



FINAL EVALUATION OF THE “PROTECT AND EMPOWER” PROJECT

Draft Report

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Learning Avenue

25 rue de l'Abbé Carton

75014 PARIS

Tél. 06 86 17 48 92

fhenard@learningavenue.fr

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Acronyms

AFD	French Development Agency
ECD	Early Childhood Development
FGD	Focus Group Discussion
GBV	Gender Based Violence
IGA	Income Generating Activity
M&E	Monitoring and Evaluation
NGOs	Non-Governmental Organisations
OECD	Organisation for Economic Cooperation and development
PE&D	Planète Enfant et Développement
PRAYAS Nepal	Prayatnashil Community Development
SDG	Sustainable Development Goals
SGBV	Sexual and Gender-based violence
SM	Social Mobiliser
SW	Social Worker
VAWG	Violence Against Women and Girls
VDC	Village Development Committee
VT	Vocational Training

Acknowledgement

The evaluators would like to express their gratitude to the many stakeholders who contributed their time and knowledge to inform this evaluation report. Particular thanks should go to the team of Planète Enfant et Développement in Paris and in Kathmandu who did not count their time to facilitate the data collection in such difficult conditions due to the pandemic.

PE&D, the partners, the consultants and stakeholders provided valuable access to information and data throughout the evaluation and freely gave time and insights to help deepen our understanding of the programme and the context.

The analysis and recommendations of this report do not necessarily reflect the views of PE&D.

Abstract

The final report of the evaluation of the “protect and empower” project launched by Planète Enfants et Développement aims at informing about the impact and sustainability of the results achieved during and after the execution of its activities from 2017 to 2020, although the programme started in 2015. The 2016-established France-based NGO identified two regions largely affected by the earthquakes of 2015, to launch a programme to help vulnerable and economically marginalised communities in Dhading and Kathmandu. The projects main objectives were to improve the lives of mothers and their children, by taking them out of violence and sex work, integrating their kids to school, improving their health and well-being and working on the community’s perceptions and gender understanding. With two sets of activities, the project was operated by two specialised organisations in the field : PRAYAS Nepal in Dhading and Child Nepal in Kathmandu. The interventions of the project were based in awareness sessions, specialised training, men’s involvement as role models and youth (and specially early childhood) education. The programme faced several challenges which prevented it from implementing all the predicted activities such as the earthquake of 2015 which affected early activities and the availability of partners, the administrative reforms and elections, and the global pandemic.

Although the programme finished in 2020, the data collection for the evaluation only took place remotely in June 2021 due to COVID-19 delays and the impossibility to run in-country interviews, which led to lower response and participation of the assessed actors. Because data was scarce, the present report was done through a documentary analysis, a scoping interview and impact interviews which aimed at investigating the perceptions, memories and life stories of the participants.

Introduction

This report is the final, external and independent evaluation of the project “Protect and empower” conducted by Planète Enfant et Développement (PE&D) in Nepal from 2017 to 2020. It had a twofold objective of Early Childhood Development and women empowerment in two areas: in the urban capital, Kathmandu, and the rural Dhading. The beneficiaries targeted were mostly women, mothers and their children from two vulnerable groups, namely women working in the entertainment sector in Kathmandu and from the marginalized Chepang community in Dhading. In addition, the indirect beneficiaries included their husband, men in the overall communities, teachers, and local authorities.

Although it faced some external constraints, the project was still able to run smoothly and to deliver tangible results on these women’s lives and especially empowerment, contributing to a more gender equal society where it was implemented. Among its many successes, the ECD targets outnumbered the provisions, women reported to feel more empowered, self-confident, healthier, and generated several successes for the implementation partners.

Recommendations include to continue capacity-building, especially regarding financial auditing and monitoring and evaluation, to re-assess the activities and main focuses for future projects and to build resilience for future COVID-19 waves and consequences.

This evaluation encountered many obstacles, such as the impossibility of conducting in-person interviews, low number of interviewees or lack of transmission of documentation on financial management and financial reports from PE&D, which makes it only partial. Hence, it merely scrutinizes the efficiency, the impacts observed on beneficiaries, by social mobilisers and on the sustainability and capacity building, when relevant.

1. Methodology

A. Updated objectives of the evaluation

This evaluation aims at informing PE&D, the donors and partners about the efficiency, impacts and sustainability of the results achieved and documented in the activity reports produced by PE&D, and at providing an assessment of current capacities. More precisely, it covers:

- **The impacts on the ultimate beneficiaries.** The evaluation identifies the progress in terms of increased awareness, changed attitudes, and initiatives taken by women and men in community development.
- **The efficiency and capacity of the partners** (the 3 NGOs) and the **operators** (e.g. social workers) to trigger change in the communities, in a sustainable manner, at individual level, community level as well as institutional level (municipalities and NGO-specific level¹).
- **The lessons to be drawn from the project strategy and the implementation of the project** by the 2 Nepalese NGOs with the support from PE&D.

Initially, this evaluation was much more ambitious and supposed to be much more detailed. With a methodology described in the inception report of July 2020, it was expected to document the inhouse relations between men and women to investigate gender behavioral changes, to shed light on the individual micro and macro evolution of perspective and attitude. However, this was abandoned due to a set of reasons, mainly the COVID-19 situation, and the impossibility to meet a large number of beneficiaries to collect their in-depth testimonies. Therefore, the team did its best to collect data on behavior change and acquired knowledge, but lacked sufficient beneficiaries to draw convincing conclusions. The focus of the evaluation is thus on the impact of the activities and their ability to last in time.

B. Obstacles and limitations

This evaluation faced some obstacles and constraints, which affected the depth and scope of its analysis.

- First, the Covid-19 crisis hampered the in-country field mission. Due to the closure of borders, lockdown and restrictions, **the data collection had to be done remotely, without focus groups or group discussions.** Every interview was done via a communication channel (phone, Zoom, etc) which means the interviewers could not establish a link with the interviewees and engage in small talks. The evaluation team did not go to Nepal and did not meet the beneficiaries of the activities (such as the local women working in the entertainment sector).
- The data collection was delayed to consider having in-person interviews, and finally **took place one year after the end of activities** (June 2021) remotely. In the meantime, the interviewees could have forgotten some information, changed their mind, be less responsive and interested in participating, and their status and concerns

¹ i.e. the capacity of PE&D, PRAYAS Nepal and Child Nepal to activate and sustain the strategy of the project.

are likely to have been affected by the pandemic. In addition, some Social Mobilisers (SM) were not working anymore for the implementing partners and were hard or impossible to reach, and so were the beneficiaries.

- The two above factors combined led to a **low response rate** from potential interviewees, and overall a **lack of representativity** of the interviewees' sample. Considering the situation, the evaluation ambitions were scaled down and the team was given a limited list of key informants to interview. The evaluation team tried its best to reach out to a maximum of stakeholders but, besides the difficult access, some interviewees did not respond, did it very late or missed the agreed interview (e.g., Eloise Jha, Shanti Nepal, PRAYAS Nepal). One implementing partner, PRAYAS Nepal, could not be interviewed regarding the impacts, although it played a key role in the Dhading area. Moreover, this report is unable to present a geographical analysis, as the sample from different villages was not adequate. Except for comparisons between Dhading and Kathmandu, local sub-level of analysis was excluded from the sample.
- The evaluation team **lacked documentation related to capacity and financial management**, which was unforeseen. PE&D had planned to release the financial report in June 2021, which was not published by the time of the writing of this report, and did not share any intermediary report. Moreover, no one from the HR or financial department was interviewed which prevented the evaluation report to assess the efficiency and the adequate use of resources.
- Finally, another difficulty for the assessment of the programme is the large number of NGOs working in the same sectors (ECD and women entertainment) and areas of intervention of PE&D, making it **difficult to isolate the effects on the overall community**. For direct beneficiaries, it was easy to assess their perceptions, and the impact on their life. Many interviewees mentioned changes in their overall community that are not solely imputable to PE&D project, as many NGOs work on the same zones and topics. Therefore, it is impossible to select and assess PE&D exclusive inputs to the change of behavior and mindset, although we can recognize that it contributed to the improvement of the overall perception.

