

**A Report**  
on  
**Aid Observatorio Regional Skills Training**  
Dhulikhel, Nepal  
24-28 June 2013

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**The Reality of Aid**

*An Independent Review of Poverty Reduction and Development Assistance*

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## **Abbreviations**

AAA	Accra Agenda for Action
AMP	Aid Management Platform
BPd	Busan Partnership Document
CAHURAST	Campaign for Human Rights and Social Transformation
CSO	Civil Society Organizations
HLF	High Level Forum
IATI	International Aid Transparency Initiative
NFN	NGO Federation of Nepal
NGO	Non Governmental Organization
ODA	Official Development Assistance
OECD	Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development
PD	Paris Declaration
RoA AP	Reality of Aid–Asia Pacific
RTI	Right to Information
SWC	Social welfare Council

## **1. Background**

Aid observation and monitoring is an important agenda of the CSOs and NGOs which have come together on this agenda at regional and international level. They have been attempting to make the governments and development partners accountable towards making aid transparent and effective. They have been observing, monitoring, analyzing and critiquing aid at various levels. However, they have been facing many challenges, most common of which are limited capacity and common understanding and cooperation among CSOs at regional and international levels. The coordinated and joint efforts of the CSOs in international level are expected to make accountable the development partners and national governments for enhanced aid effectiveness and development effectiveness. Monitoring aid involves knowledge about international forums, commitments and understanding on aid and also requires technical knowhow and approaches, developing capacity and skills of the CSOs engaged in aid monitoring. Since CSOs in Asia Pacific also face such challenges Reality of Aid – Asia Pacific together with NGO Federation of Nepal organized a 5-day Asia Pacific regional skills training on aid observation.

## **2. Objectives**

Aid Observatorio Regional Skills Training was aimed at capacity building of the leading CSOs from Bangladesh, Indonesia, Mongolia, Nepal and Vietnam. By the end of the training, the participants were expected to be able to:

- 1) Familiarize themselves with the basic concepts, objectives and methods of aid observatorio; and
- 2) Acquire basic skills in conducting and facilitating aid observatorio work in their own countries/communities.

## **3. Date, duration and venue**

The training was held at Dhulikhel Lodge Resort, Dhulikhel, Nepal for four and a half days from 24 to 28 June 2013.

## **4. Participation**

The participants of the training were CSO representatives from Bangladesh, Indonesia, Mongolia, Nepal and Vietnam. Afghanistan representatives were not able to participate in the training due to logistical reasons. Altogether 11 CSO representatives have been trained and shared the experience and situations from these countries. Ms. Pavitra Rana took part in the training on behalf of Open Nepal forum. Details of the participants are in [Annex I](#).

## **5. Proceedings**

### **5.1 Pre-training activities**

As part of preparation of the training, various preparations were made. Budget, logistics and participants were planned. After determination of the venue and date, logistics, correspondence with RoA – AP and transportation were arranged. Although attempts were made to arrange

arrival visa for the Afghan participants, it could not be made mainly due to two reasons, lack of budget for the Afghans to go to New Delhi for visa application and lack of required time for the application procedure through various ministries and departments of Nepal Government.

## **5.2 Training Activities**

The training consisted of six parts.. The participants were introduced to theoretical bases usually followed by discussions, group work and presentations. Every day, a summary of the day was made at the end.

### **5.2.1 Inaugural session**

The inauguration session of the training formally began at 9:00 am on 24 June. Ms. Myrna A. Maglahus, Coordinator of the Reality of Aid Network - Asia Pacific Regional Secretariat, highlighted the objectives of the training. In addition to the major objectives, she presented an overview of each of the sessions with objectives, themes and planned activities for the following 5 days. She expressed her hope that the training will build common understanding on various dynamics of aid. For the beyond training purpose, she informed that a training mode is in development process and could be applied to country specific needs and agenda.

In this session, everyone present was asked to introduce themselves. Later they were asked to put in writing their expectations from the training. The participants seemed to have expected to have critical understanding on international commitments and principles in aid; develop their theoretical knowledge, capacity and skills on various aspects of aid observatory work so as to enhance the development effectiveness; have better understanding of people's research methods and tools; understanding on CSO engagement on development effectiveness; be enabled to develop future plan to engage in aid monitoring in Asia Pacific; better understand data management tools; and learn from sharing among the participants.

Ms. Sharmila Karki, President of NGO Federation of Nepal, welcomed all the participants on behalf of the organizers. She regretted that Afghan colleagues were not able to attend the training. Stating the fact that aid monitoring has not yet been a priority area for the CSOs and NGOs, she said it is necessary for the CSOs to build critical mass on aid observation. We need to have conceptual clarity and develop manuals in local languages as well, she suggested. CSOs need to have good understanding of international commitments and principles on aid in order to be able to set up aid observatory and undertake the role of the CSOs, she added.

The session was facilitated by Mr. Hum Bhandari, Information, Communication and Documentation Officer of NFN.

## 5.2.2 Technical sessions

Day I, 24 June 2013

### **Part 1: Development effectiveness: From Paris to Busan and beyond**

#### ***Overview of the High-Level Forums that shaped the discussion on aid and development effectiveness***

This session was aimed to create a timeline of high-level forums and the principles agreed upon in each forum and help the participants understand the principles agreed upon from Paris to Busan. Ms. Myrna A. Maglahus made a presentation on these forums and principles. After the presentation, participants were asked to group themselves into four. Each group chose a high-level forum to find the summary of key principles agreed upon per forum, assemble the four summary tables into a timeline, and discuss an overview of the high-level fora on aid and development effectiveness.

Along with the detailed presentations on the High Level Forums and commitments, the participants were provided an overview of the High-Level Forums that shaped the discussion on aid and development effectiveness: Rome Declaration on Harmonization (2002); Paris Declaration (2005); Accra Agenda for Action (2008); Busan High Level Forum (2011).

After discussions the groups presented their findings to everyone whereby more inputs and comments were made on the documents discussed.

The group for Rome Declaration on Harmonization (2002) analyzed that it focused on donors and managing aid by donors to harmonize their system. It did not involve civil society. It is more focused on technical and procedural aspects and not on aid as such. While it lacks time bound targets, it consolidates donor's arena, or is donor led.

