

The Challenges of Localizing the Sustainable Development Goals in Gender Equality in Nepal

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Abstract This research entitled 'The challenges of localizing the Sustainable Development Goals in Gender Equality in Nepal' is an attempt to find out the key challenges of localizing SDG in gender equality. The research was descriptive method conducted through KIIs with provincial ministries and Offices, local governments and civil society organizations in Lumbini Province. This study was limited to 18 participants. The descriptive method was conducted through KIIs for exploring the key challenges of localizing gender equality and how to overcome those challenges. It was found that major challenges of localizing gender equality were data gaps to set baseline at province and local levels. The gender disaggregation isn't properly managed in planning, budgeting, monitoring and reporting systems. The gender equality is not mainstreamed in all SDGs indicators and targets as integrated inclusive indicators and targets with adequate resources. Therefore, the provincial and local governments should focus on data management and integration in planning, budgeting, monitoring with adequate resources. This article suggests some of the possible alternatives to overcome those challenges with the authors' experience.

Keywords: *descriptive, disaggregation, integrated, mainstreamed*

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1. Introduction

This chapter includes background of the study. It also consists of statement of the problems, objectives of the study, research questions, and significance of the study. The Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) for the sustainable development, the 2030 agenda has generated for the social, economic and environmental development as integrated demand of global society. The SDGs were developed by the UN Open Working Group on Sustainable Development between March 14, 2013 to July 19, 2014. The post-2015 intergovernmental negotiations (January 19 to August 2, 2015) took over the SDGs with minor changes. The SDGs became an integral part of the 2030 Agenda, but it is important to keep in mind that the SDGs are just one of the 2030 Agenda chapters, among the Preamble, Declaration, Sustainable Development Goals and targets, Means of implementation and the Global Partnership, Follow-up and Review. The social, economic and environmental development are inter-related and there is need for integrated solution. The good governance practice and system is needed for the integrated development of the society. The sustainable Development has been a global agenda from the last 25 years. The United Nations has set foundation for Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) to be achieved by 2030. Before it the Millennium Development Goals

(MDGs) were from 2001-2015. The UN conference held in Rio de Janeiro on SDGs in June 2012, later United Nations General Assembly (UNGA) held in September 2014 and prepared a solid foundation for the SDGs in the UNGA. Nepal is a part of this initiative as the member country of the UN. The sustainable development continues to build the Nepal's socio-economic development.

The Nepal's effort to implement the MDGs had also opened a new avenue for the effective implementation of SDGs for 2016-2030. United Nations Open Working Group (UNOWG) has agreed with proposed 179 target and 17 goals for 2016-2020 including sustainable development agendas and issues. The SDG was born in 2016 and become an international common development goals for planet, people, peace and prosperity. There are 230 indicators to measure the progress of SDGs. The world had owned Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) from 2001-2015 before SDGs. The most of the targets are achieved because of designed with timeframe, quantitative and measurable. At the end of the MDGs period, the world couldn't reach to different areas of development. The SDGs are designed to address the complex areas such as injustice and human rights. The SDGs are designed with high ambition.

The GoN is in transition to federalism system. The Nepal's constitution 2072 has taken as base of Federal Governance System for balance social and economic development of the nation. The major political objective of federal governance system is to make the citizens closer

to government, increase the quality of development and citizens and civil society organizations meaningful participation, quality public service delivery in a development. There is expectation for availability of all public services with accountability and transparency at federal, provincial and local governments. The Nepal's constitution is based on SDGs principles. The SDGs are taken under the constitution as right such as basic and secondary quality education, equitable and inclusive quality education and lifelong learning opportunities to all, basic health services, pure drinking water and sanitation, food and food security and bio-energy, gender equality and inclusive society. These all are the base of SDGs. The most of those are constitutional right of provincial and local governments and some of responsibilities are taken as common for federal, provincial and local governments. There is needed to develop plan in three level of government for the real and effective implementation of the SDGs. The three level of government; federal, provincial and local governments, different stakeholders have to work in close coordination, cooperation and collaborative way and SDGs localization is must for it.