These factors explain why the evaluation only copes with efficiency, impacts and sustainability, considering the information on activities were collected between 1 and 4 years after their implementation between 2017 and 2020.

C. Two-pronged and restricted data collection

The interviews were conducted in two phases, first in May 2020 for scoping interviews, and then in June 2021 for impact interviews. The evaluation team was supported by two Nepalese gender expert consultants, Nigma Tamrakar and Anita Ghimire. The objective of the scoping interviews was to determine the scope, the stakeholders and the expectations in terms of the final evaluation, whereas the impact interviews aimed at investigating the perceptions, memories and life stories of the participants. Some interviews were very long (more than one hour long), and therefore resemble the methodology of life stories, as women shared the evolution of their private and professional lives with much details.

In total, 9 people were interviewed in scoping interviews, and 16 were consulted during the impact interviews (see list in appendix A). The range of beneficiaries included: the project

leader, implementing partners, NGOs, beneficiaries, social mobilisers and former project managers. There were 4 beneficiaries from Child Nepal, 2 from PRAYAS Nepal, 3 SM of PRAYAS Nepal, 1 SM of Child Nepal. The vast majority of interviewees were women, with only 3 men, because both beneficiaries and SMs were mostly women. The type of interviewees and number were agreed upon with PE&D. After a joint meeting on 10 July 2020, it was decided to put emphasis on the interviews with social workers, as key implementers of the project at grassroot level, and to remove donors and Nepalese ministries from the informants list.

The questionnaires for each stakeholder were designed based on the scoping questions and the documentation available (see appendix B). The consultants were given a protocol to introduce the interview, ensure anonymity of the quote, etc.

2. Presentation of the project

A. The project leader

The project leader which designed and supported the project was Planète Enfants & Développement, the NGO born in 2016 out of the fusion of Planète Enfants and Enfants & Développement. Both were previously already working in Nepal, either in children's rights, trafficking or gender-based violence (GBV). The headquarters are located in Paris, and a small team (3 people) is based in Kathmandu.

PE&D's mandate is to "Strengthen the capacities of local actors (authorities, companies, civil society, communities and families) and empower them to ensure the protection of vulnerable children and to denounce and combat all forms of discrimination and exploitation of women and children." Therefore, the capacity-building aspect is an important part of this evaluation.

B. Project overview

The project "Protect and empower" targeted two central regions of Nepal: the urban area of Kathmandu and the remote and rural Dhading district and more precisely the following villages: Jogimara, Dhursa, Mahadevsthan, Gajuri and Pida. Both areas harshly suffered from the 2015 earthquake, and comprised vulnerable and economically marginalized communities (women in the entertainment sector and Chepong ethnic community). For the women in the entertainment sector, often sex workers, their jobs can be massager, cabin parlor, or any "facade" employment that in reality covers prostitution and violence. On the other side, women of the Chepong community lived excluded from the rest of the village and often did not have jobs.

The surrounding context of the implementation was uneasy, due to the aftermath of the earthquake, political crises and patriarchal society. However, PE&D already had expertise in the topic as it led an earlier similar project in Dhading only from 2015 to 2017 with Prayas Nepal, but this was the first time collaborating with Child Nepal in Kathmandu. Additionally, Seto Guras integrated the project in 2019 to deliver ECD training for teachers in Dhading and Kathmandu.

Against that backdrop, the project aimed at improving the lives of mothers and their children, by taking them out of violence and sex work, integrating their kids to school, improving their health and well-being and working on the community's perceptions and gender understanding. In a nutshell, the project aims at fighting gender-based discriminations and inequalities which result in economic disempowerment and vulnerability of women and children. Through the diverse activities, the project addressed gender inequality, women's lack of protection from exploitation in target communities, gender violence and women's disempowerment.

The project included two distinct sets of activities, with intertwined and consistent objectives, albeit specific focus as presented below:

	Stop VAWG in Chepang Communities – Prevention, Protection & Empowerment	Better Future for Mothers and Children
Location	Dhading (Jogimara, Dhursa, Mahadevsthan, Gajuri, Pida)	Kathmandu
Dates	Phase 1 2015-2017 Phase 2 2017-2020	2017-2020
Objectives	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reduce the prevalence of all forms of VAWG and promote the socio-economic inclusion of women • Bring positive behavioral changes, reinforce women protection mechanisms and contribute to empower women, promote gender equality 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Contribute to social and economic inclusion of women and children • Promotion of gender equality, protection of women against exploitation, creation of long-term conditions fostering an environment conducive to the development of young children.
Operators	PRAYAS Nepal, PE&D	Child Nepal, PE&D
Target population	Chepang community Women, men, adolescents Health and education professionals, local authorities	Worker of the entertainment sector Women, men, children Teachers and caretakers, NGO team members and staff
Types of interventions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Awareness sessions, education, institutional support, • capacity building, assistance, • materials dissemination, • men's involvement, • psychosocial counselling, • saving and credit and strengthening cooperatives • professional autonomy 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Awareness sessions, • men's mobilization, • psychosocial support, • professional autonomy, • vocational training and IGA, • saving and credit schemes • Development of ECD center, trainings, parental education, tools dissemination (this part is out of the evaluation).
Key indicators to reach	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 4250 individuals among them 1850 women at risk or survivors of physical, psychological, economical and sexual violence, 1800 men, 600 youths. • 150 women for counselling • 600 women and 100 men for awareness sessions 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 250 women working in prostitution, 20 men, 90 children • 30 staff members for 15 NGOs, 16 teachers and caretakers over 8 schools

The typology of intervention strategies included:

- **Awareness sessions /counselling** to mobilize the beneficiaries on gender issues and education and to support the women beneficiaries psychologically and socially.
- **Training** such as vocational training, income-generating activities (IGA), saving and credit schemes for the beneficiaries to encourage economic empowerment; but also training for the staff and social workers involved in the project.
- **Men's involvement** as role models to raise awareness among the male population and encourage behavioral change, not solely on GBV but other gender aspects of daily life, both at the individual and community level.
- **Youth education** and ECD within the different targeted areas, particularly for early childhood, and children of women working in the exploitation/ entertainment sector.

This project was original as it blended ECD and women's financial empowerment, drawing on the expertise of both PE&D and its partners.

C. Challenges faced

A number of serious challenges that might have hindered the project implementation should be taken into consideration;

- The **earthquake of 2015** froze the activities for a few months, and mobilized the NGOs, specifically Prayas Nepal, on the huge number of activities required by the urgency of the situation.
- The **over-solicitation of the two NGOs** following the earthquake might have distracted them from the orientation of the project, which valued the soft support (capacity building) and not the hard support (reconstruction) and was designed to trigger long term effect. Although it is essential, particularly in times of crisis, mindset change on gender might not be the first priority at a time of urgency. The project is not of humanitarian nature unlike numerous other aid development initiatives that took place from 2015.
- The **turn-over of staff**, who could find other or new job opportunities thanks to higher wages offered by other NGOs or employers, might have compromised the commitment and the learning process engaged through this project, specifically for capacity building activities.
- The **new constitution and administrative reform of 2016** on decentralization of the policies and powers significantly changed the implementation strategy. This new legal setting placed the two implementing partners in unexpected situations, requiring new types of cooperation with local staff unfamiliar with the new jurisdictions of the municipalities. This was also followed by **local elections in May 2017**, which froze the activities of the programme.
- The **global pandemic** impacted the health situation in Nepal, and the authorities' enforced a first lockdown on 24 March 2020, which stopped the activities. The beneficiaries had to abide by the sudden closure of the ECD Centre and the cessation of all activities. As a result, some activities were either cancelled altogether or rescheduled. In addition, it changed the economic situation of many beneficiaries and their community in a dramatic way, as for sex workers, restaurant, massage parlor and dance bar were the last business to re-open. The representative of the network AATWIN explained that during the 2-month lockdown, 25 entertainment workers

committed suicide, and many developed mental health issues. She also suggested developing IGA that are compatible with lockdown, such as online jobs or delivery.

