development Committee (DDC) structures are using an All Party Mechanism with representation from all major parties, to make decisions, institutionalising political party involvement in decision making particularly of resource allocation. Also youth party leagues are causing conflicts at the village level, creating a situation of violence, corruption and abuse of resources. It is within this context that discussions of devolving power are taking place and the large amount of funding support to the local government level is planned in the Local Governance and Community Development Programme (LGCDP), a multi-donor basket fund.

Arguably there is no reason particularly that federalism equates to devolution of powers and autonomy to the local level. A number of different stakeholders interviewed felt that regional elites are advocating for federalism because it would create additional political positions and power. There would be a new cadre of elites at the state level, with the ability to consolidate power and resources for themselves. The fear is that strengthening local government has gone off the agenda and that political leaders are now no longer willing to give more power, officials, and financial resources to the local level. There was a perception among interviewees that regional elites are pushing for more rights at the state level to the detriment of local government and of communities, which will have a negative impact on local governance institutions such as community forest user groups (CFUGs) of the community forestry model.

The demands of NEFIN and the Madhesi parties are arguably attempts to prevent the cooption of the federal system by current power-holders; hence both groups aim to force a change in the status quo. Any compromise is seen as a way for the Pahadi domination to find ways to continue.

However of equal concern among the natural resources sector regarding the group struggles of Janajatis and the Madhesis, which are both finding strong voice in defining the political narrative, is that these groups' elites are also positioning for power at the regional level. There is always a danger that by delegating power to 'representatives' group formation could result in 'leaders' turning oppressive power on the group, rather than advancing the legitimate claims of its members.

As such, the natural resources sector, as part of a broader coalition (also including actors such as ADDCN[1]), is arguing for devolution of power to the local level though there is some disagreement on which actors to empower: local government or community institutions. Some actors have argued for the need for a strong role for local government in support of communities' interests, and also as a counterbalance to State power in the federal system. Community Self-Reliance Centre (CSRC) and the Land Rights Coalition are arguing for the need for VDCs to take a leading role in land reform, mapping land ownership and usage to reduce the prevalence of absentee landlords, and the abuse of tenants and violation of their rights. They argue that VDCs are close enough to the reality on the ground yet also sufficiently autonomous (at least structurally) to be able to make judgements of households' access, ownership and usage. This type of role would require a strong local government. However there are fears and assertions among civil society that federalism may lead to the elimination of one of the tiers of local government perhaps the district level, as four layers may be perceived as too many in a geographically small country such as Nepal.

A critical demand from some in the natural resources sector is to enshrine community rights and roles in the Constitution. Community institutions have gained prominence in Nepal due to the success of the community forestry model, both in terms of conservation of forests and community development. The fear of some civil society actors is that gains that have been made over the last 17 years since the Community Forestry Act (1993) in terms of community access, control and benefit sharing from forest resources could be retracted by regional elites in a federal system. As such they are demanding that natural resources management (NRM) is not delegated to the state level, and that community forestry rights and roles are applied universally across the country. FECOFUN articulates this as "the sovereignty of community rights" in forestry, which could be argued both in terms of communities' independent decision making and management within a specific territory, and also in terms of communities as a recognised tier of governance in the federal structure. Enshrining community rights in NRM equates to the re-conceptualisation of group rights and roles in society, recognising the important role that CFUGs have played as often the only functioning grassroots institution even through the conflict period. The history and evolution of these grassroots institutions are important to understand both in term of devolution and equity concerns.

