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Nepal's Policies and Practices for Gender Equality

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Abstract

The development policy of the government of Nepal based the article on gender equality, inclusion, and its relationship with development in the context of the current federal structure. This article focused on two objectives: to examine the institutional contributions to gender equality and inclusion and to learn how to participate and benefit from the development activities and services on an equal basis. Gender inclusion in the development sector is defined as the participation, decision-making roles, responsibilities, attributes, and power relations in all development government sectors. Using secondary sources, this article gathered and reviewed related literature from books, articles, election commission reports, related acts, policies, and constitutions, as well as collected profiles. 31.1 percent of people who find this article are elected, 58.9 percent of them are men, and 41.1 percent of them are women. In province No. 5, there are 22.28 percent of elected officials, of whom 58.78 percent are men and 41.22 percent are women. In Province No. 6, a total of 29.73 percent of candidates are elected and 26.73 percent of the province's 7 candidates are elected, with 59 percent being men and 41 percent being women. Gender equity and its relationship to government among elected candidates is quite high compared to what the Nepal Constitution of 2072 and various political parties' election manifestos of 2074 allotted, as the Nepal Constitution of 2072 stated that every political party must include at least 33 percent women in all of its political activities, including elections. Considering gender when making decisions and giving women leadership roles. Lack

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of participation in local development activities, allocation of gender-sensitive funds, and policy- and program-making.

Keywords: Development, equality for women and men, policies, and local government.

Introduction

Gender disparity has existed in Nepal since the beginning, but only recently have discussions and problems related to gender entered the public eye. In Nepalese society, men and women have vastly different access to rights and power. Women in rural areas are less fortunate than women in urban areas. In comparison to men, women have less access to productive opportunities, services, and resources like land, livestock, financial services, and education. Despite government policies supporting them and giving them an identity, the third gender seems to be in some way marginalized in society. The gender development side is one of the most important aspects of community development. "Gender" relates to qualities or characteristics that society associates with each sex rather than to male and female, or masculine and feminine, respectively. Women and men can be learned; people are either born female or male. "Gender" relates to the socially constructed roles, obligations, and qualities, in a given society or community, as well as the power dynamics that apply to men and women. These constructs are highly variable over time and are influenced by context, socioeconomic status, geography, and culture. Gender perceptions are deeply ingrained, vastly different across cultures, and evolve over time. But in every culture, gender determines who has access to resources and what level of power (Sijapati & Subedi, 2020). In order to achieve gender balance, both men and women must actively participate in all decision-making processes and have equal access to and control over resources and services. Feminists who were concerned about the way in which women's issues were seen in terms of their sex, or their biological differences from men, rather than in terms of their gender, or considering how men and women interact socially, culturally, and economically, a relationship in which women have historically been systematically oppressed, developed the gender focus rather than women as the primary focus (Sijapati, 2011). According to the Centre Bureau of Statistics (CBS) 2011, the female population is approximately 51 percent, and the preliminary report from the Census 2021 shows that 43.4 percent of people are truly poor and 67.5 percent are illiterate. Agricultural work and small cottage industries are the main economic occupations of 62 percent of the country's large female population (86%) who live in rural areas and depend on them for food, income, and employment. A small, unable, and impoverished female population is depicted in

this demographic picture. Men and women should have equal access to opportunities, resources, and options in order for them to be able to make decisions that will affect their own lives and the welfare of the nation (USAID, 2010). According to the Nepalese development paradigm, this is a critical state of gender exclusivity. In this context, this study examined the knowledge and practices of gender inclusion in local governments. Local governments in particular can combat female gender inequality by encouraging gender inclusion. Females are included in every effective decision-making process at the local level and in good governance, regardless of whether households experience socioeconomic effects of gender inclusivity and female empowerment.

Women and development are a concept that combines theory and practice to advance development. After its founding, which can be connected to the First World Conference on Women sponsored by the United Nations in Mexico City in 1975, In the latter half of the 1970s, it was first brought up in the scholarship of gender studies. Compared to the previously prevalent theory, WID, also known as Women in Development, is frequently misunderstood. but It has a variety of distinctive traits (Razavi & Miller, 1995).

