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Foreword

The Sustainable Community Development Programme (SCDP), a joint programme of the National Planning Commission (NPC) and the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), is pleased to bring out this publication - "Reflections on Nepal Capacity 21 Initiative: Achievements and Lessons Learned". SCDP has been in operation for the last seven years. Geographically, it covers six districts of Nepal.

The concept of sustainable development is not new to Nepal. It was integrated into our development planning in the Sixth Plan (1982-87) and was further translated into actions since 1992, the beginning of the Eighth Plan, and the landmark year when the 'United Nations Conference on Environment and Development' was held.

Sustainable development is meeting people's needs and aspirations over time and space without depleting natural resources reserves and environment. It is about enabling people to plan, implement and manage their development in such a way that any unsustainable actions are identified and corrected locally through people's own initiatives. SCDP has truly embraced this concept.

This report highlights the roles and achievements of community-based organisations in planning and managing local development

in partnerships with local bodies and other related stakeholders. It describes both the processes and approaches of sustainable development as embraced by SCDP and illustrates how social mobilization can prove to be an effective tool to achieve the goal of sustainable development. The conservation and development initiatives tested at the local level have been instrumental in the formulation of national level sustainable development agenda, most notably, the recently launched Sustainable Development Agenda for Nepal (SDAN) which is an umbrella policy document to guide national level development plans and policies up to 2017.

The lessons learned from past seven years' experience in implementation of SCDP provide insights into community-based process of sustainable development. I believe that these lessons will be equally useful to other development agencies in making development more fruitful and sustainable at the local level. A common challenge facing all of us is to adapt and scale up such grassroots initiatives in other parts of the country to secure sustainable livelihood of Nepali people.



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सामुदायिक दिगो विकास कार्यक्रम
Sustainable Community Development Programme
(NEP/99/G81 & NEP/99/019)

Preface



The Sustainable Community Development Programme (SCDP) has completed its seven-year journey working with the people of six districts- Surkhet, Kailali, Dang, Humla, Myagdi and Okhaldhunga. It is the final year of its operation and this publication serves as a reflection of SCDP's achievements and lessons learned over a period of seven years. This document goes beyond the Programme terminal report that often highlights what have been achieved or what have not been achieved. It is an impact-oriented evaluative report that also examines what activities have been undertaken and how they were implemented. The report aims to provide insights on the achievements of the SCDP to inform our stakeholders at local, national and international level. It analyses how we have made impacts on the lives of people through our common efforts and where we need to improve.

This document addresses the three pillars of sustainable development- social development, economic development, and environment and

natural resources management. Capacity building for all three pillars of sustainable development has been discussed to promote and ensure sustainability in terms of social equity, economic growth, and environment and natural resources management at the community level. Local development initiatives like SCDP have been a platform in policy formulation especially the formulation of Sustainable Development Agenda for Nepal (SDAN). The institutionalisation of the Community-based Organisations are in progress and the District Development Committees and Support Organisations will take the lead role to ensure their institutional sustainability in the long run.

SCDP has learned a great deal and a number of lessons. They are discussed in an analytical manner in this report. The lessons learned from project design to planning, implementation, monitoring and evaluation will provide insights to the local initiatives and an opportunity for others working or contemplating on working in similar project elsewhere to reflect on its performance. SCDP has been successful to integrate the community-based sustainable development approaches and processes in local level development planning by the local bodies and civil society engaged in sustainable development. Seven years' time is certainly not a long period to sow, grow and nurture community-based sustainable development but SCDP as a pilot programme has demonstrated a clear path to achieve sustainable development.

Hum Bahadur Gurung
National Programme Manager

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Under Secretary, NPC and NPD/SCDP

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and Biswas Gauchan, Comptroller all from UNDP is also greatly acknowledged.

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We are grateful to National Planning Commission, Ministry of Finance, Ministry of Population and Environment, World Wildlife Fund, the World Conservation Union, Nepal Forum of Environmental Journalists, Sustainable Development Network and Backward Society Education for their support, partnership and collaboration in promoting sustainable development in Nepal.