The second group assigned Paris Declaration (2005) presented that as a second generation of aid effectiveness reforms, the declaration has adopted five key principles: *ownership, alignment, harmonization, managing for results, and mutual accountability*. They commented that Paris Declaration reinforces the principles of international financial institutions. The ownership it outlines is just superficial since it does not entail citizen engagement. Nevertheless, parliamentary engagement has been given place. The focus was on finance ministry level. A true harmony still remains far away. The donors have failed to fulfill their long-standing pledge to provide 0.7 percent of their gross national incomes (GNI) to ODA. Economic cooperation is guided by economic and geopolitical interest of the donors. Though principally good, implementation remains poor since the principles exclude penalty provisions for failing to keep to the promises.

Additional points on the Paris Declaration agenda as discussed in the training:

- this was the first time that accountability and transparency were mentioned in HLF on aid effectiveness

- Paris Declaration did not address the unequal power relations between donor and recipient countries.

Some of the reactions after the report were:

- Implementation of PD at the country-level was problematic
- International Financial Institutions (IFI's) and multi-lateral development banks (MDBs) declare that they practice transparency but in practice, one will not find key information in their websites.
- Ownership principle is problematic because there are countries where democracy is not present.

For Accra Agenda for Action (2008), the third group observed that AAA has strengthened country ownership. It has attempted to build more inclusive and effective partnership but not adequately. In the same way, it has recognized the agenda of civil society and CSOs. But the framework is still aid effectiveness.

Additional input from the participants:

- The HLFs are not inter-related
- There was no sufficient review of the impact of the HLFs.

The fourth group for Busan High Level Forum (2011) analyzed that although human rights was referenced in the document, it failed to hold accountable all key stakeholders in promoting human rights.. The preceding documents have not yet been implemented. Unfinished business of Paris and Accra remained unfinished. The Forum has highly prioritized private sector at the cost of civil society; it does not adequately address the issue on enabling environment. This was also the first time that development effectiveness is recognized as the framework for the new development cooperation architecture.

***Reframing Aid Effectiveness into Development Effectiveness—the principles and commitments of the Busan Partnership Document (BPD)***

Ms. Myrna A. Maglahus made a presentation focusing on aid effectiveness on the foundation of the principles and commitments contained in the Busan Partnership Document (BPD). It was focused on formulating an information dissemination plan to popularize the key principles and commitments in the BPD. The presentation was followed by discussions and clarification.

Likewise, a presentation was made on the Post-Busan Scenario in Development Effectiveness (DE). DE places human rights, social justice, gender equality and ecological sustainability at the core of aid relations and the development process; and challenges all development actors to promote sustainable change that addresses the root causes as well as the symptoms of poverty, inequality and marginalization.

Here a gradual move from aid effectiveness to development effectiveness was marked. For the first time CSOs had a seat in the negotiation table. Busan Partnership has broadened South-South cooperation (SSC) and triangular cooperation as well. However, SSC does not replace North-

South Cooperation. Main commitments were highlighted ownership, results, accountability, transparency and responsible co-operation.

Acknowledging the move to development effectiveness, greater civil society involvement in development decisions and processes, a critique was made on BPD as an unfinished business of Paris and Accra, limited approach to human rights. It has failed to articulate minimum set of standards for governments and donors in promoting enabling environment. Notably, key message of CSOs in Busan was considered to be united CSOs.

### ***Human rights framework, including gender framework, in the development effectiveness agenda***

This presentation and discussion has helped in understanding the Busan high-level forum framework from the perspectives of human rights and gender. The issues have been found as priority areas for engagement of CSOs in post-Busan context. Excerpts from BPD, paragraphs 11 and 20, were evaluated.

Key messages and proposals were for progress in four interdependent areas: evaluation and deepening of the Paris and Accra commitments, strengthening development effectiveness through practices based on human rights standards, enabling environment for CSOs; and equitable and just development cooperation architecture. Additionally, development effectiveness needs to be strengthened through rights-based approach, gender equality and women's rights, and employment.

### ***Importance of CSO work on development effectiveness in the context of Busan Partnership document (BPD)***

Ms. Myrna A. Maglahus made a presentation highlighting the importance of CSO engagement on development effectiveness in the post-Busan context. It was discussed that CSOs then had the mandate to participate in development cooperation programs from design, implementation and monitoring and evaluation and legal space to engage with donors and governments to push for pro-poor agenda in development cooperation. Now CSOs must block pro-business interpretation of BPD, instead BPD must promote policies that are consistent with human rights.

Eight principles for CSO development effectiveness, as well as international framework for CSO development effectiveness, CSO accountability, and enabling environment were discussed.

The minimum standards for an enabling environment for civil society were discussed as fulfillment of human rights obligations, CSOs as development actors in their own right, democratic, political and policy dialogue, accountability and transparency for development, and enabling financing.

## **PART 2: The importance and challenges of accessing aid information (from the CSO Perspective)**

### ***Why CSOs need to monitor: Importance of accessing information on development effectiveness***

This session was aimed to enable the participants to identify types and sources of aid information for CSO monitoring, to understand the significance of CSO aid monitoring under the post-Busan framework, to bring to discussion the common challenges CSOs face in accessing information

relevant to development effectiveness and find some ways to address challenges in accessing information.

It was discussed that CSOs have been engaged in aid monitoring for more responsive services, more accountable government, country ownership, corruption control, better results, and improvement in aid allocation. Moreover, CSOs bear the capacity to monitor aid so as to make it effective and contributing to reduction of poverty. CSOs should monitor aid flows, analyze aid data and trends; make the data and analysis publicly accessible, use data and information for advocacy. It is also important for CSOs to look into conditionalities, commitment vs. disbursement, project impact, transparency and sectoral distribution of aid.

At the end of the presentation, the participants were provided with a set of guiding questions in order to explore on the country level efforts on aid:

- 1) What agencies in your country hold information on development effectiveness?
- 2) What are the types of information that these agencies provide?
- 3) Are there gaps in the information? What are these gaps?
- 4) How are these gaps being addressed?