3.Implementation

A. Division of labor

The project was a cooperation between the French NGO PE&D (present in Nepal since 1997), relying and strengthening the capacity of local partners with whom it signed a partnership agreement, that is, PRAYAS Nepal, Child Nepal and Seto Guras; and another NGO such as Shakti Samuha, Chhori and Saathi. The partnership agreement was renewed every year to allow flexibility.

The project was an opportunity for PRAYAS Nepal to further engage in social activities, especially with customized counselling thanks to skilled social workers. Child Nepal is a new partner for PE&D (although some activities had been shared beforehand) and the project was an opportunity to enlarge the scope of intervention, as Child Nepal used to work on children and mothers and not specifically on women involved in entertainment business.

PE&D selected these 2 NGOs as local implementers for their closeness to local actors and final beneficiaries (women and men). The intervention scale was relevant to make change happen at individual and community levels.

Throughout this project, PE&D was able to transfer its long-standing experience in the systematic approach to gender equality, raise the managerial capacities of the two NGOs in the steering of the project, the planning and programming of activities and above all, in the monitoring and evaluation. A recurrent problem faced by NGOs lies in their difficulty to collect and analyze data and use evidence-based methods to steer their activities and report on their impacts.

PE&D

Planète Enfants & Développement was the project leader piloting the structure and delegated the implementation of activity to the two implementation partners. Therefore, its missions were to provide technical support, overall financing and management monitoring, to ensure smooth coordination, and to offer initial topic-based training to the social workers each month. PE&D also took care of the financial monitoring and auditing, with an accountant in Kathmandu and a finance responsible in Paris.

The needs for organizational capacity development were evaluated yearly by PE&D and currently are mainly on financial management, activity reporting and networking events management. PE&D trained PRAYAS Nepal and Child Nepal on monitoring and evaluation, steering committee, how to seek co-funding, draft proposal, technical and financial report, and attract large donors. Further, the continuous communication, field visits, coordination meetings were naturally conducive to skills transfer.

In early 2020, the organization of tasks changed as PE&D closed its office in the capital and partially handed over the responsibility to PRAYAS Nepal and Child Nepal, while maintaining the capacity-building and aforementioned tasks.

PRAYAS Nepal

According to PE&D latest activity report, the relations with PRAYAS Nepal were uneasy at first as the NGO was overwhelmed with other projects due to the reconstruction after the earthquake. PE&D team had to work more to compensate for the lack of dedication, but benefitted from their excellent relations with local authorities. The former PE&D project manager was going to Dhading two weeks per month to train the team.

When asked to describe PRAYAS Nepal's tasks, a respondent explained that "PRAYAS Nepal has the role of a coordinator between all the different program local actors and responsibility of direct implementation of the activities. Other missions of PRAYAS Nepal were drafting monthly reports, meeting minutes and impact surveys. PE&D used all these tools for the reporting. PRAYAS Nepal also had to keep PE&D informed every month of all the expenses linked to the project. The organization and PE&D organized meetings at least one or two times per month to coordinate".

Child Nepal

This new partnership constituted a very positive cooperation, as Child Nepal's staff was very professional and organized. Its role was to identify social mobilisers, beneficiaries, and to conduct all activities and advocacy. It had the same responsibilities as PRAYAS Nepal but in Kathmandu.

B. Calendar

Overall, the time frame was respected despite the numerous challenges faced. Some minor changes occurred due to external events.

Initially, the project was scheduled from March 2017 to February 2020, but actually ran from March 2017 to June 2020 due to the onset of the pandemic. There was also some delay in the first phase of the project in Dhading for activities related to the local authorities.

C. Adaptation to the pandemic

Obviously, the implementation of activities was disturbed by the onset of the pandemic in early 2020. PE&D and its partners had to re-assess the situation, to reschedule, cancel or adapt their activities. Although it was not in their mandate, PE&D and its partners played a role in sensitizing to COVID-19 health guidelines and to support their beneficiaries during this tough period.

For example, Child Nepal developed a Facebook page "Blog of Preschool-BOP Nepal" in English and Nepalese to educate about homeschooling, communicate about resources, encourage washing hands, etc. It allowed a very minimal education as schools closed, and provided reliable information on the virus to an audience of around 3,500 people. New activities also included sensitization radio message diffusion in Chepang, Tamang and Nepali.

Moreover, the NGO SMs ensured a follow-up via phone text messages or calls to inform them about the pandemic, hygiene tips, and assess their needs. In Kathmandu, 67 were closely monitored and PE&D distributed relief packages and emergency cash to people excluded from the government donation scheme. In Dhading, follow-up also was organized by phone for 80

people, and 12 group sessions about sensitization took place just before the lockdown. Some beneficiaries who benefited from emergency cash appeared extremely grateful for the support during the lockdown.

D. Table of completion of activities

Based on a table provided by PE&D and the originally planned activities and objectives, the following simplified table assesses the level of completion or achievement of the activity, targets and forecast results. However, the evaluation team is not responsible for the accuracy of the result presented below.

Below is the color-code of completion of activities and targets

	Impossible to assess with current figures/information
	0-25%
	25-50%
	50-75%
	75-100%
	100% or outnumbering targets

Specific objectives	Expected results for each specific objective	Main activities (and monitoring indicators) planned	Indicators of results achieved	Level of completion
<p>Specific Objective 1: Promote gender equality and protect women against exploration in the target communities.</p>	<p>Résultat 1 : Women's rights are respected</p>	<p>R1A1 : awareness raising/information on gender equality and women's rights</p> <p>DHADING :</p> <p>999 orientation sessions on gender equality and women's rights are provided</p> <p>At least 50 families are monitored (in Dhading) to assess their progress in terms of gender equality and respect for their rights.</p>	<p>100% of the beneficiary women received all the necessary information on the competent services to respond to gender-based violence and the women's protection committees were strengthened in their capacity to deal with cases.</p> <p>BUT 840 orientation sessions on gender carried out, no information on the 50 families monitored</p>	
		<p>R1A2 : Mobilization of male role models</p> <p>Training sessions on male engagement are provided to influential men in their communities (KTM and Dhading)</p> <p>Cascading activities to sensitize and mobilize men are organized with the trained men in their communities</p>	<p>Social workers observed an increase in decision-making by women in the family circle in 45% of families.</p>	