Women and Development (WAD) was created in response to concerns about the limitations of modernization theory as an explanation and a shift in perception of women's role in development. While earlier theories held that development was a means of advancing women, new theories proposed that women's participation was essential to the development and that, Women ought to take an active role in development programs rather than just receiving aid as passive recipients. Furthering this line of reasoning, WAD argued that women have always played a essential part in development and did not suddenly appear as a result of exogenous development efforts in the 1970s (Rathgeber, 1990).

In order to liberate women from the patriarchal hegemony that would otherwise exist if women participated in development alongside men in patriarchal cultures, the WAD approach proposes women-only development initiatives. However, this idea has been hotly contested by theorists in the field. In this sense, WAD is distinct from WID due to the theoretical basis on which it was developed. WAD concentrates on the connection between capitalism and patriarchy rather than specifically on how women relate to development. While much of theorizing about WAD is still undocumented as a result of the ongoing and urgent development work that many WAD theorists engage in, With the aid of dependency theory and neo-Marxism, this theory aims to comprehend women's issues (Barriteau et al., 2000).

Women in Development are strategy for developing, implementing, and assessing programs that are exclusively geared toward empowering women. WID does not contest the existence of gender inequality and thus focuses on treating the signs instead of the underlying problems. It is acknowledged by the Gender and Development (GAD) approach that social structures that disadvantage marginalized groups have a negative impact. By empowering these groups to ensure that they receive an equal share of the benefits from the development process, the approach aims to create sustainable development that is fair to both men and women.

The Women and development paradigm places a strong emphasis on the connections between women and the work that they do in their societies as economic agents in both the public and private spheres. Additionally, it highlights the unique roles that women play in the upkeep and advancement of their societies. with the awareness that including women in development efforts solely would serve to amplify the existing structures of inequality present in societies where patriarchal interests are dominant. Generally speaking, it is believed that WAD provides a more critical conceptualization of women's position than WID (Rathgeber, 1990). The Women and development strategy highlights the distinctiveness of women's knowledge, work, aspirations, and obligations while also advocating for the acknowledgment of that distinctiveness. Given this reality and the well-known propensity of development organizations to be dominated by patriarchal interests, WAD subscribers introduced women-only initiatives (Barriteau et al., 2000).

Dependency theorists, on the other hand, contended that liberal development models, such as the attempt to include women in the current global capitalism, were merely the "development of underdevelopment " (Frank, 1969). " According to this point of view, the only way to achieve balanced human development is to break free from the structural oppression of global capitalism. A narrative of advancement and an endeavor, the development paradigm that was doable came under sustained scrutiny in the 1980s, according to critics of post-structuralizing Visvanathan (2011). Men and women should develop equally, according to dependency theory. The importance of gender equality from an existing perspective has been emphasized.

The Nepali Congress (NC), Communist Party of Nepal-Unified Marxist Leninist (CPN-UML), and Nepal Communist Party (Maoist Center), even if their views on federalism differ, several other small political parties have pledged support for the federal democratic-republican government and an inclusive, participatory, and representative democracy, at least in their election manifestos. First-Past-the-Post (FPTP) candidates for the election for the constitution

assembly have been nominated by the Nepali Congress in proportions of 21 percent for indigenous peoples, 13 percent for Madhesi, 1 percent for Dalits, and 13 percent for Muslims, according to the 2018 report of the Nepalese Election Commission. 50 percent of all proportional candidates for CA are women. These top three political parties have not nominated 33 percent of women, despite the government's political pledge and the constitution's need for 33 percent female participation in state institutions.

In contrast to the Madhesi and indigenous peoples, Using the FPTP electoral system, just 30 (12%) women were elected to the CA. Women, on the other hand, have roughly half of the CA's proportional seats (2074 B.S.). According to the election results, women hold 197 (32.77%) seats in the Constituent Assembly out of the total 601 seats that were officially proclaimed. These voters demanded a truly proportional electoral system; therefore, they were dissatisfied with the election process. However, they are happy with the election's outcome because it was the first time in Nepal's political history that there was such a strong ideological representation. The outcome of the CA election largely confirms the success of the struggle for an inclusive political and administrative system in Nepal, which was led by indigenous peoples and other marginalized populations. It is countered that elected officials are more answerable to their political parties than to the communities in which they live. However, it represents a significant turning point in Nepal's political history (Gurung, 2009). The Policy's goal is to promote inclusion and gender equality. Examining how the institutional environment affects gender equality and inclusion is one of the policy's goals. to learn how to fully and equally benefit from and participate in local activities and services.