### ***Group presentations***

Nepal Group presented that Social Welfare Council, Ministry of Finance/Aid Management Platform, National Planning Commission, Nepal Rastra Bank, Ministry of Federal Affairs and Local Development, and some CSOs hold some information on aid. Most of the information available is related to budget cycle, policy, advocacy tools, awareness-raising efforts and other campaigns. Most of the data are centralized at the national level, hence difficulty in accessing information especially those from the districts. This is exacerbated by the fact that there are challenges in data management and communication system. Another important point raised by the group is the information gap on aid from South to South Cooperation providers such as India and China. Open Nepal is a newly formed civil society platform to make publicly available the information on aid. Although they have detailed information, the information is not adequately managed, integrated and computerized. The aid management has initiated by establishing an online portal but is not yet publicly available and inclusive. There are gaps in transparency, attitude and language. The gaps are being addressed through the use of Right to Information Act, citizen pressure, media campaigns, networking, and capacity building.

Mongolia Group shared that Asian Development Bank, World Bank, etc hold aid information in the sectors especially education, health, urban development and construction of road. However, the information is limited to the websites of the donors and government while a large public do not have access to internet. Language is a major barrier to accessing and using the information. With a view to increasing the access to information, Open Forum on CSO Development Effectiveness and Aid (*NGO Federation on Development Cooperation*) has been established in 2013. Meetings and interactions are initiated with government and donors for the implementation of AAA and Paris Declaration. This facilitated the recognition of CSOs in key official dialogue mechanisms.

As shared by Bangladesh Group, Economic Relations Division, relevant ministries and departments and Bangladesh Bank possess information on aid. The information includes project aid information, bilateral, multilateral and ODA loan and grant, sectoral aid and payment

information. All the agencies make periodic updates of the information. However, secrecy act hinders the transparency. But, there are efforts to address the challenges. Attempts are being made for single depository of all the aid information, dissemination mechanisms, effective implementation of Right to Information (RTI), awareness raising and media participation. CSOs on the other hand are not allowed to hold information on behalf of the country and community people have no access to national data with bureaucracy exacerbating challenges in accessing aid information. Although some information is available on the web, this is still far from adequate.

It was shared from Vietnam Group that information on aid is mainly available through Ministry of Planning and Investment. Development assistance received from development partners is available. However, the information is not updated timely. Improving the situation requires government commitment for transparency and accountability. Likewise, CSOs need to monitor and evaluate ODA implementation. It is still challenging for the CSOs since their roles are not yet well-recognized, they have limited access to information and they lack capacity. Access to information is often facilitated if the organization has favourable relationships with pertinent agencies. Furthermore, the local media is biased and serves as the voice of the government. Policy advocacy, on the other hand, is only allowed for organizations with legal status. Currently, only MSD and SRD are the CSOs leading the information campaign on aid effectiveness.

From the presentations, it was revealed that there are some initiatives in each of the nations but are not sufficient. Some of the countries have right to information while others do not. Top down vs. bottom up approach were an important part of the discussion.

The presentation was followed by a presentation on *challenges CSOs face in accessing aid information*. Common contexts that CSOs' work is affected by and common challenges CSOs face were discussed. Human rights and freedom, legislation, and commitments to transparency, accountability and participation affect mainly the works of CSOs.

As challenges, CSOs lack space and opportunity, adverse political contexts constrain them, sometimes CSOs are even targets of state-sponsored repression, and they have limited capacity to effectively participate in the country's aid system. Moreover, lack of transparency and accountability in the negotiation, design, implementation and monitoring of aid programs and projects have limited the initiatives by CSOs.

## Day II, 25 June 2013

The second day began with the recap of the previous day.

### **Part 3: People's Research and its Application to Aid Research**

#### ***Research and Its Development***

##### ***Traditional form of research and common research conceptions***

The purpose of this session was to review the definition of research as practiced by people in knowledge production, to give a brief history of the development of research throughout history and its role in the development of science and society, and to identify common research misconceptions and understand why it is best for CSOs to break away from these.

Firstly, participants were asked to write in the meta-cards various components of research. After they put up on the board, the participants explained the components they wrote. After this, Ms. Maglahus presented some true or false statements about research which contributed to better understanding of research. The statements were important to help identify common research misconceptions and understand why it is best for CSOs to break away from these. She made a PowerPoint presentation to clarify and level-off understanding on key concepts.

Research was defined and discussed on, characteristics of traditional forms of research and elite domination in research was discussed as well. Traditionally, research used to have elite domination and control. They were out of the social realities. Research has various purposes and interests. But it was noted that research does not necessarily demand expertise and documentation.

### ***Peoples' research and aid observatorio***

The session introduced and familiarized the participants with people's research, its objectives and principles. They were able to develop better understanding of the significance of people's research in Aid observatorio work and to appreciate it as an appropriate approach in studying development cooperation.

As people's research serves the needs and interests of people, it looks into the impact on the lives of the marginalized, main source of information is the social practice of the people and supports and informs social change.

A research discovers the social condition, uncovers power relations, and guides action to deal with the problems. Grounded in actual living conditions, it is necessary for improving the conditions of the people and to consolidate CSO networks and information building and exchange. The people who are committed to interests, needs and rights of people and those with honor, integrity and quality are interested in people's research. From discussion, it was considered that in many cases there is a lot of gap—local communities are not consulted.

The participants shared their experiences. They acknowledged the effectiveness of information dissemination.

### ***Approaches and Strategies to People's Research***

The discussion on this topic has deepened understanding on various approaches and strategies to policy research and its different design components.

People's research can be undertaken adopting various approaches and strategies. They can consist of description of policies, critical analysis of policies and evaluation, recommendation, historical and social context, quantitative surveys, and evaluation of policy implementation and impacts. Instances of descriptive research were discussed at length. It was noted that while using secondary data, the context, who and when need to be considered. Also a researcher must watch out for the sampling errors.

### *Steps in Conducting Peoples' Research in the Context of CSO Aid Observatorios*

This session was designed to familiarize the participants with the steps in conducting people's research in the context of CSO Aid Observatorio, to familiarize the participants with commonly used methods in research and their respective strength and limitations in gathering information, and to provide some guidelines on how to formulate research problems relevant to Aid Observatorio work, and how to organize and analyze data.

Five steps to people's research were introduced: formulate the problem, set the goals of the research, identify the strategy and approach, identify sources of data and data gathering procedures, and process and analyze data. Each of the steps was discussed at length.