		<p>R1A3 : Psychosocial support</p> <p>40% of direct beneficiaries received psycho-social support (duration of support according to individual needs).</p>	<p>100% of the direct beneficiaries at KTM received psycho-social support and 80% of them acknowledge that they have regained their self-confidence</p>	
		<p>R1A4 : 1256 visits to 'entertainment' establishments around Kalanki, bus stops (New Bus Park), Gongabu and Thamel.</p>	<p>Missing total results</p> <p>11 visits were made to a total of 428 different establishments, with an impact (direct or indirect) on 254 women and 48 children. In phase 2, 745 visits.</p> <p>for a total of x different establishments, impact (direct or indirect) on x women and x children.</p>	
	<p>Result 2 : women have improved their livelihoods</p>	<p>R2A1 : Promotion of savings and credit mechanisms</p> <p>Trainings on finance, savings and microcredit have been organized for TS (Dhading only)</p> <p>100% of the members of the focus groups in Dhading were asked to create a common savings system or to improve the existing one.</p> <p>Savings groups (depending on the number of beneficiaries) have been created in Gongabu</p>	<p>80% of women direct beneficiaries received all the necessary information on ways to improve their livelihoods and acknowledged that they understood this information as a result of the discussions.</p>	

		<p>R2A2 : Access to professional autonomy (vocational training and income-generating activities)</p> <p>Orientation sessions on vocational training, career development and entrepreneurship support are organized every two months (then monthly in Q2) in Kathmandu and via group sessions in Dhading.</p> <p>All beneficiaries who request it receive individual support in accessing vocational training or in setting up income-generating activities.</p>	<p>In Dhading, 18% of direct beneficiaries engaged in activities to access new or improved income (entrepreneurship training and IGA support)</p> <p>Of the 133 beneficiary mothers, 59 have either undertaken training or received support for the development of an income-generating activity (i.e. 36% of direct beneficiaries) + 22 are members of the savings and credit group (i.e. 57%)</p>	
<p>OBJECTIVE 2 : Create and promote long term conditions fostering an environment conducive to the development of young children</p>	<p>Result 1 : 3 to 5 year old children of female beneficiaries have access to quality preschool education</p>	<p>R1A1 : Recruitment and training of ECD Model Centre staff</p> <p>In the first 6 months of the project, qualified staff were recruited and trained to ensure a high quality of service in the model early childhood development center.</p> <p>Subsequently, Seto Gurans, a local organization with expertise in ECD, continued to train all ECD teachers.</p>	<p>89 children were welcomed in the model center and received the quality education for which staff have been trained. NB: 34 regular children at the end of December 2019</p>	

		R1A2 : installation of ECD Centre equipment In the first 6 months of the project, adapted learning and teaching materials were purchased and provided to the center.	ECD center was equipped with pedagogical items	
		R1A3: implementation of early childhood curricula (ECD Centre + schools) An age-appropriate curriculum was developed and improved throughout Phase 1 and followed up in Phase 2, in conjunction with Parent Teacher Associations (PTA) and School Management Committees (SMC). Monitored by regular visits	The curricula were developed, but there was no target regarding the number of monitoring meetings	
		R1A4 : Access to medical care 100% of the children at the center had regular medical check-ups	100% of children improved their health conditions (weight gain, better oral hygiene, better overall hygiene, nutrition). Total of 564 checkups on mothers and children in T2 (excluding parental sessions on hygiene/health) - including 1 special session on Corona in KTM in Feb 2020 (33 participants)	
		R1A5 : Hand washing and tooth brushing awareness (YAK project)	Awareness session and training conducted	

	Result 2 : The quality of pre-school education at home and at school in the target communities has improved.	R2A1 : Parental education 100% of the beneficiary parents participated in one or more orientation sessions on parenting	100% of children of primary school age at the end of the school year entered a primary school 18 children in total were integrated in the mainstream school system (kindergarten or primary), their situation and that of their parents having stabilized 80% of direct beneficiary parents participating in parenting education activities recognised the importance of pre-school education and 70% committed to becoming more involved in their young children's education BUT How many parents participated in one or more orientation session?	
		R2A2 : training for ECD supervisors and teachers The beneficiary teachers were trained in age- and gender-appropriate teaching techniques (first by a consultant, then by Seto Gurans, an official national body)	Conducted, but there was no target	

Result 3: civil society stakeholders in the intervention districts have increased their skills in women's empowerment and early childhood development.

R3A1 : training for local partners

Local partners received at least 4 trainings per year to improve their capacity and knowledge

Numerous meetings at local and district level were organized in urban and rural areas

Higher than planned.

		R3A2 : Development and dissemination of tools on gender equality -Training curricula have been created on gender equality	Completed	
		R3A3 : Development and dissemination of tools for pre-primary schools -Training curricula have been created on quality pre-school education	Tool kit for preschool education (ideas of routine, activities) and training manual for preschool teacher to identify kids with special needs or in difficulty	

As the above table shows, PE&D and its partners were able to fully implement their activities planned, some even out passing the initial numerical targets. However, it should be noted that these good results are also due to the **lack of quantitative objectives**, which makes it impossible to assess the degree to which the activity reaches the adequate number of beneficiaries, or if the number of meetings held was sufficient. Further, the activities that were cancelled or postponed were missing or not clearly red-flagged, and the evaluation team could not assess the extent to which all the activities initially planned were implemented. All the numbers indicated were transmitted to the valuation team by PE&D, and were not set up by the evaluation team who could not control the accuracy of the data. Despite this lack of clarity, overall, the implementation of the project was a clear success, in particular for ECD-related activities, beyond target regarding children's enrollment at school.

All activities were conducted both in Kathmandu and Dhading, except the administrative help for official documents (only Dhading) and the access to preschool education (the only center was in Kathmandu).

4. Assessment of the project

This evaluation follows the OECD criteria relevance, coherence, efficiency, effectiveness, impact and sustainability. However, **only the efficiency, impacts and part of the sustainability criteria were able to be assessed**, due to methodological constraints and lack of information mentioned in the section “Methodology”. Thus, only a very brief overview of the other criteria is provided, to make use of the data collected, but this does not constitute an analysis *per se*. It simply offers a glimpse of information based on our understanding.

A. Relevance

Regarding the relevance, it appears that the project was very well designed, targeted marginalized communities and identified real needs and leverages for change. The challenges (fragility of the Chepang community, men’s reluctance) were correctly identified, the zones and adequate partners as well, which led to a successful implementation and significant impact on health, education, livelihood and well-being.

The objectives were in line with many Sustainable Development Goals (SDG) on poverty (1), health (3), quality education (4), gender equality (5), decent employment (8) and reduction of inequalities (10). Further on, the program fits into its PE&D gender policy², which focuses on fighting Violence Against Women and Gender (VAWG), children’s protection, discrimination and patriarchal traditions that undermine women’s rights.

Due to the evolution of sanitary context, a future project should focus more on income-generating activities to build resilience in the communities and improve nutrition.

B. Coherence

Similarly to the previous criteria, this project does not aim at assessing the coherence. However, at first glance and based on the interviews, it seems that, despite the important number of NGOs working on the same areas and topics, there was no overlap or contradiction.

Several international and national NGOs were simultaneously working on ECD, women’s empowerment or ending women’s trafficking and prostitution, such as Peel on the Chepang community, Biswas Nepal for women in the entertainment sector, among many others, like Chhori, Sworjgar, Shanti Nepal, Focus Nepal, AATWIN, ...

Besides, the respondents belonging to other NGOs (AATWIN, Chhori) deemed that it created a better collaboration, more leverage to jointly lobby local authorities, and a virtuous cycle for the beneficiaries that enjoy activities from different NGOs.

² PE&D, Gender policy, September 2018.

C. Efficiency

The efficiency of financial, human and material resources used cannot be assessed at all due to a complete lack of information. There was no information either on the original budget, intermediary or final financial report. Yet, the NGOs and SMs were systematically asked whether they had sufficient funds and resources to conduct their mission, and all approved. There was no mention of budget mismanagement.