The Province Government, Lumbini Province has developed a first five years periodic plan. The planned goals and priorities are designed to achieve for the global community by 2030. The province government has developed the policy and strategies as the Government of Nepal has committed at international level to achieve. The province government, Lumbini Province has taken steps for formal planning process for SDGs localization and mainstreaming. The province government has established the baseline of SDGs though most of the information and data are not available to determine the targets. The higher-level policy formulation agency of Nepal; National Planning Commission has prepared two important report related to SDGs. They are (a) Status of SDGs and Direction 2016-2030, and (b) Need, Expenditure and Financial Strategy of SDGs in Nepal. The both reports are developed by national emphasis where is realized the provincial and local governments roles and responsibilities for SDGs localization and ownership under federalism governance system. The both reports reflects the need to handover the financial authority to provincial and local governments, citizens and civil society organizations participation, engagement should be focused and 'leave no one behind'. The GoN can achieve the SDGs through coordination, cooperation, collaboration and joint monitoring at local-level on the leadership of provincial and local governments. Thus, SDGs localization is must to success towards the international commitment regarding the sustainable development of the nation.

The province government, Lumbini Province has already prepared the baseline report of SDGs that is must to understand the context and status of the province regarding the SDGs. The province government has prepared this report by working jointly with Province Planning Commission and UNDP. The total geographical area of Lumbini Province is 22288 square kilometers, 15.1 percentage of total area of Nepal. Likewise, Gandaki province is adjoining in east and north, Karnali province in north, Sudurpaschim is in west and India is in south. The total population of the province is 4499272 which is 17 percentage of the total population of Nepal. Here are

twelve districts, 4 Sub-Metropolitan City, 32 Municipalities and 73 Rural Municipalities. According to National Population Censuses 2011, the total male population is 2140316 (47.6%) and total female population is 2358956 (52.4%) in Lumbini Province. Likewise, the literacy rate above five years population is 66.4 percentage (58.33% female literacy rate and 75.50% male literacy rate). The human development index is 0.461 in Lumbini Province. The major languages of this province are Nepali, Tharu, Bhojpuri and Awadhi. Here is a high possibility of the development on the aspect of geography, industry development and international trade, national and international tourism development, big rivers are here for irrigation in agriculture.

In SDGs, there are number of targets, indicators for gender equality. The target 5.2: Eliminate all forms of violence against all women and girls in the public and private spheres, including trafficking and sexual and other types of exploitation has indicator 5.2.2: Proportion of ever-partnered women and girls aged 15 years and older subjected to physical, sexual or psychological violence by a current or former intimate partner in the previous 12 months, by form of violence and by age is 6.9 at national level and 8.3 in Lumbini Province.

Thus, Target 5.4: Recognize and value unpaid care and domestic work through the provision of public services, infrastructure and social protection policies and the promotion of shared responsibility within the household and the family as nationally appropriate has indicator 5.4.1: Percentage of time spent on unpaid domestic and care work, by sex, age and location and divided into two groups; Percentage of time spent on domestic and care work by male that is 10.2 at national-level and 9.9 at province-level and Percentage of time spent on domestic and care work by female is 21.9 at national and 19.7 at province. The target 5.6: Ensure universal access to sexual and reproductive health and reproductive rights as agreed in accordance with the Programme of Action of the International Conference on Population and Development and the Beijing Platform for Action and the outcome documents of their review conferences has Indicator 5.6.1: Proportion of women aged 15-49 years who make their own informed decisions regarding sexual relations, contraceptive use and reproductive health care that is 19 at national and 20.3 at province. This can specify through sub-indicator under 5.a. share of women among owners or rights bearers of agricultural land, type of tenure that's status 22.2 at national-level and 21.6 in Lumbini Province and share of women among owners or rights bearers of home and property is 11.7 at national-level and 11.8 in Lumbini Province. Similarly, sub-indicator under 5.b. Proportion of female (15-49 years) who own a mobile telephone is 72.6 at national-level and 69.7 at province. The proportion of male (15-49 years) who own a mobile telephone is 89.3 at national-level and 88.7 in Lumbini Province [1].