The first step is important for conceptualization of the topic with considerations of relevance, resources, time, and capacity for research. Scopes are delineated and research problem is formulated. Secondly, the research goals spell out the scope and limitation of the research, shed light on the purpose of the research, clarify where information and data will come from and what will be accomplished. The third stage includes strategies and approaches for description, analysis, surveys and evaluation of policy implementation and impacts. Fourthly, sources of data and data gathering procedures such as primary or secondary, review of policy documents, policy briefs, agreements, treaties, documents, data from aid monitoring of CSO observatorio, records of other CSOs or institutions that conduct monitoring of development cooperation, media information and government statistics are made. Methods may be quantitative or qualitative which were illustrated in the presentation. Finally come data processing and analysis. Quantitative data is processed and analyzed using statistical software such as SPSS, Excel and may make use of various statistical measures. Qualitative data processing does not need dealing with complex quantitative analysis. Rather, interviews, FGDs and other methods used to gather data must be properly documented, recorded and transcribed. Data may then be grouped according to themes and subthemes.

The participants were presented with some **tips and guidelines in organizing and analyzing qualitative data**. In addition, they were cautioned to watch out if there is democratic ownership, if the research reflects people's interests. It was also considered that missing information is as critical as what is there. Compare and contrast with international/national policies will always be useful.

#### **Group Work**

After discussion on concepts of research, people's research, approaches and steps, the participants were asked to make a design of a people's research. Followings were provided as the guiding questions:

- 1) Pick a research topic related to development effectiveness
- 2) Formulate the research problem
- 3) Set the goals of the research

- 4) Identify strategy and approach
- 5) Identify sources of data and data gathering procedures
- 6) Proposed data analysis and data processing

### Presentations

Country	Research topic	Research problem	Goals	Strategy and approaches	Sources and procedures	Data analysis and processing	Remarks
Nepal	Aid flow in health and sanitation in Nepal	Lack of information in aid flow	To find out the trend of aid flow in health and sanitation in Nepal	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Descriptive,</li> <li>• Quantitative</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• OECD DAC website</li> <li>• Budget, AMP database, relevant ministries, Social Welfare Council</li> <li>• Bilateral and multilateral donors</li> <li>• Health offices</li> <li>• CSOs working in health and sanitation</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Tabulation</li> <li>• Analysis in spreadsheet</li> <li>• Comparative analysis: commitment vs. disbursement</li> <li>• Observation of aid flow through various agencies</li> <li>• Use of online and offline data analysis, mapping and geo-coding software</li> </ul>	Turning the research problems into questions is useful; lack of information can be focused
Bangladesh	Information gap in aid flow in Bangladesh	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Individual project budget information is not available</li> <li>• Aid flow status not available</li> <li>• Implementation status information not available</li> <li>• Hidden</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Identify the root causes of the unavailability of required information and find out the way forward</li> <li>• Identify the ways to create popular</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Descriptive</li> <li>• Critical analysis</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Relevant policies</li> <li>• Reports, publications, websites</li> <li>• Ground level sources</li> <li>• Relevant experts</li> <li>• Government agencies and officials</li> <li>• Donor agencies</li> <li>• CSOs working on the issue</li> <li>• Media professionals</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Narratives</li> </ul>	

Country	Research topic	Research problem	Goals	Strategy and approaches	Sources and procedures	Data analysis and processing	Remarks
		<p>conditions and interests not mentioned</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Information not understandable to grassroots people.</li> </ul>	information packages for the grassroots and community		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Think tanks</li> <li>• Parliamentarians</li> </ul>		
Mongolia	Infrastructure in urban area Mongolia		Reduce the gaps	Quantitative/descriptive			Only the research may not be able to reduce the gaps; what is the scope of the research? Quantitative, descriptive...?
Vietnam	The role of CSOs in monitoring the governmental ODA projects' implementation	The limitation of CSOs' roles in monitoring governmental ODA projects' implementation	The research aims to review the legal environment for CSOs in monitoring governmental ODA projects' implementation	Critical analysis of policies: Current policies do not mention the involvement of CSOs in monitoring ODA projects' implementation	<p>Desk-study: Available legal documents for CSOs, and degree 38 on guideline to manage and use ODA's fund in Vietnam</p> <p>Experience from regional and international country;</p> <p>Legal environment for CSOs</p> <p>Qualitative: in-depth interview with CSOs</p>	Interviewing, government documents, website, media	

Following the group presentations, each of the group was provided feedback and comments from other group members and resource person. A summary of the presentations was made. The participants shared their experiences, cases and problems with development effectiveness. There were also the bitter experiences in development effectiveness: no water in the tap after completion of drinking water project; just paper buffaloes; and digging the ponds and again refilling.

### ***Writing research report***

A brief discussion was made on writing research report. A few are to be seriously considered. Firstly, a research requires accuracy in presentation. It should have simplicity and logical order and development. The writer needs to use imagination in reporting so as not to make it boring and monotonous. It also needs to be distinguishable from writings for popularization.

### ***Summary of Application of People's Research in the Context of Aid Observatorio***

On summing up, the use of research was appreciated for its use in continuing work in aid observatorio, and in enumerating some ways on how to add a new body of knowledge to existing literature in aid policy.

## Day III, 26 June 2013

### **Part 4: Data Management**

Mr. Bibhusan Bista took the responsibility of the resource person for this part of the training. It has contributed to bringing about conceptual clarity to the participants on data and open data, works of International Aid Transparency Initiative (IATI) and importance of open data for development effectiveness. Managing data, open data initiatives and Open Nepal forum were introduced in the training.

Firstly, all the participants were asked to write their understanding of these concepts. Based on their expressions, some initial warm-up discussions were made. Then the concepts were discussed one after another along with presentations by Mr. Bista.

### ***Concept of Open Data***

Data is facts and statistics collected together for reference or analysis. From data through information and knowledge emerges the wisdom.

Open data was defined and discussed. Open data is data that can be freely used, reused and redistributed by anyone - subject only, at most, to the requirement to attribute and share alike. It is useful for information, transparency, accountability, efficiency, business and innovation, citizen participation and enhances efficient use of public resources.

Some ways to open up data is to choose relevant datasets, apply for an open license, make data available and make it discoverable (through portals, geo-mapping, open source data management system, open data hubs etc).