Methods

The article used the "Development Theory," which came into existence after 1970 as an alternative to "Modernization and Dependency Theory," to promote the overall development of the country, community, and people (Subedi, 2011). Justice, sustainability, and inclusive development are key tenets of this theory. This paper is grounded in pragmatism and anti-positivism/interpretative philosophy and draws on gender inclusion to examine how local government development is related to these issues. The pragmatist school of thought recommends specific techniques for understanding how gender development relations relate to local government at all levels of government in Nepal. This article used secondary sources that the researcher gathered and reviewed by looking through books, articles, reports from the election commission, related acts, policies, and constitutions, as well as collected profiles. The

major source of this article is the Local Election, (2074). Local Election Result Book as well as Provincial election results books of Nepal.

Results and Conclusion

Gender Inclusion Development Sectors' Current Laws and Policies

A perspective and process known as "gender mainstreaming" examines how any planned action, such as legislation, policies, or programs, in all situations and at all levels, will impact both men and women. It is a way to guarantee that the issues and encounters of both men and women are taken into account when designing, implementing, overseeing, and assessing policies and initiatives in all areas of politics, business, and society. This way, both men and women can benefit equally and inequality won't persist. The realization of gender equality is the ultimate goal. Gender mainstreaming is described in another way, the institutionalization of gender issues across the entire organization, in terms of accounting for gender equality in business and financial matters, in particular. In terms of attitudes, "culture," goals, and procedures, staffing, along with other organizational practices, contributes to a long-term transformation of the organization; gender empowerment: Women's involvement in decision-making, as well as their capacity to speak up for themselves and bring issues to the forefront (Moser & Moser, 2005). a part of the gender inclusion policy; a dual approach that combines mainstreaming gender with specific actions for gender equality; analysis of gender; joint approach to responsibility, where gender experts support all decisions but where everything is jointly responsible, Women's empowerment and decision-making through gender-specific training and support, as well as monitoring and evaluation of gender inclusion. A smaller number of institutions share three additional elements: budgets, working with other organizations, and knowledge resources. The operational and programming implementation of gender mainstreaming, in contrast, has received very little attention from assessment. Resulting from both In terms of gender equality, the implementation's effects are still largely unknown. Thus, a dual strategy is required for the coming decade: the implementation of gender mainstreaming (with much greater documentation transparency) and the development of more trustworthy methods for evaluating output and results Although there has been progress, the next ten years will be the true test of gender mainstreaming in practice (Moser & Moser, 2005).

The 1995 Fourth United Nations World Conference on Women in Beijing produced the Beijing Platform for Action, as a significant international strategy for the advancement of gender

equality, gender mainstreaming has been established. The United Nations Economic and Social Council established a few fundamental tenets for gender mainstreaming (UNESCO, 2017). Additional specific instructions were provided in a letter the Secretary-General sent on October 13 to the heads of all United Nations entities. The General Assembly's twenty-third special session was held to track how the Beijing Platform for Action was being used (Angela & King, 2002). In the past, local and regional governments have worked to advance gender equality on a global level with a focus on increasing the representation of women in local elected office and encouraging the involvement of all women in development decision-making (Anne, 2015). The Global Declaration on Women in Local Government, which serves as a blueprint for international commitments and principles governing local and regional governments' actions in support of women's rights, was adopted by the International Union of Local Authorities (IULA) in 2000 (UNCHS, 2000).

The relationship between gender inclusion and local development defines how a society views the rights, obligations, and gender identities in relation to one another. It is crucial to alter men's attitudes toward women when there is a connection between gender and local development. Women will always be dominated in society in some way, unless and until people's attitudes toward them change. It is crucial that there is gender equity in society when it comes to questions of gender and local development. Treating men and women equally in terms of rights, benefits, obligations, and opportunities is referred to as gender equity. Local development is very challenging when it comes to gender equity. Gender balance must be carefully considered during local development to ensure sustainable growth. These statistics, which were broken down by the board age of an elected parliament member, show that the highest percentage (24.24%) of people are between the ages of 46 and 50 overall, as well as in both males (23.9%) and females (33.33%). Males in the age group 56–60 and females in 51–55 make up the second highest percentages. The age group 41–45 has the third highest percentage (11.52% overall, 11.32% male and 16.67% female), with 11.52 percent. The majority of members are, however, over 40 and under 60 years old. Members who are over 70 make up just 0.61 percent. Additionally, the minority includes those under 40.