There are some of the key challenges to achieve the SDGs and sustainable development of Lumbini Province such as poor data availability and data management, financial/budget/resources gap, gap in capacitated human resources, poor proper vertical and horizontal coordination, poor governance, gender discrimination, and risk of natural disaster. The province government has prioritized

to work for stopping discrimination to women, adolescent and girls. The gender-based violence should be stopped in public and private places in different way. There are some of the traditions that results discrimination, violence, abuse, harassment, violence cases in different ethnic communities as well as everywhere in Lumbini Province. The women have less education, employment, information and opportunities for self-enhancement at home and society. Likewise, young women and girls are at a high risk on the aspect of drop out of school before completion of primary and secondary education, women have lower access in education, property, social security, freedom, health services, public services and decision-making process in different areas. Women in Nepal still have been facing a challenge without support of the father, leaving single mother with a huge disadvantage. The provincial and local governments (PLGs), and other organizations have to know the current status and key challenges facing in localizing the SDGs focused on SDG-5: Gender Equality in Lumbini Province. The needs of women and girls should have attention on the same way as the needs of men and boy to achieve the SDGs. So, the study was conducted to find the key challenges of localizing SDGs focusing on Gender Equality in Lumbini Province.

The major objective of this study is to identify the major challenges of localizing the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) focused on SDG 5: Gender Equality in Lumbini Province.

The research question of this study is given below:

What are the key challenges of Gender Equality in Lumbini Province, Nepal?

This study highlights the key challenges of localizing SDGs in Lumbini Province. The GoN (Federal, Provincial and Local Governments) including development partners, civil society organizations have been working to localize SDGs at national, provincial and local levels. The study will be fruitful to the government of Nepal, institutions that have been working for SDG localization; gender equality. It will be benefitted to those who involved to achieve the SDGs in Nepal and will show the present context of Nepal and Lumbini Province on gender equality. This research will provide some insight on SDGs localizing and gender equality may give some important guideline to the researchers whose subject of study related to this area.

It deals with the reviews the theoretical literature, as well as empirical literature and discusses the implications of the review for the study and conceptual framework. One of the essential preliminary tasks for undertaking a research study is to go through the existing literature in order to acquaint with the available body of knowledge of interest. Related books by different authors and articles, previous research works such as dissertations, thesis, and reports have been consulted in this study. It has been divided into the following two sections.

Examining the literature is never ending task but we have limited time, it is important to set parameters by reviewing the literature in relation to some main themes pertinent to our research topic. Research must be based on the past knowledge and study. There should be continuity in research by linking the past knowledge to the present study. Literature reviews the previous researches done in the field of Challenges of Sustainable Development Goals

(SDGs) in Gender Equality in Nepal. The purpose of the literature review is to find out what research studies have been done in the chosen field and what more has to be done.

1.1. Introduction of Sustainable Development Goals and Its Localization

The sustainable Development has been a global agenda from the last 25 years. The United Nations has set foundation for Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) to be achieved by 2030. Before it the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) were from 2001-2015. The UN conference held in Rio de Janeiro on SDGs in June 2012, later United Nations (UN) General Assembly (UNGA) held in September 2014 and prepared a solid foundation for the SDGs in the UNGA. Nepal is a part of this initiative as the member country of the UN. The sustainable development continues to build the Nepal's socio-economic development. The Nepal's effort to implement the MDGs had also opened a new avenue for the effective implementation of SDGs for 2016-2030 [2].

The SDGs are designed to do progress for a better and sustainable future for world. The main objective of SDGs was to develop the universal goals to meet the economic, political and environmental challenges that have been facing by world. They replaced the MDGs. A long time 15 years, MDGs work in different a very important areas such as reduce poverty, access to education, water and sanitation, nutrition, health, agriculture and drastic improvement of maternal health, and treatable disease [2].

The Sustainable Development Goals are as the Global Goals that were adopted by United Nations member states in 2015 to work to end poverty, ensure all people enjoy with peace and prosperity and to protect the planet by 2030. All those goals address the challenges faced at globally related to climate change, environment, inequality, poverty, peace and justice. There are 17 SDGs and all are integrated, those SDGs are recognized for actions are interconnected to contribute each-other outcomes and development should be balanced on the aspect of social, economic and environment sustainability. Through those SDGs focuses to Leave No One Behind, for this the countries have committed to prioritize to them and achieve them all by 2030. Thus, SDGs are designed to bring life-changing; zero poverty, no hunger and no discrimination against girls and women [2].

The five pillars (5P) of SDGs are given below: [3].

