

PROVISION FOR POST-

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I. Executive Summary

i. Project data

From 1 November 2010 to 31 October 2012, the Indian NGO Pragma implemented the project: *Active democracy and political participation of tribal communities in the Himalayas*. Pragma head office is in Gurgaon (a satellite city of the capital Delhi), and the organization has six field offices in the states of Jammu & Kashmir (J & K), Himachal Pradesh, Uttarakhand, Sikkim, West Bengal and Arunachal Pradesh in the high Himalayas. The project received USD320,000 in support from UNDEF (of which USD25,000 was pre-allocated to evaluation).

The project's principal objectives were "to enhance civic participation among Himalayan tribes and empower marginalized groups (women, people with disabilities and nomads); and to foster the involvement of Himalayan people in governance and democratic dialogue". In support of this, the project aimed to build a supportive environment for enhanced democratic participation through actions directed at supporting state and non-state actors.

In pursuit of these objectives, the project comprised 10 core components: civic awareness campaigns and the development of educational materials for hill tribe villagers in the target regions; development of Resource Centres and the provision of relevant materials to community service organizations (CSOs) in the 12 target districts; legal/civic education targeting marginalized groups in three regions; self-managed helpline services for marginalized groups; the development of quarterly "social watch" monthly reports; training on leadership for elected representatives and CSO staff; organizing one stakeholder forum in each district and regular citizen/state interactions focusing on two issue-based studies and annual national policy dialogues; citizen media training and promotion of local media coverage; sensitization programmes for non-state development actors such as media; and establishing "socio-legal kiosks", staffed by trained volunteers.

These actions were designed to create a continuum from awareness of rights to access to those rights, supported by the training and mobilization of relevant support actors and those who could make the rights a reality.

ii. Evaluation questions

In evaluating the **relevance** of the project, the evaluators interviewed Pragma staff in head office and project offices, participants in the diverse activities, and consultants who had delivered training. In particular, the evaluators examined the context in which the project was developed, the coherence of design and the coincidence of the project's aims and outputs to the needs of the beneficiaries. The evaluators also considered the gender-appropriateness of project design, materials and implementation and, given the geographic focus of the project and its central aim to change attitudes to rights access, issues related to risk management and mitigation.

The evaluators considered that the project, which fitted into a much broader strategy for the region concerned, implemented by Pragma over a number of years, was logical and very much tuned to the needs of the beneficiaries and other stakeholders in this challenging region. It was consequently extremely relevant.

In exploring the project's **effectiveness**, the evaluators focused on potential changes in the scheduling of activities, on the numbers of beneficiaries and stakeholders reached by the project, and the extent to which the targets set in the project document were reached. There were no delays in project delivery since it had been designed with the seasonal obstacles relevant to the target region in mind (the high Himalayan districts are cut off from the rest of

the country for four to five months a year). Statistically, the project reached and in several instances exceeded the targets set. The multiplier effect of some of the activities is not easy to measure but is evident in those areas where numbers have been captured.

In relation to **efficiency**, it was noted that the project budget (in addition to USD 19,200 in-kind noted in the Project Document) understated the true value of the project and that many costs were in fact covered through Pragya's ongoing programming in this region, in the context of which the UNDEF-supported project was designed. The additional funds expended and in-kind provided far exceeded what was reported and added considerable value to UNDEF's support.

The evaluators based evaluation of **impact** on interviews with a range of participants in the project. Most of these were interviewed by telephone because the target areas were not reachable following disastrous flooding in the region in the week before the evaluation took place. The respondents gave numerous examples of positive impact on individual participants and it was clear that the impact on elected representatives and broader stakeholders was significant.

Because the UNDEF-supported project was part of a broader, ongoing programme of support to the people of the high Himalayas, its **sustainability** potential was high. The processes and structures put in place during the project have been maintained however there are a number of threats to sustaining the outcomes of the project that need to be managed. These include the potential negative influence of those who fail to access their rights and the possibility that a volunteer workforce will lose interest if they are not in some way remunerated or replaced over time.

In attempting to identify **UNDEF value-added**

While this project was well designed to be sustainable after funding had ended, there are a number of things that might put this at risk, including use of a volunteer workforce and the potential negative influence of unsuccessful applications for schemes and entitlements. These risks need to be managed to ensure ongoing sustainability.