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[1] ADDCN is the Association of District Development Committees Nepal

The Community Forestry Act of 1993 was passed in response to the difficulties of local and central government in policing and protecting national forests. Through this Act community forestry user groups (CFUGs) were given user rights making them autonomous from government control. Now there are 15,000 CFUGs managing 1.25 million hectares (25% of Nepal's forests). Nearly all the rural population is involved somehow in community forestry, deepening democratic practices and culture at the grassroots. However the relationship with the state is not so simple, and CFUGs often face political interference and obstacles from bureaucrats and political elites alike. Legally the CFUGs have autonomous user and even management rights to the community forests, however in practice this can be very different, with the Forest Department creating many hurdles. Further land ownership has remained with the government, such that the community can use forest products but cannot "use" the land, such as the mineral resources. The lack of land tenure makes the situation very difficult as the government can appropriate the land without consultation with communities or compensating them. This has been seen with the construction of military camps and hydropower plans on community forestry land, rolling back community user rights in this model. In theory community rights could be rolled back by the state at any point as the model is based on a legal framework rather than on immutable constitutional rights. This makes it easier to rewrite or to ignore than if these rights were articulated in the Constitution. Political parties' interference in the operation of CFUGs is also common, attempting to mobilise and politicise the user groups, even attempting to change the composition of CFUG leadership bodies.

While the community forestry model has been very successful from a conservation perspective and also in terms of community development, as user groups have been able to mobilise large quantities of money for local development activities, there are still important challenges to the equity of management and inclusivity of decision making of CFUGs. Many of those interviewed described the problems of internal equity with the exclusion of Dalits and women. When the Forestry Sector Master Plan was developed in the 1980s it envisioned one-third representation of women in community forestry. This was not applied in the beginning and then only applied tokenistically. Women were not given decision making responsibilities. However the recent Community Forestry Guidelines make special reference that fifty percent of CFUGs' membership and one of the main positions (Chairman, Secretary or Treasurer) should be women. There has been a perceived improvement in equity in CFUGs, particularly around the inclusivity of decision making, and also greater equity in benefit sharing, however the benefit flow to poorer households is still somewhat less than it should be. A report on gender equity in the management of buffer zones has argued that women are excluded from policies, programmes and resource management institutions, concluding that the conservation model underpinning community forestry in Nepal has separated nature from culture so that women are not considered as essential actors and custodians in conservation (Forest Action, 2009).

Equity and inclusivity of community forestry has its roots in historical justice issues with the introduction and evolution of the community forestry model. Initially it was people with political connections and the elites of the villages who formed groups and benefited. Many people relied

on forests and on forest products, particularly the Janajatis whose cultural heritage and livelihoods are intertwined with natural resources; and also other groups such as Dalits who use timber to make charcoal, however they and also women were excluded from participation and decision making in CFUGs. Subsequently attempts have been made to open up membership and participation within CFUGs, with some degree of success as mentioned above, but it is clear that their original formation privileged elite males to the detriment of other groups. Janajati interlocutors believe that indigenous knowledge and practices which were applied earlier were ignored and lost due to the nationalisation of natural resources and the introduction of a universal model for their management (Bhattachan, 2000). As a result Janajatis have had to change their livelihoods and cultural practices as their customary rights have not been recognised. Even though now the rights of Janajatis are recognised in CFUGs (accommodating them into the existing system), their demands reflect the need to restructure access and ownership centred on the recognition of their cultural rights and practices.

This case illustrates the fact that communities are not homogeneous and that enshrining community institutions' rights and roles could further exclude marginalised groups in the absence of certain conditions to ensure their active participation. Additionally, some of the experiences from community forestry have been exported to other sectors and other types of institutions; but they are generally less successful than community forestry. This is largely because these other sectors are reliant on central government agencies for resources, which tend to be less reliable than the livelihood potential of forests. Further, the exportability of this model to other natural resources depends on the size of the resource. As size of the resources increase such as watersheds, community level management becomes unfeasible and hence meso-level institutional arrangements are required. Institutional arrangements under a federal system particularly regarding natural resources need to take account of integrating upstream and downstream communities through innovations such as the Payment of Environmental Services whereby benefits and loss sharing across regions can be facilitated.

There are some important institutional facts regarding devolution especially in a federal system. Whether the state promotes a territorial or socio-political federal system, devolution of powers needs to be done in a way that enhances economic efficiency of state responsiveness to citizens. If economies of scale are essential to the delivery of services then higher levels of government should retain responsibility, however if there is a high level of heterogeneity across states and localities these responsibilities should be devolved to lower levels of state. There is the additional question of the types of powers devolved and the actors who benefit from devolution of powers (Agarwal and Ribot, 1999). Powers can be understood in terms of legislative, judiciary, and executive, and the level of devolution of powers relates to the autonomy of the state to define its own agenda and raise resources to deliver on this.