However, there might have been a significant staff (especially project managers and director) turnover in PE&D (with Eloise and Sushila leaving in the middle of the project) but the activities and beneficiaries were not impacted.

D. Effectiveness

This part aims at analyzing the achievement of the project's objectives, especially regarding the effective transfer of skills and capacity building of PE&D towards Child Nepal and PRAYAS Nepal.

As exposed in the table of the level of implementation above, the project successfully managed to reach its **desired objectives of empowering women and improving ECD and early life** of kids aged between 3 and 5 in two districts of Nepal. The impacts below will detail in a qualitative manner how respondents evaluated the changes.

Regarding the capacity-building, which constitutes another cross-cutting goal of PE&D, the project leader did its best to ensure the sustainability and autonomy of its local partners by sharing its technical expertise. Unfortunately, as PRAYAS Nepal was only interviewed during the scoping interviews, only Child Nepal responded to questions related to relationship, communication and training by PE&D.

Partners professionalism

First, PE&D correctly identified resourceful and hard-working partners. PE&D had already worked with PRAYAS Nepal, which received a positive evaluation on various indicators in 2019 by an independent agency, and Child Nepal was praised several times for its professionalism, effective communication, and involvement. Yet, the representative of AATWIN, a network of NGOs engaged against human trafficking and children's work, deemed that Child Nepal could have communicated more on success stories, shared intermediary and final reports, and clearly mentioned the donor and project leader (she was very surprised to see a French evaluation team until she was explained the project leader was a French-based NGO). Likewise, the representative of Chhori was not informed personally about the activities conducted, but discovered them by hazard online, via Facebook. She enjoyed the ECD photos that she found inspiring and wished that she could have been told about the exact activities conducted. One recommendation could be to start a newsletter or notice to inform and update the partners working in the same zone on the same topic about the activities conducted and their results.

As neither Prayas nor Shanti Nepal were interviewed for the impact interviews of June 2021, this report cannot assess their communication and working style with partners.

Capacity-building and windows for improvements

On top of daily training and advice, PE&D organized several meetings and specific training for its local partners. These events included workshops for proposal writing, monitoring and follow-up, regular discussion of the agenda, achievement, qualitative and quantitative changes. Regarding monitoring and evaluation, PE&D developed tools for data collection and indicators. It also offered specific training on ECD, mental health or violence against women to complete the knowledge of its partners. A key activity was the steering committee, which gathered about 6 times during the project to jointly brainstorm, question, debate about the management style, outcome, activity, relevance and the following steps.

Child Nepal described PE&D's attitude as very supportive and collaborative, and deemed that the project was very beneficial to enlarge the scope of their expertise, previously focused on ECD, and now englobing women's empowerment. The project leader helped its partners to develop networking and outreach to new stakeholders, enhancing the bonds with other local NGOs. They also appreciated the participatory approach, respected their opinions and gave them increasing responsibilities. For example, for the new project, they were associated with the design of activities.

Based on its own perspective, PE&D should continue on training its partners on digital communication, advocacy strategy, financial auditing and the digitalization of accounting. The partners requested further support on monitoring and evaluation, especially the design of qualitative and quantitative targets, indicators and follow-up mechanisms. For example, for men's involvement in gender equality and as role models, Child Nepal's manager regretted the lack of indicators to assess the result, which he found frustrating. Regarding thematic expertise, they could also benefit from additional training on psycho-social counselling, women's rights and empowerment, and ECD practices.

PE&D training for social mobilisers

Regarding its action on training social mobilisers, those who benefitted from PE&D training remembered it very well. For example, a female SM recalled that she attended a 3-day training on psychosocial counseling to identify people with different kinds of needs and contexts and their challenges. She also participated in training on how to deal and speak with people, how to conduct group discussion, etc. She enjoyed the rigor of the methodology and format. Another former SM also remembered the exact duration of each training session : 9-day training on development, a 5-day training, another 5-day training on GBV case management. However, all believed that these training sessions were organized by PRAYAS Nepal or Child Nepal, and never mentioned PE&D.

In conclusion, it appears that PE&D planned and organized multiple and various skills training sessions, which translated into a high quality of activity implementation by the partners. The partners did a remarkable job on learning on the spot and interacting with other NGOs. Yet, communication, transparency and visibility should be upgraded to improve the relations with other NGOs in the sector. From PE&D's perspective, during the interview, the project director

explained that their work focuses more on the community and local level, interacting with local officials and municipalities rather than local NGOs such as AATWIN, with whom they worked together two years ago. Additionally, PE&D is not eligible to join such a network because it is an international and not a Nepalese NGO. Nonetheless, Child Nepal and PRAYAS Nepal could communicate more about PE&D, their sponsors and the evolution of the activities throughout the projects.

E. Impact

This section constitutes the crux of the analysis, as the most documented in the interview. **The project has had an undeniable positive impact on women's empowerment in the rural areas of Dhading, health attitude in Dhading, and parents' upbringing habits.** The economic impacts were harder to assess remotely, and more difficult to reach in times of pandemic, but all women who received the vocational training improved their skills and employability, and the group saving mechanism lasted up until today. Likewise, men's involvement was impossible to assess as there was no indicator and very few men interviewed (see methodology), but the female respondents felt a change in attitude. Below are the qualitative impacts presented by thematic focus.

Women empowerment and (self) perception

This is the single most important result perceived during the interviews. Both beneficiary women, the partners and SMs noticed a clear change in women's self-confidence and attitude, which had positive spillover impacts on other aspects (health, administrative issues, job, etc).

Confidence, trust, respect and financial freedom

Although it appeared more clearly in Dhading, both women working in the entertainment sector in Kathmandu and Chepang women of Dhading highlighted a surge of self-confidence, esteem and respect. Thanks to the counselling, job that created a sense of purpose and group discussions, women upgraded their standards and claims. For example, one mentions that she was taught how to complain or protest. Many explained that, at the beginning of the project, Chepang women in Dhading did not use to talk with strangers, bowed their heads, sat at the back, let the other intervene first in discussion. By the end of the activities, they were actively engaging in debate, asking forward-looking questions, looking at people's eyes, greeting people in the street, talking with public agents and strangers. In Kathmandu, a woman who used to work in a hotel declared "Child Nepal gave us skills training and also taught us how to build self-confidence", while another labeled it "confidence power". A social mobiliser that worked in Dhading said "now they can stand before a group and introduce themselves confidently", she also added examples such as being representatives of a group and proactively engaging in ECD by collecting books for children.

Their self-confidence and financial freedom also led to people entrusting them with money. Several interviewees in Dhading underlined the fact that women are now able to independently take loans as they are perceived as able to repay it, they do not rely on their husband anymore, and their neighbors and relatives trust them with money.

Positive evolution of perspectives and decrease in discrimination

On top of their self-perception, neighbors and relatives' perception, the overall community also shifted its attitude regarding Chepang women. All the beneficiaries and SMs interviewed expressed a strong "yes" when they were asked if the interactions between Chepang and non-Chepang groups changed. They listed a couple of attitude examples, such as now speaking politely or the disparition of mockery.

In Kathmandu, a woman now running a cloth stall assured that "Now people have a different perception towards me. They praise me for my hard work". Another woman, a single mother abandoned by her husband, also clearly felt the change in people's eyes. "Since my husband left me when I was pregnant, it was very difficult for me to deal with negative comments passed by people. People would ask about my husband, and after knowing the truth, some men approached me for sexual relations. This was very demeaning and humiliating and saddened me a lot. People now respect me for my work and behavior. Everything has changed now with the passage of time and how I worked diligently, I am raising my daughter and working hard. The change in perception towards me has come because of my own thinking and my decisions. But Child Nepal made me mentally strong to overcome such a situation which was a great help and which helped me to take those strong decisions and to be resilient in the face of life's difficult circumstances". Finally, another woman even became a role model, expressing how life-changing it was "My friends in training used to say that they get inspired by me and my way of living life."