Table 1: Broad Age Group of Elected Members of Parliament by Sexes, 2074 Election

| Age Group | Male | | Female | | Total | |
|--------------|------------|--------------|----------|------------|------------|--------------|
| | Number | Percent | Number | Percent | Number | Percent |
| 30-35 | 4 | 2.52 | 1 | 16.67 | 5 | 3.03 |
| 36-40 | 7 | 4.4 | - | - | 7 | 4.24 |
| 41-45 | 18 | 11.32 | 1 | 16.67 | 19 | 11.52 |
| 46-50 | 38 | 23.9 | 2 | 33.33 | 40 | 24.24 |
| 51-55 | 31 | 19.5 | 2 | 33.33 | 33 | 20.0 |
| 56-60 | 33 | 20.75 | - | - | 33 | 20.0 |
| 61-65 | 19 | 11.95 | - | - | 19 | 11.52 |
| 66-70 | 8 | 5.03 | - | - | 8 | 4.85 |
| 71 and above | 1 | 0.63 | - | - | 1 | 0.61 |
| Total | 159 | 100.0 | 6 | 100 | 165 | 100.0 |

Source: Election Commission, Nepal, 2074.

Table 2: Number of Local Elected Officials by Provinces in 2074.

| S.N | Numbers | No of Candidates members | | | Total Elected Members | | |
|-----|--------------|--------------------------|---------------|----------------|-----------------------|---------------|---------------|
| | | Male | Female | Total | Male | Female | Total |
| 1 | Koshi | 15,254 | 9,813 | 25,067 | 3,554 | 2,489 | 6,043 |
| 2 | Madhes | 22,861 | 14,387 | 27,248 | 3,895 | 2,723 | 6,618 |
| 3 | Bagmati | 14,726 | 8,887 | 23,613 | 3,433 | 2,359 | 5,792 |
| 4 | Gandaki | 7,598 | 5,057 | 12,655 | 2,317 | 1,617 | 3,934 |
| 5 | Lumbini | 14,024 | 9,010 | 23,036 | 3,017 | 2,116 | 5,133 |
| 6 | Karnali | 7,554 | 4,848 | 12,402 | 2,211 | 1,476 | 3,687 |
| 7 | Sudharpashim | 8,502 | 5,841 | 14,343 | 2,262 | 1,572 | 3,834 |
| | Total | 90,519 | 57,843 | 14,8364 | 20,689 | 14,352 | 35,041 |

Source: Election Commission, Nepal, 2074.

Note: Only two new candidates are in province five who have a third gender.

There are only two new candidates in Lumbini Province 5 who identify as third gender. In a province-by-province analysis of the number of candidates and representatives who are elected to local government, in a final, out of a total of 1,48,364 people ran for office in all 7 provinces, but only 35,041 (23.62%) of those people were chosen. 20 689 (22.86%) of the 90 519 male candidates are elected, making up the gender. 14,352 (24.81%) female candidates out of 57,843 total candidates are elected. According to an analysis done the by province, 25,067 candidates were present in Koshi Pradesh. Out of them, 6043 (24.11%) are elected; 58.81 % of them are

men, and 41.19 % are women. There were 27,248 candidates overall in Mahades Pradesh. Of them, 24.29 percent are elected; 58.85 percent of them are men, and 41.15 percent of them are women. There were 23,613 candidates overall in Province 3. There are 5,792 (24.53%) of them who are elected, with 59.27 percent men and 40.73 percent women. There were 12,655 candidates overall in Gandaki Pradesh.

Table 3: Expressed as a Percentage, Local Elected Members by Province in Local Elections in 2074