1. Planet: protect our planet's natural resources and climate
2. People: end poverty and hunger in all forms and ensure dignity and equality
3. Partnership: implement the agendas through a solid global partnership
4. Peace: peaceful, just and inclusive societies
5. Prosperity: ensure prosperous and fulfilling lives in harmony with nature

Nepal has gained valuable experiences and lessons from the achievement of MDGs that will support to achieve the SDGs. The UN member countries need to go the last mile to end hunger, ensure gender equality, improvement of health services and ensure equitable and inclusive quality education and lifelong learning

opportunities to all. The SDGs are commitment towards the development to achieve what started and there should be tackled some of the more challenges that have been facing the world. The SDGs is one of the chances to improve the life for future generation through managing natural resources, ensure gender equality, better health services, peace and justice, inclusive societies. All these supports to reduce inequalities and support for economic prosper. The SDGs try to cover all those issues that affect to all of us. They are committed at international level to end poverty everywhere and permanently. There is ambition to make sure no one is left behind. The Nepal has been working to achieve the SDGs where require the partnership with government, United Nations (UN) agencies, International Non-Government Organizations (I/NGOs), Civil Society Organizations (CSOs), private sector, citizens to make sure that planet is better for future generations [2].

In total, 17 SDGs, they are no poverty, zero hunger, good health and well-being, quality education, gender equality, clean water and sanitation, affordable and clean energy, decent work and economic growth, industry, innovation, and infrastructure, reducing inequality, sustainable cities and communities, responsible cities and communities, responsible consumption and production, climate action, life below water, life on land, peace, justice, and strong institutions, and last one is partnership for the goals. All these SDGs are interlinked each-other and contribute to outcomes interconnected way. Each SDG has a list of targets along with measurable indicators. There are 169 targets and 232 indicators [4].

The SDGs localization refers to the process of adapting, implementing and monitoring the SDGs at the local-level and sub-national level. For the localization of SDGs in Nepal through how local and provincial governments can support the achievement of the SDGs at national level by means of action carried out from the bottom-up and how the SDGs can provide a framework for local development policy. The SDGs localization should be real in communities, households and individuals focus to who are at risk of behind. Then take account to achieve 2030 agendas [2].

1.2. Gender Equality and Its Challenges in Localization

The SDGs are very ambitious set goals and challenging too to achieve. There are needed a huge financial and human resources for the achievement within 10.5 years from now. They are interlinked each-other, the achievement of one goal has implication to the achievement other goals that are set by the Government of Nepal (GoN). There is needed budget audit at provincial and local governments, Gender Equality and Social Inclusion (GESI) mainstreaming, GESI audit at provincial and local governments, periodic plan at provincial and local level focusing gender equality on the aspect of SDGs localization with more focus on SDG 5: Gender Equality. Here is developed SDGs baseline report by Province Planning Commission, Lumbini Province, Butwal, Nepal with support of UNDP.

Gender Equality is a foundation for sustainable, peaceful and prosperous world. For the sustainable

economic development, benefit societies, need to provide women and girls with equal access to health services, decent work, education, representation in politics and economic decision-making processes. As per record the 143 countries guaranteed equality between girl and boy, women and men in their constitutions. Gender Equality refers a wage discrimination for the similar work, physical and sexual violence and harassment harmful practices i.e., early/child/forced marriage and other traditions (KC, 2020). The GoN has targeted to increase seat held by women in the national parliament to 40 percentage for increasing women' proportion in the decision making of public service. There is needed enforceable legislation to achieve gender equality that promotes empowerment of all girls and women, need to provide opportunity for secondary education for all girls. The girls should be viewed as agents of change not as beneficiaries of change. It is a very crucial to engage girls and women in implementation of the SDGs [5].

The economic growth of Nepal has averaged four percentage since last decade. Likewise, poverty is 25 percentage in 2010 that decreased from 42 percentage in 1995 and it has decreased to 23.8 percentage in 2015. There are high disparities in poverty rate by social groups, gender and geographical areas [6].

According to the Nepal Living Standards Survey [7], Nepal has a lower literacy of adult, only 56.6 percentage. The male literacy rate is 71.5 percentage and female literacy rate is only 44.5 percentage, here is pointing that a huge disparity between the two genders. The National Census (2011) states that the literacy rates of women and men in Nepal is differ by 17.7 percentage. It reflects that women have less education, employment, information and opportunities for self-enhancement at home and society. Likewise, young women and girls are at a high risk on the aspect of drop out of school before completion of primary and secondary education [8]. The report on the Socio-Economic Status of Women in Nepal by National Women's Commission shows evidences that women have lower access in education, property, social security, freedom, health services, public services and decision-making process in different areas. Women in Nepal still have been facing a challenge without support of the father, leaving single mother with a huge disadvantage [9].