Interestingly, a couple of women seemed very fierce and autonomous when it came to external help by NGO. One declared that some people do not engage in income-generating activities because of laziness. Another said that "You must change yourself; accessibility of internet, electricity, road and transportation do nothing if you don't have enthusiasm to change yourself. Change must come from within." This shows that they do not rely on NGOs and external help and take charge of their own fate. Others also mentioned how good it felt to have a goal and an activity for self-development. "I have become stronger and more confident and now have an aim of doing something good in life", proving how a new occupation can bring a sense of purpose and a new dynamism.

The empowerment activity and group discussion were all the more efficient as the women who perceived these empowerment benefits acted as a relay, reaching out to those in need and disseminating their knowledge. A former beneficiary from the entertainment sector stated "I can share my knowledge with women who are in trouble and help them to find a way out. I have taken 4-5 women to Child Nepal as well".

Therefore, the project did have a positive transformative impact on gender norms as it uplifted women's self-confidence and skills.

Income-generating activities and financial saving groups

The economic-related activities were correctly implemented, but with mixed results as the COVID-19 affected all markets, and therefore darkened the prospects of thriving in a new occupation. But once again, vocational training sessions have had an important psychological impact on the beneficiaries, who discovered a new field, skills, enjoyed their new activity, met other women and became financially independent. Several beneficiaries met friends, who became an important psychological support during the pandemic.

The offered training covered a wide range of jobs, such as sewing, social worker, beautician, waitress, stuff animals making, vegetable shopper, farmer, herder, etc. It was offered not only to Chepang women and workers of the entertainment sector, but also to women with vulnerable jobs, such as street sellers. One of them learnt how to knit frocks, outers, sweaters, caps and gloves and has got many orders but could attend the due to the unavailability of yarn during the lockdown. She still managed to sell many knitted products during the last lockdown, which was very profitable as she even got orders from America. Another success story lies in a chicken farm that started with 50 chickens, and progressively expanded to 500 chickens and then into more than 1000 chickens in Dhading.

Overall, the training covered numerous business-related topics, focusing on agriculture in Dhading like how to grow unseasonal vegetables or systematic way of rearing goats. If some women are still doing vegetable farming because of the pandemic, their income decreased due to the fall of prices.

Apart from these IGA, the women were also taught how to manage the budget. One woman proudly explained “ During my training, I learnt how to spend money wisely, how to minimize unnecessary expenses and that has helped me in managing financial activities in a proper way”. Some even received financial assistance amounting to Rs. 25000 from Child Nepal for their businesses. In addition, all the interviewees confirmed that the mothers’ saving mechanism, that is, a group of women who pool their savings to take turns in financing a member’s project or loan, or to use during exceptional times. Women were surprised that they managed to save money whereas before they had a hard time to make ends meet.

Hence, beneficiaries did receive effective vocational training and support to initiate their own activity, but due to external circumstances, it did not always bring the expected financial outcomes and economic spillovers.

Health and awareness

The interviewees seemed divided regarding the evolution of health help-seeking behaviors. If many women and parents did increase their knowledge, awareness and care about health, many women still minimize their health condition, only resorting to hospitals or health posts in case of emergency and still favoring home-made or traditional dubious remedies. The result depends on the situation. Although it is mentioned below on the men’s behavior part, the respondents unanimously agreed on a reduction of drinking addiction and the improvement of children’ health and hygiene, which constitute important results.

It appears that regarding pregnancy check-up and delivering in a hospital, these changes were easily integrated by the Chepang women, and a vast majority of them is now informed about prenatal care. A respondent also declared that women used to be reluctant about their children’s vaccination, but it is not the case anymore. Beneficiaries received awareness sessions and participated in group discussions about health. New areas of knowledge included menstruation and how to make one’s own pads, hygiene, sanitation and sickness prevention by early check-ups. It also covered very precise and personal matters, such as leucorrhoea, and the problem of uterine prolapse, frequent for Nepalese women who were pregnant early.

However, a woman part of a mother group in Dhading talked about the slow and small improvements of help-seeking behaviors for the Chepang women. She explained that her fellows do not naturally turn toward help, only when the condition becomes worse or “intolerable”. A woman in Dhading suffering from thyroid issues said “I go to the hospital for the treatment of serious health issues and I buy medicine from the medical center for small health problems. I usually prefer home remedies such as having hot water, cardamom water, but also visit a doctor if it becomes more serious”. This example reveals the ambiguity between the lack of financial means and the preference for home remedies, and the necessity to consult a professional medical practitioner. Additionally, several interviewees said that they have not stopped believing in Dhami, Jhakri or shamanism, or witch doctors and still request their help, sometimes for important procedures (e.g., a SM said that a young boy had a huge wound on his chest, and his parents brought him to a shaman before she convinced them to go to the hospital). However, the team was unable to interview a sufficient number of beneficiaries to establish a pattern regarding the go-to priorities (consulting witch doctor or the hospital first) or to detect any change in the priorities.

Finally, health was understood in its globality and encompassed mental health as well, with various socio-psychological support, which was much appreciated, as beneficiaries did not even diagnose their own mental health issues before the training. For instance, a woman testified “ I got to know so many things about mental health which I had not paid attention to before that training. Sometimes we used to feel very depressed and disheartened. We also frequently had suicidal thoughts. But we never did anything about it, even if it affected our life badly- we did not feel like going to work, friends shared they felt irritated when they had to handle children and we rarely felt happy. This program taught us how to overcome and tackle this. Prior to the program I used to feel so depressed and inferior as I was a single mother and I had to face many problems due to such feelings, but now I don't feel like that anymore”. The counselling slowly improved self-confidence, sharing feelings and overcoming trauma.

Men involvement in equality, domestic violence, awareness on gender-based violence

Part of the activities aimed at involving men in the promotion of gender equality, and reshaping men-women relations, especially marital interactions and division of labor. Although there was no clear indicator to assess the success of such activities, and no study on inhouse relations, some interviewees still provided some interesting and exploitable insight on the change of behaviors and attitudes, shedding light on a positive transformation, increased dialogue and joint decision-making.

Domestic violence and drinking habits

In Dhading, a woman explained that before the program, there were many incidents of domestic violence. Males used to spend all their money on alcohol, playing cards and gambling, beating their wife after drinking. All participants noted a significant reduction of domestic violence and drinking behaviors. As apparently several NGOs are working on the matter, it is hard to say whether this is solely the results of PE&D project of a virtuous combination of various programmes. Yet, the testimonies highlighted that numerous Chepang men stopped drinking, encouraged their peers to also quit this addiction, and recognised that the efforts to push them out of alcoholism were in their best interest, as someone mentioned

“They usually say “All this work is conducted for the community and for the development of our life.”

However, the interviewees disagreed on the extent to which it has changed concerning alcohol: while some mentioned personal estimations, such as two social mobilisers in Dhading that reckoned that 50- 60% for one, or 80% of drinking behaviors according to the other, had stopped; another person deemed that “most of the male had not changed. They have not stopped drinking and playing cards when they are not going for daily income”. A SM attributed the resistance to quitting alcohol to social and cultural practices among the Chepang community, as some rituals involve wine.