| S.N | Province | No of Candidates members | | | Total Elected Members | | |
|--|--------------|--------------------------|----------|---------|-----------------------|----------|--------|
| | | Male % | Female % | Total % | Male% | Female % | Total |
| 1 | Koshi | 16.85 | 16.96 | 16.89 | 7.26 | 17.34 | 17.25 |
| 2 | Madhes | 25.26 | 24.87 | 18.37 | 18.92 | 18.97 | 18.89 |
| 3 | Bagmati | 16.27 | 15.36 | 15.92 | 16.67 | 16.44 | 16.53 |
| 4 | Gandaki | 8.39 | 8.74 | 8.53 | 11.25 | 11.27 | 11.23 |
| 5 | Lumbani | 15.49 | 15.58 | 15.53 | 14.65 | 14.74 | 14.65 |
| 6 | Karnali | 8.35 | 8.38 | 8.36 | 10.74 | 10.28 | 10.52 |
| 7 | Sudharpashim | 9.39 | 10.10 | 9.67 | 10.99 | 10.95 | 10.94 |
| Total | | 100.0 | 100.0 | 100.0 | 100.0 | 100.0 | 100.0 |
| Local Elected Members (in Total Number and Percentage) by Province in Local Elections in 2074 | | | | | | | |
| 1 | Koshi | 60.85 | 39.15 | 25,067 | 58.81 | 41.19 | 6,043 |
| 2 | Madhes | 83.9 | 16.1 | 27,248 | 41.15 | 27.23 | 6,618 |
| 3 | Bagmati | 62.36 | 37.64 | 23,613 | 59.27 | 40.73 | 5,792 |
| 4 | Gandaki | 60.04 | 39.96 | 12,655 | 58.9 | 41.10 | 3,934 |
| 5 | Lumbani | 60.88 | 39.11 | 23,036 | 58.78 | 41.22 | 5,133 |
| 6 | Karnali | 60.91 | 39.09 | 12,402 | 59.97 | 40.03 | 3,687 |
| 7 | Sudharpashim | 59.28 | 40.72 | 14,343 | 59.0 | 41.0 | 3,834 |
| Total | | 61.01 | 38.98 | 14,8364 | 59.04 | 40.96 | 35,041 |

Source: Election Commission, Nepal, 2074.

There are 3,934 (31.1%) of them who are elected, with 58.9% men and 41.10% women. There were 23,036 candidates overall in Lumbini province. Out of them, 5,133 (22.28%) are elected, and 58.78% of men and 41.22 % of women. There were 12,403 candidates overall in Karnali Province 3687 of them (29.73%) are elected, 59.97% of them are men and 40.03% are women. There were 14,343 candidates in total across Sudharpashim province. A total of 3834 (26.73%) of them were elected, with a male-to-female ratio of 59 to 41. As stated in the election

manifestos of the various political parties and the Nepal Constitution of 2072, each and every political party must include women who make up at least 33% of all political activity in the country, including voting. However, among the elected candidates, women's inclusion in local government is quite high.

Table 4: Local Elected Government Broad Age Group by Sex, 2074 Election

| Age Group | Mayor | Deputy Mayor | Chairman | Vice. Chairman | Ward President | Male Members | Female Members | Total |
|--|-------|--------------|----------|----------------|----------------|--------------|----------------|--------|
| 21-40 | 52 | 111 | 112 | 237 | 2,036 | 4,542 | 6,610 | 13,700 |
| 41-60 | 205 | 172 | 293 | 215 | 4,057 | 7,542 | 6,096 | 18,584 |
| 61 and above | 36 | 10 | 53 | 8 | 649 | 1399 | 603 | 2,757 |
| Total | 293 | 293 | 460 | 460 | 4,267 | 13,484 | 13,309 | 35,041 |
| Age Groups Represented in Local Elected Government in 2074, Broken Down by Sex, in Percent | | | | | | | | |
| 21-40 | 17.75 | 37.88 | 24.35 | 51.52 | 30.2 | 33.68 | 49.67 | 39.1 |
| 41-60 | 69.97 | 58.70 | 63.7 | 46.74 | 60.8 | 55.94 | 45.80 | 53.0 |
| 61 and above | 12.29 | 3.41 | 11.52 | 1.74 | 9.0 | 10.38 | 4.53 | 7.9 |
| Total | 100.0 | 100.0 | 100.0 | 100.0 | 100.0 | 100.0 | 100.0 | 100.0 |

Source: Election Commission, Nepal, 2074.

As a representative cross-section of the local government personality, the male and female members, as well as the mayor, deputy mayor, chairman, vice chairman, and ward president, are all elected. Among all age groups, those between the ages of 41 and 60 make up the majority (53%) while those between the ages of 21 and 40 make up 39.1% and those 61 and older make up just 7.9%. The majority (69.97%) of mayors are between the ages of 41 and 60. When examined as a post, ward presidents make up 60.8%, chairmen 63.7%, and deputy mayors 58.70%. However, the age range of the Vice Chairman's majority (51.52%) is between 21 and 40. Similarly, 58.70% of Deputy Mayors are 41-60 or older.