Devolving power and authority to the lowest appropriate level (the principle of subsidiarity) is argued to improve efficiency of service delivery and state responsiveness and accountability,

however devolution particularly in a federal state where autonomy is a fundamental principle still requires a strong central government which is able to mediate interregional conflicts and inequities. It is essential that the federal system promotes cooperation and coordination across state boundaries avoiding conflictive relationships that exist in some federal countries. Cooperative mechanisms need to include policy matters, implementation of programmes, environmental issues, and resource issues, to name a few. Equalisation is another important role of the central government, allowing redistribution of resources across states to rectify any disadvantage in state resource or economic endowment. Self-determination of federal states needs to be balanced with a central structure with adequate power to manage both the coordination and equalisation functions required for state efficiency, effectiveness and importantly legitimacy. However there is a push-back in public debates on central government powers, relating to the historical centralising tendency of the Nepali state, and also to the perception of high levels of corruption and hoarding of national resources at this level.

5.2 Equity and inclusion

There are high levels of inequality and a long history of exclusion on the basis of ethnicity, caste, religion and gender. In many parts of the country feudal and classical social relations persist. This can be seen in the inequitable access to the benefits of community forestry. Historically, land and forests were used as incentives for the mobilisation of the army, particularly under the Rana regime. During this period land was taken by ruling classes as their private property and distributed to their henchmen and kin, buying allegiance and support, but also damaging productivity and creating high levels of inequality in land ownership. In the same way access to forests was also limited, affecting the livelihoods and cultural heritage of many groups. The inequity in ownership and access of different forms of capital (economic, natural, cultural, social and human) are mutually reinforcing

There is great inequality in the experience of citizenship across groups in Nepal, seen as both a status (legalistic definition) and as a practice (sociological definition). In the past accessing citizenship rights has been intrinsically tied up with land ownership, whereby people needed land to get a citizenship card, and also they needed a citizenship card to get land (Pradhan and Shrestha, 2005). Furthermore, tenants are able to claims their tenancy rights when holding a citizenship card, however due to information asymmetries many are unaware of this. There is also an important gendered experience of citizenship, such that previously women could only get citizenship cards if their husband or father permitted, however now they can get citizenship cards if three neighbours also recommend this, firmly grounding their dependence on others for access to citizenship rights. Additionally, the existing legal framework denies women the right to pass citizenship status to their children. These are fundamental rights that the constitution must address.

There is inequality in citizenship as a 'status' and there are also barriers to citizenship as a practice based on power imbalances. Inequities in society have been replicated in formal systems limiting voice of marginalised groups and their access to decision-makers. A recent study on the composition of the administrative services[2] has shown that there is under-representation of women, Dalits and indigenous people in the government administration, and also within political parties. These are obviously the main formal power-holders in Nepal, and the locus of political decisions being made. The exclusionary nature of the Government of Nepal bureaucracy and also particularly the political parties can cause alienation from the mainstream, with no access to these positions.

The Dalit NGO Federation (DNF), formed to conduct grounded advocacy promoting Dalit rights in Nepal, has consistently demanded that government budgets make special provisions for Dalit programmes. While political leaders have often been very supportive verbally, this has not translated into meaningful policy and budgetary changes, and where special programmes have been approved such as the tenth five-year plan or the recent three-year plan, these provisions have not been implemented. Evidence of this is the fact that while Dalits comprise approximately 13 percent of Nepal's population, and are one of the most excluded and socially, politically and economically disadvantaged groups, they have received only about 0.02 percent of the last budget for special programmes. Further, there is a provision that each VDC, the lowest level of government, should spend a certain proportion of their resources on Dalit communities, this is rarely realised. Information asymmetries prevail at the local level with dalit citizens largely unaware of their entitlements and are therefore unable to mobilise successfully to raise demands. These types of information asymmetries represent a fundamental barrier to the achievement of equal citizenship in the long run.