Positive evolution of men's behavior

In the meantime, there was a clear consensus among the interviewees on the perceived changes in their other attitudes, such as domestic chores help, involvement in child care, and sharing decision-making. A woman in Dhading shared her positive surprise: “I had never seen their involvement in taking care of their children. They would wait for mothers to feed them and change their clothes but things have changed now. Husbands are also seen taking care of children and also concerned about their hygiene and cleanliness”. Other respondents provided different but similar examples, such as cooperative attitudes (e.g., suggesting prices for their wife to sell the vegetables in the markets), sharing financial concerns and decisions, increased vigilance and involvement with their children to make sure they attend school regularly. A woman in Kathmandu that had been living there for 18 years stressed on a clear and recent change in men's attitude. As always, the results are also on a case by case basis, and in some families, men remain the sole decision-maker, or the husband has been living abroad for decades and the woman manages the household. In these extreme cases, the program brought little to no change.

Awareness on GBV

Finally, concerning the awareness program on GBV, the questionnaire included questions to check whether beneficiaries could remember what they learnt. And indeed, these awareness discussions were very much remembered, especially since the discussion was surprising and empowering for many women. When asked about what they remember on gender equality, they cited a very large variety of actions that go way beyond physical or sexual violence. For example, beneficiaries listed not helping in household work, physically taunting, aggressing or mocking women, discrimination by mother in laws, not letting wives to come out and express themselves. A woman testified that for her “not allowing women to raise their concerns and opinions is also violence. I had never thought of this before but after participating in training I got to know what violence actually means”.

Another woman in Kathmandu explained very well that she understood and felt harassment before, but did not label it as such: “touching where we don't like, holding hands are all violence but after the participation of this training I came to know about it. Now, if somebody does that to me I can oppose and raise my voice against violence. Previously, I did not like it but I did not know what to do/ if I could say anything or if people would just consider me foolish. I did not know it can be called violence and I can say no”. Hence, women learnt and remembered the scope and variety of inappropriate actions that can be considered as GBV. They also

recalled their rights, especially about consent and freedom of opinion, and alluded to current examples where they now react and refuse anything they did not consent to. Although participants did not agree on the extent of the behavioral changes, they all agreed that there was a positive evolution that affected a large portion or the majority of the community.

Administrative help

Social workers conducted follow-up and helped families individually about several personal challenges, such as drinking concerns, counselling and administrative issues. Regarding the latter, the official administrative registration of mothers and children was paramount to entitle them to government's subsidies, school enrollment and other key services.

Thanks to legal identification documentation, Chepang kids were able to enroll in preschools (that require a birth certificate), women were eligible to public services (property for the house, subsidy for birth, possibility to lodge a complaint) and obtained access to special funds and aids dedicated to the earthquake reconstruction, and later on proved useful to COVID-19 emergency help. These constitute long-run positive change, and challenging results as many beneficiaries did not know how to read, write and about their rights and entitlements. Chepang women also gained official citizenship, which fostered their inclusion in the surrounding communities.

A social mobiliser in Dhading said that it was a custom to make birth certificates of the children only when they reach grade eight and when it was mandatory to have them to be able to appear in the final exam of grade eight which is taken by the district education office instead of the school. "Now only 1-2% do not have a birth registration certificate soon after they are born", for the case where the mother is originally from a very distant and remote place. The women interviewed still remembered specific rules, such as birth registration has to be done within the 35 first days of the birth of a child, or that citizenship can be obtained by mother's name only (able to obtain it even if the father left).

On top of these individualized supports, women attended training on traffic rules by traffic police, important phone numbers in case of emergencies, or how to complain to the police station. These teachings about the rights and legislation created a virtuous circle with other activities where knowledge and self-confidence led to more requests for administrative procedures. For example, a woman declared "I can easily go to any office and perform administrative tasks now that I have received the training. Prior to the training, I would hesitate and get confused about where to go, who to talk to, what to say etc. I used to get scared and confused. But this is not the case anymore, I can go wherever I need to for administrative paperwork. When you start going outside rather than staying home all day, it makes you stronger and more confident",

Conclusion

All the impacts were tangible, positive and perceived by the beneficiaries, the SMs and Child Nepal simultaneously. The interviewers also noted the enthusiasm of some respondents regarding Chepang women's empowerment in Dhading. The project was therefore impactful on most aspects, the objectives contributed to create the right atmosphere for the other components' implementation, and acted in synergy with other NGOs.

The beneficiaries were utterly satisfied, and when asked what could have been improved, they mentioned extending to other areas or communities or adding issues, but did not suggest any change to the already existing activities. They also expressed their gratitude toward Child Nepal and PRAYAS Nepal. For example, one woman recalled that when her brother passed away, a social worker came and consoled her, despite the fact that it was not mandatory in her work. Likewise, in Kathmandu, mothers working in the entertainment sector sometimes did not pick up their children on time, leaving them all night with the staff that took care of them after the closure of the school.

We can also note a transversal added value in linking women in support groups, saving groups, vocational training groups and discussion groups, which created sorority and friendship. It is also noteworthy to mention that these results are remarkable over a short period of 3 years, and considering they relied on a lot of qualitative data, people's feelings, perceptions, habits and no numerical targets that can be easier to reach. Very few activities included buying material (mainly preschool items) or one-shot activities. Most of them were long-run regular activities that also depended on the trust and commitment of the beneficiaries.

F. Sustainability

The evaluation of the sustainability of the results and their impacts cannot be complete and exhaustive for a number of aforementioned reasons. However, as the evaluation was conducted one year after the end of the project, the results and impacts observed already lasted up until now despite the very peculiar sanitary situation.

Some results acquired will not change (purchase of material, administrative registration), some lasted (women's pooling saving mechanism), some were impaired by the covid (IGA). Regarding women's self-confidence, one woman in Dhading stated that it will last now that they acquired it, and that people who benefitted from vocational training continue to perform their work properly and diligently. The women's saving groups still run and proved to be particularly useful during the lockdown.

In addition, some impacts already show encouraging signs of sustainability. When asked to remember what they learned, some interviewees recalled well the awareness and sensitization campaign, which proved their long-lasting results. They were able to recall precise details or rules. From the interviewees' perspectives, the domestic violence has significantly decreased even during the pandemic that is also infamous for the "shadow pandemic" (domestic violence against women and children) whereas it could have fired back. It shows a slow but deep evolution of gender roles, as women gained confidence and skills.

In addition, in Dhading, administrative authorities initiated on their own the reproduction of an activity that was implemented the first time by Child Nepal. They established a camp to receive Chepang women to deal with their administrative issues (birth registration, citizenship, marriage certificate) over a five days period to facilitate the multiple procedures. This shows that the joint activity enabled the local authorities to adopt this process and to run it regularly, therefore successfully managing a handover of capacity.

In parallel, due to the lockdown, the ECD center in Kathmandu had to close. Most children went back to school when it reopened but some did not come and dropped-out totally. Hence,

the pandemic was the main hindrance to the project completion toward the end, affecting the sustainability of ECD education via remote learning, and hitting hard the women entrepreneurs who just started their own business. However, these two cases could revert back at the end of the repeated lockdowns, if children resume to preschool and women re-attempt to found an enterprise or to make profit with it. These lukewarm results on ECD and IGA sustainability are thus not definitive.

5. Recommendations

Activity-focus for future projects:

- Explore recurrent adequate responses like drinking behavior and gambling as a root cause to child malnutrition and domestic violence.
- Include resilience activity for the end of the pandemic: relief cash, emergency fund, further focus on livelihood, and adapt income-generating activities so that the communities can survive and thrive in times of lockdowns (delivery or online services for example).
- Ensure the inclusion of people infected with COVID-19, who are marginalized and forbidden to laugh. Awareness campaigns could remedy that psychological violence for those sick with the virus.
- For any project, upgrade the design of the project via specific indicators (qualitative and quantitative) for each activity in the project proposal, to ease the follow-up and results-tracking. Awareness raising and capacity building activities require specific methodology to measure the change and the contribution of the project to the change. This is an activity per se, in addition to the other potential activities implemented by the partners.