### ***Introducing Open Nepal***

Mr. Bista introduced Open Nepal as an initiative in Nepal for open data and information. It is a collaborative platform to promote the availability of better data and provide tools, skills and

support to help those in the development ecosystem to access, analyze and use data for more inclusive and effective development.

Open Nepal works based on an open data ecosystem. Open data platform in the system is fed in data through various sources and legacy systems. Software developers use data in creating visualizations which will be used by experts and educated citizens. The experts build services targeted both to educated and less educated citizens.

Challenges in implementing Open Data include

- Data remains in the domain of the elite
- Buy-in from the people on issue of transparency
- Data literacy is an issue
- Currently, open data is an agenda of the governments through IATI. There is a need to involve citizens
- Create an ecosystem for open data.
- In areas where internet is an issue, CSOs can be intermediaries. This is where technology comes in.

### ***Data Management and Principles***

Data management involves a group of activities relating to the planning, development, implementation and administration of systems for the acquisition, storage, security, retrieval, dissemination, archiving and disposal of data.

Better data management is necessary to enhance effectiveness and efficiency, to gain knowledge economy, to compete with the external factors and also for the reason that data is required legally and for credibility.

Data management is often supported by tools and technologies. It is underlined by some key principles that data is asset and compliant with law, it should be shared, accessible, fit for use, compliant with law, secure, defined, and original.

### ***IATI***

International Aid Transparency Initiative (IATI) was another topic. IATI is a protocol and a common standard to report foreign aid, it is a political commitment to publish open data in a standard format.

IATI was launched in September 2008 at the Accra HLF, as a voluntary, multi-stakeholder initiative to increase aid transparency in order to maximize impact on poverty. The standard includes the information such as basic project details, organizations involved, financial information, sub-national geographic information, terms and conditions, results, and relevant documents.

The plenary discussion also showed the other side of IATI. The inclusion of the private sector in this multi-stakeholder body sidelined CSOs. Furthermore, the private sector is using IATI for investment monitoring, thus becoming an opportunity for companies to find areas for investments in certain countries. There is also a cost to joining IATI which can be an expression of tied aid. For example, in order for countries in Africa to commit to IATI, it has to revamp its software and IT systems. This will require governments to purchase softwares and services through loans from donor governments.

The presentations were followed by discussions. During the discussion it was considered that data needs ownership at local level. Open data initiatives should be according to the need, control and initiatives at the local level. As is said knowledge is power, the data should chiefly empower the local people than becoming others' tool to control some communities. Remaining free from hegemony, we need to represent ourselves.

### ***Data classification and coding***

Ms. Farhana Akter from Bangladesh shared her knowledge and experience in data classification and coding which were discussed as important for transparency and accessibility, project level database, searchable data, and better and specific data. How OECD has assigned various codes for different sectors was introduced.

The need for data classification and coding stems from the central challenges in monitoring development projects. These are mainly monitoring where aid allocations are actually spent, issues of missing or unreported data, questions on aid coordination, and what works (or does not work) in a recipient country. Data classification and coding therefore, makes aid more transparent and accessible to a wide range of stakeholders. Code sheets are generally used to categorize data. The most common code sheet utilized to monitor aid the OECD code sheet.

Day IV, 27 June 2013

## **Part 5: Disseminating and Popularizing Information on Development Effectiveness**

### ***Advocacy and Approaches in Advocacy Work***

The session has been useful to the participants as it enhanced their understanding of advocacy for development effectiveness. Experiences in advocacy were shared before actually beginning the training session. Ms. Myrna Maglahus introduced the elements, approaches, skills and processes of advocacy.

Basically, vulnerable groups, context of inequality, and the need to influence are vital. While lobbying involves direct communication with decision-makers, campaign deals with maximizing a wide-range of platforms. Information gathering; negotiation and assertiveness; case presentation; and working with different types of people and groups are required as skills. Mapping out the environment, defining goals and objectives, getting to know the audience, defining and delivering the key message, capacity-building, expanding network and mobilizing support were discussed as the processes to be adopted in advocacy. Monitoring and evaluation can be carried out through qualitative methods or quantitatively through surveys.

Next, the participants were prompted for a group work to design an advocacy plan. They were asked to reflect back on their people's research and create a hypothetical scenario of the result of people's research. Out of the hypothetical result of the people's research, they were guided to create an advocacy plan.

### ***Group presentations***

The groups came up with different key messages for advocacy: develop infrastructure in *ger* area (Mongolia); CSOs should involve in monitoring ODA for development effectiveness (Vietnam); revision and reformation of policies and guidelines related to health and sanitation in indispensable, and creation of measures for effective implementation is the key (Nepal); people's

advocacy for aid policy and information flow (Bangladesh). “Pregnant women, your responsibilities, not foreign aid!” was introduced as the key message as part of National Campaign for Maternal Mortality Rate Reduction, without Foreign Aid in Indonesia. This was aimed to achieve by alliance-building, stakeholders involvement and media campaign. Likewise, other commonly adopted strategies were training, meeting, lobby, alliance building, etc. as strategies.

Each of the groups was provided with comments and feedbacks so that they could improve their advocacy plans for better results.

### ***Main Channels of Raising Public Awareness on Development Effectiveness***

Facilitated by Ms. Myrna Maglahus's presentation, various channels were discussed as the channels for awareness raising. Different channels were discussed as tools to facilitate public information on aid and development effectiveness.

A forum allows a venue for discussion and education. Public engagement for the reasons like signature campaign is another good way. Broadcast and print media can reach to larger audience. Likewise, advantages and disadvantages of various media platforms and how they can be used were discussed. In addition, the participants shared their experiences of media mobilization and partnership, and the attitude of media towards NGOs/CSOs in their countries.

### ***Maximizing Media for Public Awareness on Development Effectiveness***

The session was focused on using media for maximizing dissemination of development effectiveness information; and creating a media action plan for disseminating or popularizing aid information.

A presentation was followed by group discussion. This group work was planned to build on the same advocacy plan developed in the previous session. They were reminded to consider the audience, medium or media to be used, time considerations, and expected output or impact.