There are some of the challenges to localize the SDGs such as poor data availability and management, financial gap; resources/budget, poor coordination between federal, provincial and local governments; vertical and horizontal coordination, not fully trained capacitated human resource and poor governance and natural disaster. The GoN, the Non-Government organizations (NGOs), INGOs, cooperatives, CSOs, private sectors, community sectors can support by financing some of the SDGs through resource mobilization at provincial, local and community level. The provincial and local governments are still developing various policy, act and regulation regarding gender equality and social inclusion, gender mainstreaming guideline, GESI audit guideline, SDGs localization, poverty reduction. There is needed technical assistance to make gender sensitive and responsive policy, act and regulation. The program planning, budgeting, implementation, monitoring, evaluation and reporting should be gender responsive and sensitive, it should be integrated.

Likewise, institutional set-up at federal, provincial and local level need are not properly completed, it is at initial phase, there is needed to focus for steering committee, working group at federal level and provincial level with its functionality. There is needed representation of parliament members, CSOs, youths, women and most marginalized communities' representation (Province Planning Commission-PPC, 2019).

2. Methods and Procedures

In this chapter, I presented the design of the study, sources of data, population and sample, tools for the collection of data, process of data collection and data analysis and interpretation procedures. This study was concentrated with provincial ministries and offices, local governments and civil society organization that had been directly working for localization of Sustainable Development Goals under Lumbini Province. This research was based on the data obtained from the Key Informant Interview with civil servant Office of the Chief Minister and Council of Ministers, Province Planning Commission, Ministry of Social Development, Province Public Service Commission, elected representatives and staff of local governments and civil society organizations representatives. Likewise, the secondary data are used such as from Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) baseline report of Province Planning Commission, Lumbini Province, data from National Planning Commission and other research related to the topics. The present study was based on descriptive method. I designed the study selecting the required population. I selected four provincial ministries and offices, six local governments, from Lumbini Province and two civil society organizations' representatives. The total population of the study was 10

civil servants, six elected representatives and two civil society organizations' representatives of Lumbini Province. The key informant interview (KII) was conducted.

Key informant interview was undertaken for exploring qualitative information. The key informant interview (KII) was done as below:

- KII with civil servant: Four civil servant of provincial ministries and offices
- KII with elected representatives: Six Mayors/Deputy Mayor/Chairperson/Vice-Chairperson
- KII with civil servant: Six Chief Administrative Officers of local governments
- KII with staff: two staff of civil society organizations

Prior to the final administration of the interview, I visited all provincial ministries and offices then decided and selected four provincial ministries and offices based on its roles on localization of sustainable development goals and visited few of local governments. I visited few civil society organizations and identified their roles in localization of sustainable development goal in gender equality under Lumbini Province. I did face to face discussion and telephonic conversation with few participants to collect the information. The collected data and information were checked and systematically described.

3. Findings

This deals with the presentation, analysis and interpretation and the findings of the data obtained from the research. The indicators' status was presented through table, percentage and ratio. The secondary data from Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) baseline report of Province Planning Commission, Lumbini Province focused in gender equality. This is given below:

Table 1. SDG 5: Gender Equality' targets/indicators and status, 2019

SDGs Target and Indicator	National	Lumbini Province
	2015	2015
Target 5.2: Eliminate all forms of violence against all women and girls in the public and private spheres, including trafficking and sexual and other types of exploitation		
Indicator 5.2.2: Proportion of ever-partnered women and girls aged 15 years and older subjected to physical, sexual or psychological violence by a current or former intimate partner in the previous 12 months, by form of violence and by age	6.9	8.3
Target 5.3: Eliminate all harmful practices, such as child, early and forced marriage and female genital mutilation		
Indicator 5.3.1: Proportion of women aged 20-24 years who were married or in a union before age 15	7.2	4.7
Indicator 5.3.2: Proportion of women aged 20-24 years who were married or in a union before age 18	40.5	39.5
Target 5.4: Recognize and value unpaid care and domestic work through the provision of public services, infrastructure and social protection policies and the promotion of shared responsibility within the household and the family as nationally appropriate		
Indicator 5.4.1: Percentage of time spent on unpaid domestic and care work, by sex, age and location		
Percentage of time spent on domestic and care work by male	10.2	9.9
Percentage of time spent on domestic and care work by female	21.9	19.7
Target 5.6: Ensure universal access to sexual and reproductive health and reproductive rights as agreed in accordance with the Programme of Action of the International Conference on Population and Development and the Beijing Platform for Action and the outcome documents of their review conferences		
Indicator 5.6.1: Proportion of women aged 15-49 years who make their own informed decisions regarding sexual relations, contraceptive use and reproductive health care	19	20.3
5.a. Undertake reforms to give women equal rights to economic resources, as well as access to ownership and control over land and other forms of property, financial services, inheritance and natural resources, in accordance with national laws		
share of women among owners or rights bearers of agricultural land, type of tenure	22.2	21.6
share of women among owners or rights bearers of home and property	11.7	11.8
5.b. Enhance the use of enabling technology, in particular information and communications technology, to promote the empowerment of women		
Proportion of female (15-49 years) who own a mobile telephone	72.6	69.7
Proportion of male (15-49 years) who own a mobile telephone	89.3	88.7

Note: SDGs baseline report. Passport. Copyright 2019 by Province Planning Commission, Lumbini Province, Nepal.

Table 1 shows that the Proportion of ever-partnered women and girls aged 15 years and older subjected to physical, sexual or psychological violence by a current or former intimate partner in the previous 12 months, by form of violence and by age is 8.3 in Lumbini Province however 6.9 at national-level. The eliminate all harmful practices, such as child, early and forced marriage and female genital mutilation has indicator of proportion of women aged 20-24 years who were married or in a union before age 15 that has 7.2 at national and 4.7 in Lumbini Province and also one indicator of proportion of women aged 20-24 years who were married or in a union before age 18 that has 40.5 at national however 39.5 in Lumbini Province.

Likewise, the percentage of time spent on domestic and care work by male that is 10.2 at national-level and 9.9 at province-level and the percentage of time spent on domestic and care work by female is 21.9 at national and 19.7 at province. The proportion of women aged 15-49 years who make their own informed decisions regarding sexual relations, contraceptive use and reproductive health care that is 19 at national and 20.3 at province. This can specify that share of women among owners or rights bearers of agricultural land, type of tenure that's status 22.2 at national-level and 21.6 in Lumbini Province and share of women among owners or rights bearers of home and property is 11.7 at national-level and 11.8 in Lumbini Province. The proportion of female (15-49 years) who own a mobile telephone is 72.6 at national-level and 69.7 at province and the proportion of male (15-49 years) who own a mobile telephone is 89.3 at national-level and 88.7 in Lumbini Province.

Here is described the findings from Key Informant Interviews (KIIs) with the participants. The participants in KIIs believed that the major challenges of localizing gender equality are data gaps to create baseline for set a target to mainstreaming gender equality in province and local levels. The provincial and local governments partnership with private sector, non-government organization/international non-government organization, community-based organizations for implementing and monitoring the achievement of gender equality. The political setups are not gender friendly at province and local levels. Likewise, one of the major challenges is poor in social change along with economic interventions for empowering women.

The gender equality is not mainstreamed in all SDGs indicators and targets as integrated inclusive indicators and targets with adequate resources. There is gap in gender disaggregated in planning, budgeting, monitoring and reporting including discriminated castes, indigenous ethnic groups and difficult geographic location. The lacking in gender audit of macroeconomic policies at federal, provincial and local levels.

The participants Mr. Krishna Parajuli said, "*LAINGIK SAMANTA KO LAKI PRADESH RA ISTHANIYA SARKAR LEY LAINGIK SAMBEDANSHIL NITI TATHA KARYANIDHI TAYAAR GAI KARYANWAYAN MA LYAUNA JARURI DEKHINCHHA*". Thus, one of key findings of this article is for ending all forms of discrimination against all women and girls everywhere requires strong laws and their enforcement, programs and

their effective implementation, and a database for monitoring which is not properly at province and local levels. Likewise, information related to gender-based violence, sexual abuse, discrimination at home, institution-based crimes, and women's representation in various fields is missing. The lacking in project/programs design for collecting gender related information to address gender goals. The participants of KII presented their understanding that the lacking of gender responsive and sensitive policies and practices in the three tiered-federal system and other organizations. The capacity development plan and program and its design and delivering methods, approaches and procedures are poor. The mechanism of gender mainstreaming at federal, provincial and local governments isn't established in federal system of Nepal. Likewise, there is gap in formulation of gender equality strategy and guideline to mainstreaming in provincial and local governments. The gender equality audit is not implemented at provincial and local governments.