Networking, coordination and advocacy with other stakeholders:

- Enhance communication about the project and beneficiaries within the network of NGOs (AATWIN, NSCT, etc) so as to expand the value of the project and trigger opportunities for further or potential cooperation, for the benefit of the early childhood sector and the gender-sensitive policies.
- Improve the coordination with other NGOs and identify the right target (e.g. the district level or federal government instead of municipalities) regarding women entertainment sector, to gain impact on a larger scale.

Sustainability

- Keep on the support of the implementing partners in terms of further developing:
 - the M&E and managerial capacity so the partners can roll out programmes and projects efficiently with a reliable reporting;
 - the communication and advocacy capacity so the partners continue interacting with local authorities and best reflect the voice of the civil society's interest and concern;
 - the technical capacity of the in-house staff in terms of gender-based expertise so the partners can improve their efficiency in that field and secure their recognition by the local authorities as well as by other potential funders.
- Ensure the presence and activity of local consultants appointed by PE&D, as a key bridge and resource provider on project management and gender-specific as well as early childhood-specific support modalities for the implementing partners.

- Explore the lessons learned from the COVID-19 period and the ability of the implementing partners in overcoming the constraints. PE&D and the 2 NGO partners have adapted their intervention methods with agility and provided alternatives to sustain the impacts. There are lessons to be drawn from the exceptional situation that might last for the coming years..
- Explore raising funds to invest in online or individual items for distance preschool learning, tools and homework for lockdowns.

Appendix

A. List of interviewees

Scoping interviews

Name	Position and organization
Véronique Jenn-Treyer	Director PE&D
Camille Chapron	Volunteer, PE&D
Buddi Kumar Shrestha	Country representative PE&D
Damodar Aryal	Director, PRAYAS Nepal
Sunil KC	Coordinator, PRAYAS Nepal
Sushila Sharma	Former Project Manager, PRAYAS Nepal
Preet Shah	Former Project Manager for BFWC
Mohan Dagal	Director, Child Nepal
Kamal Pulami	Project coordinator, Child Nepal

Impact interview

Category	Organization/job	Name	Date
Project leader	PE&D	Buddi Shrestha	21/06/2021
		Maya Verbist	21/06/2021

		Sushila Sharma	11/06/2021
Implementing partners	Child Nepal	Mohan Dagal	15/06/2021
	PRAYAS Nepal	Damodar Aryal	X
Partners and networks	AATWIN	Benu Maya Gurung	16/06/2021
	Chhori	Hira Dahal	22/06/2021
Social mobilisers	PRAYAS Nepal	Sumitra Chepang	23/06/2021
	Child Nepal	Ambika Paudel	23/06/2021
	PRAYAS Nepal	Sushila Nepal	23/06/2021
	PRAYAS Nepal	Suraj Shrestha	20/06/2021
Beneficiaries	Chatpate, beneficiary Child Nepal	Gita Bohora	23/06/2021
	IG and training support beneficiary of Child Nepal, Tribeni Mothers Group (TIRBENI)	Rupa Gurung	14/06/2021
	Self employed as tailor, beneficiary from Child Nepal	Premkala Raut	23/06/2021
	Secretary of the mothers group Shrijanshil Matrivhumi Amma Samuha, beneficiary of PRAYAS Nepal	Sukmaya Gurung	23/06/2021
	Own business, beneficiary Child Nepal	Urmila Gautam	20/06/2021
	Kalika Samudayik krishi bikash Samuha,	Babulal Chepang	20/06/2021

	Treasurer, beneficiary of PRAYAS Nepal		
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B. Interview questions

Scoping questions with PRAYAS Nepal and Child Nepal

- What would be the added value of that evaluation for your NGO?
- What kind of information you definitely cannot collect and that we should/may collect as external evaluator?
- What do you expect in terms of recommendations?
- Could you briefly describe what has worked well and not so well in the project ("big picture")?
- What change did you expect to programme would make, compared to the initial situation (Being more specific)?
 - Please make distinction for each of the activities:
 - Reduction of violence against women
 - Women's autonomy in economic sphere
 - Health improvement of women and girls
 - Girls access to education
 - Which could be the thresholds to attain?
 - Which success criteria would you expect?
 - How would you measure (quanti/quali) change of attitudes among women, men and adolescents?
- Is there any baseline survey we could exploit for our evaluation?
- Are there any contextual factors (not project-dependent) that have facilitated or hindered the project implementation?
- Could you describe the management of the project, from your standpoint?
 - The tools and the process: which one were project-specific, new to you?
 - The human and financial resources: were they adequate? Any bottleneck?
 - The cooperation with PE&D: What has progressed? What have you learned thanks to the cooperation?

- What would be your advice for us regarding that evaluation : risks / bias and sensitive issues we should pay attention to?

Questionnaire template for beneficiaries

Opening questions:

- What type of beneficiaries were you (mother of kids, women that benefitted from vocational training, Chepang women, etc)?
- What activities did you participate in?

Health:

- Do you think women seek health services and medical help more often? What kind of services? In what situations?
- Do you think women and girls' health improved due to the program?
- Do you think the program brought a reduction of violence against women (domestic violence, in the street, etc)? Do you have numbers about women's violence?
- Did you receive awareness training about Gender-based violence? What do you remember?
- Can you give examples of what is gender-based violence?

Income-generating activities:

- What training did you receive? Did it help you to start an income-generating activities? Do you know about the other women who attended the training with you, do they still continue their business or did it closed due to the pandemic?
- What is your job now? Do you enjoy it? Is your income sufficient?
- Do you participate in the 'Saving and Credit' group of women? How does it work?
- Do you think women participate more in family decision-making and financial issues? Please give examples.

Administrative services:

- Did you receive training/awareness campaign on how to fulfill administrative document (birth and marriage certification, request citizenship)?
- Did you obtain help for the COVID-19 crisis? How did you do it? What type of help and from whom?

Men's involvement:

- Do you think men are more involved in the reduction of violence and gender equality? Do you think they are more involved in child education?
- Do you think men changed their attitude or behaviour?
- Do you notice less drinking behaviour in your community?

Children and education:

- Do your children attend schools? Did they go back after the reopening of schools (closed due to COVID-19)? Do you know children who did not go back to school after the reopening? Do you know why?
- Did you receive training of children's education? What do you remember?
- Do you think that the teachers are better now? Have the quality of education improve?

Overall perception:

- What has been the biggest change for you thanks to the program?
- What was the best part? And the hardest part?
- Do you see a change of perception from the rest of the community (for Chepang women, do you feel more included)?
- Do you feel empower or more confident?
- Did the project change your relations with other people? How?
- Do you think the program effect lasted or will last in the long-run?

Final questions:

- Do you have anything to add?
- Can you recommend someone we should interview?
- Do you have any final recommendation to improve the program or for a future program?

C. Documentation list

- Learning Avenue, Inception report, July 2020
- PE&D, Gender Policy, 2018
- PE&D, Rapport d'exécution final mono pays, pour l'AFD, Juin 2021
- PE&D, Analyse data ECD, juin 2021

D. Evaluation team

The evaluation was conducted by the following team, under the aegis of Learning Avenue:

- **Fabrice Hénard**, director of Learning Avenue and contact point.
- **Nigma Tamrakar**, Nepalese gender expert
- **Anita Ghimire**, Nepalese gender expert
- **António Neves**, research assistant at Learning Avenue
- **Lucie Haye**, research assistant at Learning Avenue