

Project Ujyalo Bhabisyā *“A Brighter Future”*

Development Nepal Summary Proposal

Project Purpose: Community Poverty Alleviation in Rural Nepal

Location: Sunsari District, Nepal

Target group: Socially / economically excluded rural communities

Responsible Institution: Development Nepal (www.developmentnepal.org), UK Charity No. 1085199

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Total budget: GBP £207,728

Duration of next phase: 5 years 2010-2014



Development
NEPAL

“There is no doubt whatsoever that the Project has reached the poorest and the most vulnerable section of the society in Sunsari.”

Ravindra Shakya, Project Ujyalo Bhabisyia independent evaluator, 2009

Who We Are

Development Nepal (DN) is a UK charity which supports the poorest individuals and communities in the Sunsari district of Eastern Nepal. We aim to improve access to essential resources and opportunities to help improve the knowledge, skills and income of those whose livelihoods require support to protect them from abject poverty.

We manage this by running Project Ujyalo Bhabisyia (Project UB) - meaning ‘A Brighter Future’ - which focuses on supporting socially and economically marginalised individuals through a programme aimed at education, empowerment and income generation. Since 2000 over 2,500 individuals have benefited from directly engaging on a daily basis with Project UB activities.

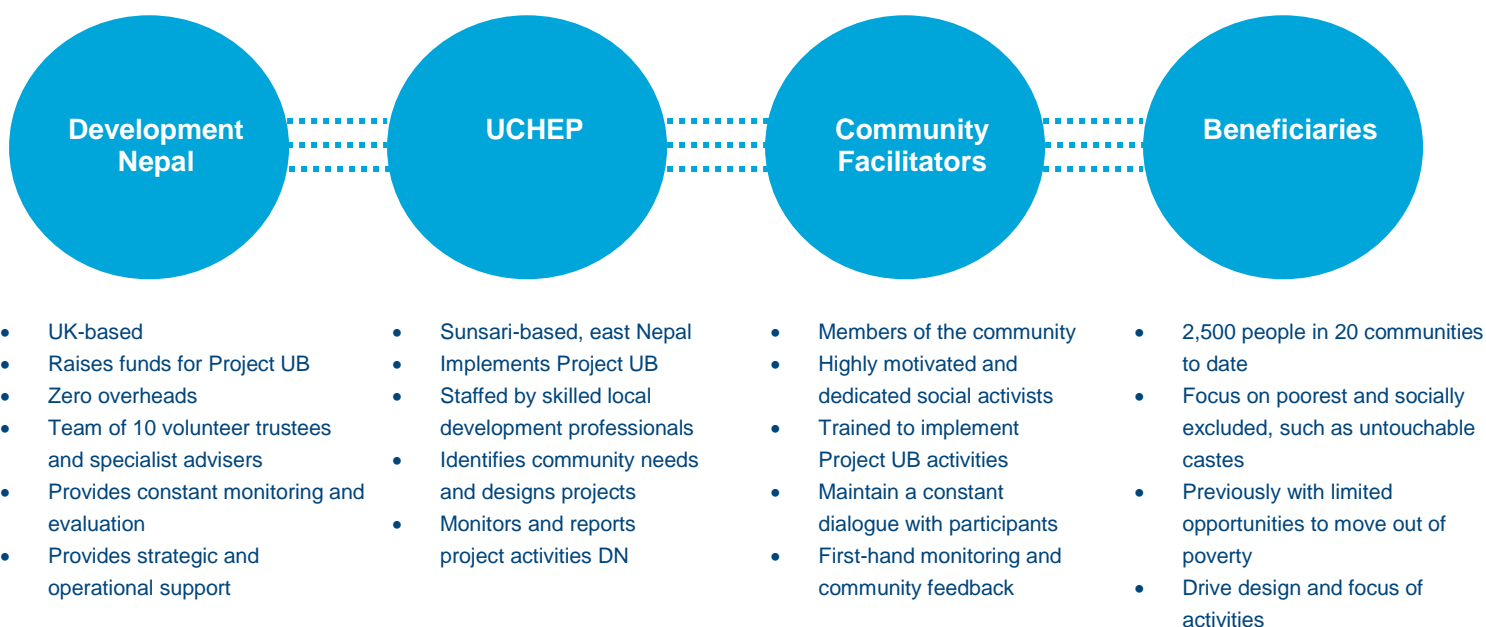


Literacy Class - Sunsari

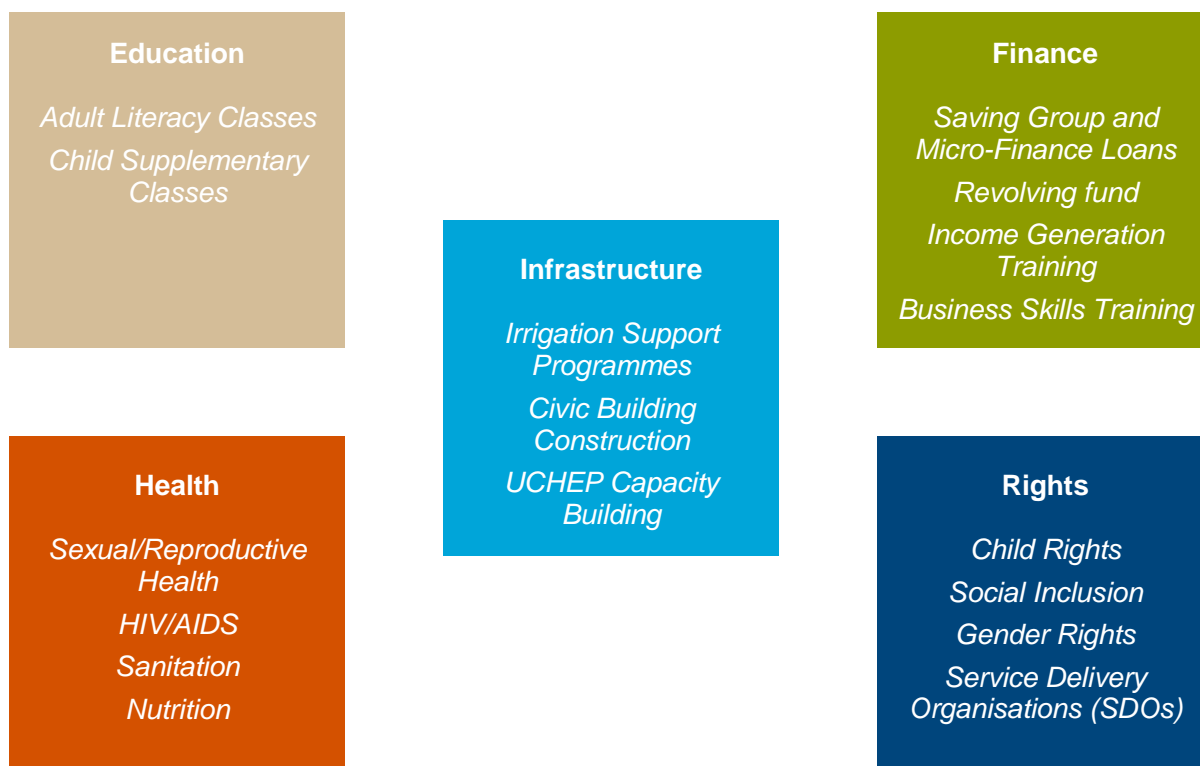
What We Do

We work in partnership with the Union for Culture, Human and Environment Protection (UCHEP), an outstanding local non-governmental organisation (NGO) who have an established reputation in Sunsari. This enables Development Nepal’s work to be more sustainable and enables us to deliver a better locally targeted project.

UCHEP recruit and train local community ‘facilitators’ - motivated and enterprising community members, who are selected to implement the programme of activities Project UB is involved with. The facilitators are key to every stage of the project and are in constant dialogue with other members of their community, finding out how the project can address the problems they face more effectively. Our facilitators ensure that the project is reaching the poorest individuals in the community and that the project is planned, designed and implemented according to their needs. They will help realise Project UB’s benefits throughout the project’s duration and long after it has been completed.