### ***Presentations***

Nepal Group chose public at large as target audience for which they wanted to use community radios, street drama, television, posters, mothers' groups, etc. In a year they expected the communities aware of their rights leading to their increased participation and formation of pressure groups.

Mongolia Group chose local communities, CSOs and local authorities as the target group. Both electronic and print media, public forums and mobile phones were to be used. A national meeting was also planned. Through this they expected broader dissemination of information, expansion of network, and collaboration.

Bangladesh Group planned to reach local communities and CSOs through television and radio programs, meetings, cultural programs and networking. Millions of people were expected to reach to in this way.

CSOs, umbrella organizations, development partners, Ministry of Planning and Investment, Ministry of Finance, beneficiaries, media, and ODA implementing agencies were the targets of Vietnam Group. The key message would be 'Support CSOs as independent development actors in their own right, and commit to an enabling legal environment for their work in monitoring

governmental ODA projects' implementation in Vietnam'. It will be achieved through capacity building, lobbying, and networking.

Indonesia Group came up with 'Raising public awareness' campaign. It was targeted to reach to people above 19 through radio and television programs and face to face dialogues. Ultimately, enhanced understanding and awareness will lead to people taking action on the issue.

#### Day V, 24 June 2013

#### **Country Sharing**

The first session on this day was devoted to the sharing of country experiences and situations on aid transparency and aid information.

Bangladeshi participants shared that CSOs in Bangladesh have been working for aid transparency and effectiveness and development effectiveness. They have engaged in capacity building of district CSOs and local government agencies. Publicity has been gained through media, workshop, reports, publications, sharing and talk shows. A legal act was said to have been in final stage.

Not having aid policy, and lack of capacity development activities and information were the challenges. They shared their learning that people want to know development effectiveness and how they can be a part of this process. CSOs should have some supporting role to the government. Nevertheless, presently, more than 40 CSOs have been working on aid issue, and are making joint efforts. NGO Affairs Bureau records the foreign aid that NGOs are receiving.

From the sharing it was found that Indonesia has aid policy (law of state finance). In March/April government publishes aid report. If aid is found not necessary it can be rejected. Project aid is found declining. However, program aid for changing policy is still available. Government publishes yellow book (with proposed aid), blue book (with approved aid) and brown book (with ongoing projects).

As shared by the participants, aid flow in Mongolia has not been much effective in addressing the housing, water and sanitation in Mongolia. Vietnamese participants shared the scenario of CSO engagement on aid in Vietnam. But only some CSOs/NGOs are able to do advocacy.

Various aid transparency initiatives in Nepal were shared. CAHURAST, Janautthan Pratisthan and NGO Federation of Nepal as well as other organizations have been involved for aid information, effectiveness and development effectiveness. Role of Social Welfare Council (SWC), Ministry of Finance, and Ministry of Federal Affairs and Local Development were briefed. Open Nepal, a recent forum for open data, was introduced as an initiative to contribute to aid transparency along with other data. Aid Management Platform in Ministry of Finance has initiated a data portal for foreign aid, but the accessibility to it is limited and does not hold the complete data. Although SWC has a lot of aid data pertaining to NGOs and INGOs, it has not computerized or managed the aid data and information.

#### **5.2.3 Closing session**

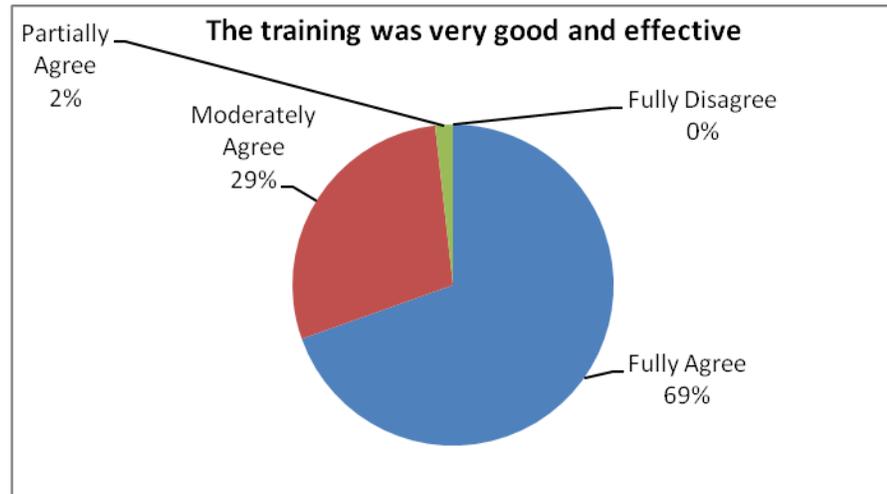
The closing session was chaired by Ms. Sharmila Karki, President of NGO Federation of Nepal. In this session, all the participants were offered a short time to share their personal experiences and effectiveness of the training. They were also asked to fill the evaluation form.

Ms. Sharmila Karki and Ms. Myrna Maglahus offered certificate of participation to all the participants of the training. Both of them were asked for their closing remarks. Ms. Maglahus thanked all the participants and management for their participation and cooperation. Ms. Karki pointed out the need of creating a critical mass to observe and monitor aid. She suggested that we need to be careful about the local context and scenario. We need to make sure that the earmarked money is not open to international organizations. She hoped the training will lead to the formulation of a practical strategy for different countries.

Finally, the participants have agreed to explore on the possibilities of developing a bulletin and formulate strategies for the future regional and international level advocacy. Back home, they will discuss further so that they can come up with some common agenda and strategy. The agenda could be national level and regional level. Any relevant information could be disseminated through Reality of Aid.

## 6. Evaluation of the training

The training was successfully completed as planned. All the participants were distributed an evaluation form so that the training could be evaluated from the perspective of the participants as well. The areas of evaluation included topics and issues discussed; resource speakers and facilitators; quality of



participation; facilitation and time management; secretariat and technical support; and venue, food and accommodation. Asked if the above areas were very good and effective, 69 percent of the participants fully agreed, 29 percent of them moderately agreed and 2 percent of them partially agreed.

All of the participants also have stated that the objectives of the training and their expectations are met.