6. Concluding remarks: implications of the federal system

This paper has presented some important dimensions and issues emerging from the positions on federalism across civil and political society, and the analysis presented in this paper on the interaction between identity and citizenship and the implications of federalism for inclusive governance.

6.1 Bringing in diverse voices

A critical challenge facing the new Nepal is the need to bring together the divergent demands of society, recognising and respecting diversity and difference while maintaining unity in the

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[2] Report from IIDS Nepal on "Engendering Nepalese administrative services"

country. Federalism has been proffered by strong voices in the society as a solution to the collusive and predatory nature of centralised governance in Nepal. However there are risks still that it will serve only the interests of current power-holders or a small minority of the groups making such demands. It will not provide a catch all solution to the oppression and marginalisation suffered by many in the country, and will not necessarily guarantee a deepening of democratic space and a more substantive experience of citizenship for "minority" groups.

6.2 Fluid and multi-layered identities

It has been argued in this paper that the demands for an ethno-linguistic federalism coming from indigenous nationalities must be understood under the rubric of identity politics. However there is a risk inherent in this type of ethnicity-based identity politics which serves to essentialise cultural identity, making claims to a biological or natural determinedness. However identity must instead be understood as fluid and multilayered, and a matter of individual choice and identification. In this way an individual can belong to more than one such identity group, in what Gellner argues for a "hybridity" both biologically and culturally in identity (Gellner, 2001: p194). These multiple identities that constitute the individual affect their experience of equity and inclusion, and hence of citizenship, both as a status and as a practice.

Group struggles in Nepal, as elsewhere in history, represent claims for the extension and reordering of what citizenship means in the country, reshaping the rights domain to reflect the particular realities they are faced with. These struggles are also very explicitly not about being accommodated into the current system of power, but instead presenting strong demands for the political culture to change. The political system now needs to respond to these group struggles for social justice, not just extending the current system to accommodate these groups, but instead radically changing the norms, structures and relations of public governance, deepening democracy and promoting more substantive and deep notions of citizenship.

"Democracy" as a way of organising or structuring the state has become very narrowly identified with territorial-based competitive elections of representative liberal democracies. However this representative democracy is not felt to be well suited to the complex social and political realities and demands of a heterogeneous or plural society, leading to a crisis in the legitimacy of democracy (Shankland, 2006; Gaventa, 2006). This crisis is the product of the *form* of representative democracy leaving many on the outside of power feeling alienated and disenfranchised (Fung and Wright, 1999). Deepening democracy and the experiences of citizenship will result in new social and political spaces, subjectivities and identities and incorporating marginalised groups' voices into political culture (Baocchi, 2001; Heller, 2001).

6.3 Empowered local governance

A key demand from civil society is that the political narrative in Nepal needs to broaden out the federal system beyond the power-sharing arrangement to both the recognition of the rights of communities and also the representation and participation of citizens. Therefore meaningful devolution captures the demands of decentralisation advocates for empowered local government, the interests of the natural resources lobby for the articulation of community rights and responsibilities as a layer of the federal state, and also the creation of an inclusive political settlement which ensures the representation and participation of marginalised communities and citizens. Specific measures such as proportional representation and reservations in federal and local government of positions for marginalised groups are essential, seeing a replication of advancements made at the national level in lower levels of government. The constitution will articulate the roles and responsibilities of different levels and organs of the state. The local, state, and federal spheres of governance should be constructed bottom-up on the basis of the principle of subsidiarity. Applying the principle of subsidiarity from the bottom up can reposition the rights and roles of citizens, communities, and different levels of state government, allowing the inclusion of the community into the governance of the public sphere.