4. Discussions

This describes the central contributions and their significance in advancing disciplinary understandings, contributions made by findings, supporting prior research and the differences from prior research findings, strengths and limitations, scope of the research article, ethical dilemmas, recommendations for future research considering the implications for future research, policy and practice.

This research highlights the key challenges of localizing the SDGs in gender equality in Lumbini Province. The federal, provincial and local governments have been trying to mainstream gender equality through various program and intervention in Nepal though still there are gaps and challenges to localizing it. The GoN has developed gender equality mainstreaming policy at federal-level but lacking at provincial and local levels. The policies, acts, regulations and guideline development are must at provincial and local level to localize gender equality. Then, the implementation of those provision at province and local levels supports to mainstreaming and localizing gender equality through various interventions. This research will be beneficial to the three-tiered federal governments, UN agencies, INGOs, NGOs, civil society organizations, community-based organizations, policy makers and researchers too. This research will provide some insight on what are the key challenges of localizing gender equality and how to localize it at provincial and local levels. It may give some important guideline to the researchers whose subject of study is related to this area.

This research was limited to Lumbini Province of related provincial ministries/offices, local governments and civil society organizations. This research was limited to secondary data sources and key informant interview with 18 participants.

Localizing gender equality in all the SDGs and targets along with planning and implementing the gender specific is the correct strategy for gender-balanced development. It should be cross-cutting not only the sectoral. The provincial and local governments' taxation, subsidy, and

spending policies are either gender unfriendly or biased against women. The policies, acts, regulations of the provincial and local governments are gender-biased given their collateral-based lending practices and procedures as women have few entitlements to property to pledge as collateral. It is recommended that localizing SDGs into federal, provincial and local levels in planning and budgeting systems. Regular gender audit of the program and budget at federal, provincial and local levels from SDGs localization perspective. Similarly, strong coordination between federal, provincial and local government for SDGs implementation and localization, partnership between public, private, cooperative, I/NGOs sector and development partners in policy formulation, implementation, monitoring and reporting, and need to be explored new avenues for resources for mainstreaming gender equality.

On the basis of this research work, I would like to recommend that the provincial and local governments should be developed gender equality mainstreaming policy, guidelines and localizing strategy. The provincial and local governments should be developed gender responsive program and budgeting. The gender equality mainstreaming policy and framework should be implemented at province and local levels. The gender equality mainstreaming in all SDGs indicators and targets should be inclusive indicators and targets with adequate resources. The gender disaggregated in planning, budgeting, monitoring and reporting including discriminated castes, indigenous ethnic groups and difficult geographic location should be done by federal, provincial and local levels. The research work done by any researcher will certainly be useful for other researchers and their researchers. There are still many things to be questioned or unsolved. So, many researchers can be done to get new ideas. Here, I tried to find out the key challenges of localizing gender equality. I suggest to other interested researchers to do researches on the topics. The research will be definitely be helpful in the field of SDGs localization, gender mainstreaming.

This research is an attempt to find out the key challenges of localizing SDGs in gender equality. The research was descriptive method conducted through KIIs with provincial ministries and Offices, local governments and civil society organizations in Lumbini Province. The descriptive method was conducted through KIIs for exploring the key challenges of localizing gender equality and how to overcome those challenges. It was found that major challenges of localizing gender equality were data gaps to set baseline and further targets at provincial governments and local governments. Similarly, the gender disaggregation isn't properly managed in planning, budgeting, monitoring and reporting systems, gender equality is not mainstreamed in all SDGs indicators and targets as integrated inclusive indicators and targets with adequate resources. Therefore, the provincial and local governments, civil society organizations, community-based organizations, I/NGOs, UN agencies, private and corporate sectors should focus on data management and integration in planning, budgeting, monitoring with adequate resources.

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