Annex I: List of participants

Aid Observatorio  
Regional Skill Training  
24-28 June 2013, Dhulikhel, Nepal

S.N.	Name of the participant	Organization	Country	24 June	25 June	26 June	27 June	28 June	Remarks
1.	Ms. Farhana Akter	VOICE	Bangladesh	√	√	√	√	√	Training participant
2.	Mr. Md Atiqur Rahman Tipu	CDP	Bangladesh	√	√	√	√	√	Training participant
3.	Mr. Donatus Klaudius Marut	INSIST	Indonesia	-	√	√	√	√	Training participant
4.	Ms. Enkhtsetseg Baljinnyam	CHRD	Mongolia	√	√	√	√	√	Training participant
5.	Ms. Mandkhaitsetsen Urantulkuur	Food Coalition	Mongolia	√	√	√	√	√	Training participant
6.	Mr. Amrit Bishwakarma	Janautthan Pratisthan	Nepal	√	√	√	√	√	Training participant
7.	Ms. Durga Karki	NGO Federation of Nepal	Nepal	√	√	√	√	√	Training participant
8.	Mr. Hukum Pokhrel	CAHURAST	Nepal	√	√	√	√	√	Training participant
9.	Mr. Hum Bhandari	NGO Federation of Nepal	Nepal	√	√	√	√	√	Documentation, management and facilitation
10.	Ms. Sharmila Karki	NGO Federation of Nepal	Nepal	√	-	√	√	√	As the President of NFN
11.	Ms. Pavitra Rana	Open Nepal	Nepal	-	-	√	√	√	Training participant
12.	Mr. Daya Sagar Shrestha	NFN	Nepal	-	-	-	-	√	As Executive Director of NFN
13.	Mr. Sadhuram Sapkota	NFN	Nepal	-	-	-	-	√	As Finance and Admin Associate of

									NFN
14	Mr. Bibhushan Bista	Young Innovations	Nepal	-	-	√	-	-	Resource person
15	Ms. Rinu Maharjan	Young Innovations	Nepal	-	-	√	-	-	Observer from Young Innovations
16	Ms. Myrna A. Maglahus	RoA AP	Philippines	√	√	√	√	√	Resource person
17	Ms. Trang Thu Hoang	MSD	Vietnam	√	√	√	√	√	Training participant
18	Ms. Nguyen ThiBich Ngoc	SRD	Vietnam	√	√	√	√	√	Training participant

Annex II: Training schedule

**AID OBSERVATORIO REGIONAL SKILLS TRAINING**  
**Dhulikhel, Nepal**  
**24-28 June 2013**

**Agenda**

**Objectives**

By the end of the training, the participants should be able to:

1. Familiarize themselves with the basic concepts, objectives and methods of aid observatorio;
2. Acquire basic skills in conducting and facilitating aid observatorio work in their own countries/communities

**Target Participants**

CSO representatives from Mongolia, Indonesia, Vietnam, Nepal and Bangladesh

<b>Time</b>	<b>Activities/Methods</b>	<b>Facilitator</b>
<b>Day 1</b>		
	<b>Introductions</b>	
0800-0830	Registration of Participants	
0830-0930 (1 hr)	Welcome Address from the President of NGO Federation of Nepal  Introduction and expectations of the participants  Objective Setting and Agenda-Setting	
	<b>Part 1: Development effectiveness: From Paris to Busan and beyond</b>	
0930-1030 (1 hr)	<b>Overview of the High-Level Forums that shaped the discussion on aid and development effectiveness</b> <b>Objectives:</b> 1. Create a timeline of high-level forums and the principles agreed upon per forum 2. Understand the principles agreed upon from Paris to Busan	
1030-1045 (15 min)	<b>Coffee/Tea Break</b>	
1045-1115 (30 min)	<b>Reframing Aid Effectiveness into Development Effectiveness – the principles and commitments of the Busan Partnership document (BPd)</b> <b>Objectives:</b> 1. Understand the principles and commitments contained in the Busan Partnership document (BPd) 2. Formulate an information dissemination plan to popularize	

	the key principles and commitments in the BPd	
1115-1145 (30 min)	<b>Human rights framework, including gender framework, in the development effectiveness agenda</b> <b>Objectives:</b> 1. Familiarize with the CSO key asks related to human rights and gender. 2. Understand the Busan high-level forum framework on human rights and gender. Identify priority areas for engagement in post-Busan context that are related to human rights and gender advocacy	
1145-1300 (1 hr and 15 min)	<b>Importance of CSO work on development effectiveness in the context of Busan Partnership document (BPd)</b> <b>Objectives:</b> Understand the importance of CSO engagement on development effectiveness in the post-Busan context	
1300-1400 (1 hr)	<b>Lunch</b>	
	<b>PART 2: The importance and challenges of accessing aid information (from the CSO Perspective)</b>	
1400-1500 (1 hr)	<b>Why CSOs need to monitor: Importance of accessing information on development effectiveness</b> <b>Objectives:</b> 1. Identify types and sources of aid information for CSO monitoring 2. Understand the significance of CSO aid monitoring under the post-Busan framework 3. Discuss the common challenges CSOs face in accessing information relevant to development effectiveness; 4. Propose some ways on how to address challenges in accessing information.	
1500-1530 (30 min)	<b>Challenges CSOs face in accessing aid information</b>	
1530-1545 (15 min)	<b>Coffee/Tea Break</b>	
	<b>Part 3: People's Research and its Application to Aid Research</b>	
1545-1645 ( 1hr)	<b>Research and Its Development</b> <b>Objectives:</b> 1. To review the definition of research as practiced by people in knowledge production; 2. To give a brief history of the development of research throughout history and its role in the development of science and society.	
1645-1700	<b>Wrap-up of Day 1/Announcements</b>	
<b>Day 2</b>		
0800-0830	<b>Registration</b>	