Our work comprises literacy, business, numeracy and life skills training; health and wellbeing training; rights based teaching approaches; saving and micro-credit schemes in support of income generation; and community infrastructure development. All of our activities are framed around 5 thematic pillars, which are outlined below:



Why Sunsari, Nepal?

At the end of 2008, Nepal was ranked 142 (out of 177 measured) in the UNDP Human Development Index, with 38% of Nepal's population of 24 million living below the UNDP defined poverty line.

The pattern of poverty in Nepal is disproportionately concentrated on rural areas, and amongst women, children and lower castes. Sunsari district, in the Terai, is one of these rural areas within which rural poverty is exacerbated by a lack of education, skills, access to credit and alternative employment opportunities. Moreover, levels of poverty in rural areas, including Sunsari, have been aggravated by Nepal's decade-long civil war, and the continued disturbances to law and order in many parts of the country - Sunsari often faces severe challenges to peace and security.

Addressing these challenges and reducing rural poverty requires solutions that are long-term and tailored at a grassroots community level. This is the starting point for Project UB.

What makes us different?

1. We only work with the **poorest communities** and individuals – we want the most vulnerable to benefit from our work.
2. We offer a **responsive and holistic** programme, which allows us to address the multiple dimensions of poverty, and support the different components of people's livelihoods.

3. The programme of activities are **community owned**, managed and perpetuated by the communities and project participants themselves, with decreasing influence from external patrons. The focus on facilitators from within the communities to implement and manage Project UB ensures long term sustainability of our work.
4. We are **geographically-focused**, which allows us to design targeted programmes in an area that is extremely complex socially, politically and economically. Moreover, our local partner is currently the only NGO working in the area, making their work increasingly important to the communities in the district.
5. **Rigorous management of overheads**. We work to ensure that no more than 20% of funds raised goes on project office and management costs by our local partner. We have no expenditure in the UK as DN is managed by volunteers.

The Future – what your support would fund



Since the project started in 2000 we have worked with approximately 2,500 individuals across 20 communities. The project has seen marked improvements in the levels of literacy (and other educational indicators), household income, and access to key resources and opportunities.

Moreover, we have observed a change in attitudes among our beneficiaries, reflected by a greater understanding of the importance of education, an understanding of their rights and how they impact upon individuals' ability to make key livelihood choices and influence lasting change. Such changes have led, for example to:

- An increase in the proportion of children both enrolled and attending government schools
- Citizen action to campaign for improvements in infrastructure and public services (e.g. road improvements, access to electricity etc)

- Increased confidence in participants to stand up (regardless of class, caste or gender) and be heard

Off-Season Vegetable Farming Training

It is testament to the success of the project that more and more communities wish to work with us and reap the benefits that participation in Project Ujyalo Bhabisyia provides. Over the next 5 years (2010-2014), we intend to work **with 50 new communities** in Sunsari and the neighbouring district, whilst continuing in the short term to work with the 10 existing Project Ujyalo Bhabisyia communities from 2007-2009.

Meet Bhim Chandrabanshi - a villager of Prakashpur Hidaluwa-3 who is in his early forties.

Before Project UB started in this area the land was unusable due to a lack of irrigation. Instead, farmers became day labourers for others, receiving a daily wage of Rs 150 (c£1.20) which was insufficient to fulfil their basic needs. Bhim was always worried that he couldn't feed his family or farm his land, and that he had to work for others.

Project UB has provided electrical motors to a number of the poorest Project UB communities, which have been used for irrigation to make their land productive. Bhim, saved money to buy vegetables to cultivate, and is now selling vegetables, a valuable source of income. The project participants have been able to plant a diverse range of vegetables and grains which has freed them up from having to rely on earning a living from being day labourers on other people's farms. Bhim has given a special thanks to Project UB.



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