6.4 Substantive notions of citizenship and democracy

However, as the experience of community forestry has shown, communities are not homogeneous entities, and there is a risk that elites and dominant individuals can co-opt groups to serve their own purposes. This argument has been levied at the various groups demanding ethnic-based federalism, arguing that regional elites are vying for new positions of power. In order to promote greater accountability in relationships between state and citizen it is also necessary to have greater accountability in relationships between citizens in society (O'Neill, Foresti and Hudson, 2007). Therefore a more substantive conception of citizenship, beyond it simply as a legal-juridical status, but as a practice, stresses that "the relationship between citizens is at least as important as the more traditional 'vertical' view of citizenship as the relationship between state and the individual" (Kabeer, 2005: p23). How citizens relate to one another and whether these relationships are based on justice and accountability could facilitate or undermine the aspiration that the federal system results in a more inclusive Nepal.

An important conclusion of this paper is that it is essential to invest in a Habermassian concept of "consensual communicative roles" (Marden, 2003) within the civic sphere, pluralising the spaces for civic engagement. The idea of civic engagement is promoted in this paper for two reasons. Firstly it would create a deliberative and consensual space within civil society where different interest groups can meet and reach consensus. Secondly this type of space can empower marginalised people to participate, express their voice and ideas confidently and form new political subjectivities and identities. Fraser (1992) argues that marginalised groups may

find greater opportunity for exercising voice through creating their own spaces. Mansbridge (2000) argues that these spaces can enable marginalised groups to build positions, construct a politics of engagement and gain greater legitimacy to voice demands within participatory spaces. Hence critical to the promotion of deeper notions of citizenship and democracy is the need for more empowered citizens, particularly from marginalised groups, who have the capabilities and opportunities to participate, enabling negotiation between citizens from different backgrounds and identities; and in turn facilitating meaningful negotiation between state and citizens.

In conclusion the federalism settlement designed in Nepal will need to negotiate these murky waters, balancing the various interest group politics. The recognition of group rights must not essentialise group traits, solidifying what are fluid political and social realities. However the upsurge in identity politics through which ethnic-based demands are gaining much political currency, reflect the attempts of marginalised groups for social justice and access to cultural, economic, political and social power such that they can also influence and change the rules of the game. A challenge for civil society is to maintain civility, and not crowd out the legitimate demands of other marginalised groups by emphasising only their own concerns. Finding linkages between the Janajati groups' struggles for cultural power are inherently linked to the social, economic, and political group struggles of Dalits. Helping these diverse interests support each other's demands would pose the fundamental challenge to the continued hegemony of current power-holders. This type of substantive and consensual citizenship and democracy is needed in all spheres (government, civil society, political society) and levels (local, regional, national) of governance.

Annex A: List of interviewees

Name	Organisation
Mr Ghanashyam Pandey	Federation of Community Forestry Users Nepal (FECOFUN)
Ms Kamala Sharma, Bhagwanti Nepal, Rama Ale Magar, Gita Bohora	The Himalayan Grassroots Women's Natural Resources Management Association (HIMAWANTI)
Mr Peter Brany	Livelihood and Forestry Programme
Mr Jagat Basnet	Community Self-Reliance Centre (CSRC)
Dr Hikmat Bista	
Mr. Krishna Prasad Jaisi	Association of District Development Committees Nepal (ADDCN)
Mr. Hem Raj Lamichhane	
Naya Sharma (Forest Action); Ghanashyam Pandey (FECOFUN), Kamala Sharma (HIMAWANTI), Jagat Basnet (CSRC), National Land Rights Forum, NR Network, Federation of Drinking Water and Sanitation	National Confederation of NRM Networks
Mr Tirtha Bishwakarma	The Dalit NGO Federation (DNF)
Mr Om Gurung	Nepal Federation of Indigenous Nationalities (NEFIN)
Ms Sapna Malla	Constituent Assembly Member and Forum for Women, Law and Development
Mr Pashang Sherpa	Constituent Assembly Member and NEFIN
Mr Naya Sharma	Forest Action

Professor Dwarika Nath Dhungal	Institute for Integrated Development Studies (IIDS)
FECOFUN Banke District Office	
Focus Group Discussion	Women Advocacy Forum Banke District
Mr Tribhuvan Paudel, Mr Maksha Ram Maharjan	CARE Nepal

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