Table 5: Districts in Each Province, the Amount of Elected Local Government Members by Sexes, and the Level of Local Government

| Province No. | No. of Dist. | Metropolitan city | Sub - Metropolitan city | Municipality | Rural Municipality |
|--------------|--------------|-------------------|-------------------------|--------------|--------------------|
| | | | | | |

| | | M | F | M | F | M | F | M | F |
|--------------|-----------|------------|------------|------------|------------|-------------|-------------|--------------|-------------|
| 1 | 14 | 56 | 41 | 118 | 86 | 1513 | 1035 | 1922 | 1290 |
| 2 | 8 | 95 | 66 | 229 | 157 | 2451 | 1711 | 1116 | 789 |
| 3 | 13 | 178 | 264 | 156 | 41 | 1417 | 984 | 1709 | 1156 |
| 4 | 11 | 98 | 69 | - | - | 967 | 675 | 1262 | 886 |
| 5 | 12 | - | - | 241 | 167 | 1139 | 805 | 1652 | 1162 |
| 6 | 10 | - | - | - | - | 926 | 631 | 1285 | 855 |
| 7 | 9 | - | - | 57 | 39 | 1069 | 746 | 1126 | 787 |
| Total | 77 | 427 | 440 | 801 | 490 | 9482 | 6587 | 10072 | 6925 |

Source: Election Commission, Nepal, 2074.

Table 6: Jhapa District Has (in Number) Elected Members for Local Government of Study

| S.N | Name of R.M/Municipality/ | Mayor/Chairman | | Deputy Mayor | | Ward president | | Members | |
|-----------------|------------------------------|----------------|----------|--------------|----------|----------------|----------|------------|------------|
| | | M | F | M | F | M | F | M | F |
| Jhapa | | | | | | | | | |
| 1 | Gauradaha Municipality | 1 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 9 | 0 | 20 | 20 |
| 2 | Gaurejung Rural Municipality | 1 | 0 | 1 | 0 | 6 | 0 | 13 | 17 |
| 3 | Siva Sataksthi Municipality | | | | | | | | |
| Lalitpur | | | | | | | | | |
| 1 | Lalitpur Metropolitan city | 1 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 29 | 0 | 67 | 54 |
| 2 | Godawari Municipality | 1 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 14 | 0 | 31 | 33 |
| 3 | Konjosom Rural Municipality | 1 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 5 | 0 | 12 | 14 |
| Total | | 5 | 0 | 1 | 4 | 63 | 0 | 143 | 139 |

Source: Election Commission, Nepal, 2074.

Note: - There are two municipalities, two rural municipalities, and one major city.

Conclusions

A burning issue in the modern world is gender equity, development, and local government viewpoint. Women's status is gradually being promoted and included in local development sectors that make decisions. Women are becoming more powerful and active in a variety of industries, including household economy, environmental conservation, infrastructure development, and social sectors. the exclusion of women from decision-making and positions of leadership. the lack of participation of the chairman of local development activities and other

ward chairmen and other members of the 41% elected in local government in the creation of local development programs and policies, the allocation of a gender-friendly budget. In accordance with Nepal's 2072 Constitution, as well as national and local policy, after being elected to the local government, the staff members created a number of gender relation policy program activities, such as a women-friendly budget and other necessary policy programs. Although there is no plan or action, there is a demand for the budget. Even the legal system stipulates that all judgments must favor men.

The constitution and policies of Nepal address equal participation and decision-making in local social development sectors. One of the main goals of the national government for a "new Nepal" that emphasizes gender equality is to reform the Nepali state in the spirit of inclusive democracy. In spite of the fact that all levels of government, the 2015 Constitution includes provisions for women and other marginalized groups, these measures by themselves are probably not going to be enough to improve the level of representation and meaningful participation for these groups. It's crucial to comprehend whether local government is adequately addressing the inclusion of women and minorities, as required by the Constitution. Support from constituents for and evaluation of inclusion practices, including the capacity of women and people of color to take part in local government policy-making, are among the indicators to gauge progress toward greater inclusion. The financial capacity of local governments is one of the most crucial elements in determining their ability to function effectively. Despite the fact that subnational expenditure has encountered significant difficulties, the main concern is still whether local governments have sufficient financial resources and fiscal autonomy to meet their budgetary needs and aspirations.

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