0830-0900 (30 min)	<b>Recap of Day 1</b>	
0900-1000 (1 hr)	<b>Traditional form of research and common research conceptions</b> <b>Objectives:</b> 1. To understand the nature and characteristics of traditional form of research; 2. To identify common research misconceptions and understand why it is best for CSOs to break away from these.	
1000-1015 (15 min)	<b>Coffee/Tea Break</b>	
1015-1215 (2 hrs)	<b>People's Research and Aid Observatorio Work</b> <b>Objectives;</b> 1. To introduce and familiarize the participants with people's research, its objectives and principles; 2. To understand the significance of people's research in Aid Observatorio Work and to appreciate it as an appropriate approach in studying development cooperation.	
1215-1300 (45 hr)	<b>CSOs in Aid Observatorios</b> <b>Objectives:</b> 1. To identify who and what groups are capable of implementing people's research on development cooperation; 2. To appreciate what characteristics should CSOs in Aid Observatorios have in order to be effective in pursuing development effectiveness.	
1300-1400 (1 hr)	<b>Lunch</b>	
1400-1430 (30 min)	<b>Approaches and Strategies to People's Research</b> <b>Objectives:</b> 1. To become familiar with the various approaches and strategies to policy research and its different design components	
1430-1530 (2 hrs)	<b>Steps in Conducting People's Research in the Context of CSO Aid Observatorios</b> <b>Objectives:</b> 1. To familiarize the participants with the steps in conducting people's research in the context of CSO Aid Observatorio 2. To familiarize the participants with commonly used methods in research and their respective strength and limitations in gathering information; 3. To provide some guidelines on how to formulate research problems relevant to Aid Observatorio work, and how to organize and analyze data.	

1530-1545 (15 min)	<b>Coffee/Tea Break</b>	
1545-1700 (45 min)	<b>Continuation of Group Discussion Presentation per country</b>	
1700-1715 (15min)	<b>Wrap-up of Day 2/Announcements</b>	
<b>Day 3</b>		
0800-0830	<b>Registration</b>	
0830-9000 (30 min)	<b>Recap of Day 2</b>	
0900-0930 (30 min)	<b>Summary of Application of People’s Research in the context of Aid Observatorio</b> <b>Objectives:</b> 1. To appreciate how the results of people’s research in development cooperation can be used in our continuing work in aid observatorio; 2. To enumerate some ways on how to add a new body of knowledge to existing literature in aid policy.	
	<b>Part 4: Data Management</b>	
0930-1000 (30 min)	<b>Concept of Open Data</b> <b>Objectives:</b> 1. Know the meaning and concept of Open Data; 2. Understand the importance of accessing information related to development effectiveness. 3. Familiarize with the work of IATI.	
1000-1030 (30 min)	<b>Data Management</b> <b>Objectives:</b> 1. Level-off understanding of data management.	
1030-1045 (15min)	<b>Coffee/Tea Break</b>	
1045-1115 (30 min)	<b>Principles of Data Management</b> <b>Objectives:</b> Learn the different principles of data management	
1115-1200 (45 min)	<b>Data Relevant to Aid Observatorio/ Sources of Data</b> <b>Objectives:</b> 1. Identify different types of information necessary for Aid Observatorio work; 2. Learn how ensure that data is accurate and appropriate.	
1200-1300 (1 hr)	<b>Challenges in Data Management:</b> <b>Objectives:</b> 1. Enumerate and discuss some of the challenges faced by CSOs in relation to enabling environment;	

	2. Come up with some answers on issues on Enabling Environment.	
1300-1400 (1 hr)	<b>Lunch</b>	
	<b>Part 5: Disseminating and Popularizing Information on Development Effectiveness</b>	
1400-1430 (30 min)	<b>Strategies and Approaches in Advocacy Work</b> <b>Objectives:</b> Understand the importance of development effectiveness advocacy.	
1430-1530 (2 hrs)	<b>Carrying-out advocacy work</b> <b>Objectives:</b> 1. Understand the different elements of an advocacy; 2. Carry-out an advocacy plan for aid observatorio.	
1530-1545 (15 min)	<b>Coffee/Tea Break</b>	
1545-1700 (1 hr 15 min)	<b>Continuation of Group Discussion</b> <b>Presentation of Advocacy Plans</b>	
1700-1715 (15 min)	<b>Wrap-up of Day 3/Announcements</b>	
<b>Day 4</b>		
0800-0830	<b>Registration</b>	
0830-0900 (30 min)	<b>Recap of Day 3</b>	
0900-1030	<b>Group Work: Planning for Advocacy</b>	
1030-1045	<b>Coffee/Tea Break</b>	
1045-1200	<b>Presentation of Advocacy Plans</b>	
1200-1300	<b>Ensuring Access to Accurate and Appropriate Data and Information on Development Effectiveness</b> <b>Objectives:</b> Learn some strategies on how to ensure access of CSOs and other stakeholders on information related to development effectiveness.	
1300-1400	<b>Lunch Break</b>	
1400-1500	<b>Main Channels of Raising Public Awareness on Development Effectiveness</b> <b>Objectives:</b> Learn and appreciate the different channels that can be maximized as tools to facilitate public information on aid and development effectiveness	
1500-1600	<b>Maximizing Media for Public Awareness on Development Effectiveness</b> <b>Objectives:</b> 1. Learn the importance of using media for maximizing dissemination of development effectiveness information;	

	2. Create a media action plan for disseminating or popularizing aid information.	
1600-1615	<b>Coffee/Tea Break</b>	
1615-1700	<b>Group Work</b>  <b>Presentation of group discussion</b>	
1700-1715	<b>Wrapping-up of Day4/Announcements</b>	
<b>Day 5</b>		
0800-0830	<b>Registration</b>	
0830-0900 (30 min)	<b>Recap</b>	
<b>Part 6: Setting-up of Aid Observatorio</b>		
0900-1000	<b>Sharing of CSOs doing aid monitoring</b> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. How you started?</li> <li>2. What was the strategy you used?</li> <li>3. Who were the people involved?</li> <li>4. Coordination?</li> <li>5. Sustainability?</li> <li>6. Mobilization?</li> </ol>	
1000-1015	<b>Coffee/Tea Break</b>	
1015-1100 (45 min)	<b>Planning on How to Set-up the Aid Observatorio</b>	
1100-1130	<b>Presentation of Plans</b>	
1130-1300	<b>Closing</b>  <b>Training Evaluation</b>	

### Annex III: Photos



NFN President Ms. Sharmila Karki making her inaugural speech



Ms. Myrna Magahus during one of her discussion sessions



The participants on group work (up and down)







Mr. Bibhusan Bista taking his session as a resource person



A fun time together



Ms. Maglahus handing over certificate of participation to Ms. Mandkhaitseten Urantulkhuur



Everyone on a group photo