This project provided high value-added for UNDEF, and there is potential for UNDEF to continue engagement in this neglected region, particularly focusing on the promotion of democratic participation.

iv. Recommendations

For Pragya

Take steps to mitigate disillusionment. It is inevitable that not all those who apply for government schemes and entitlements will receive them and it is also possible that promised services may not materialize, or that louder voices may prevail. In order to mitigate negative examples they may see, put in place an active process for sharing success stories.

Consider providing modest honoraria to those who have volunteered in this project and also preparing new volunteers to replace those that drop out. This is important for sustainability since even enthusiastic volunteers will not work for ever for no reward. Alternatively or additionally, particularly in order to maintain a spirit of volunteering, prepare new volunteers to replace any that drop out.

Include follow-up funding to maintain the processes put in place by making these a component of other, larger project submissions. The Resource Centres, helplines and forum will have relevance not only to continuing the impact of this project, but in future projects (perhaps in other ways). It is therefore legitimate to include the ongoing maintenance of these processes as a component of future project design and funding submissions.

For UNDEF

UNDEF might **consider supporting projects in geographical areas that are largely neglected by other UN agencies, NGOs and donor/governments.** In particular, this offers the opportunity to promote the **inclusion of specific project components covering democratic participation** – voting and representation.

Consider requesting, when final accounts are submitted, information on the total budget for programmes of which UNDEF supports one component. In this way, the full value will be evident and both evaluators and UNDEF will see the true extent of the actions being undertaken and the resources being mobilized.

ii. Logical framework

Civic awareness campaigns and educational materials on laws and processes

Creation of 12 Resource Centres

Materials provided to 120 CSOs in 12 districts

Two awareness campaigns in each of 12 districts, facilitated through Resource Centres and CSOs

An aware and informed Himalayan community, empowered for democracy

Legal/civic education programmes in three regions for particularly marginalized groups (women, nomads, people with disabilities), in conjunction with counselling and links to services

Especially marginalized groups experience

Enhanced civic participation among Himalayan tribes empowered to claim their rights



Training of barefoot monitors in Kargil

"I attended three training courses with other elected members of the panchayat. They taught us the provisions of the National Rural Employment Guarantee Act and about legal aid for the poor and school education for children. We had many doubts about the schemes because of the lack of cooperation of government

services to which they believe themselves to be entitled may not all be successful. Pragya estimates that approximately 80% of those who applied for entitlements and grants following the project were successful; this means that two of every 10 people would be disappointed. One result of their disillusionment may be that they tell others that it is not worth trying because they, too, will be disappointed. There are ways to mitigate this risk, but these were not specifically foreseen in the project design.

Conversely, Pragya did list as a risk factor the fact that the implementation area is prone to natural disasters and that this might disrupt project schedules. They aimed to counter this by adjusting the time-table seasonally and through project office management of the schedule. However the June 2013 floods in the region raise another issue in relation to risk: since the project focused on helping villagers to learn how to access their rights and in particular entitlements provided by the government, the villagers' belief in government responsiveness is crucial. Inevitably in the wake of natural disasters there is impatience about the speed and level of government response and the relief services government provides. This disaster-focused disappointment might well impact on the broader attitudes of the hill tribes towards government services and the attention they believe government accords to their needs. There is also a need, therefore, to consider this aspect of disaster-related risk and ways to mitigate it (potentially, as outlined above, through positive reinforcement and highlighting success/good news stories).

This finding leads to **Conclusion ii**.

ii. Effectiveness

Objectives achieved

The project achieved all the objectives set in the original project plan. All activities took place and there were no unforeseen delays or obstacles. In pedagogical terms, the training sessions were designed in such a way that they were likely to have a high level of effectiveness. The Milestone Verification Report focus

Representatives of marginalized groups trained in counselling and representation	276
Self-managed helpline services established	Multiple in 12 districts
Young people trained as barefoot monitors	487 (172 female, 315 male)
Social Watch reports produced	7
Leadership training participants	1,347
Programme/project assessments completed	24
Participants in public hearings	864 including 72 government officials
Issues-based studies prepared	2
National policy dialogues organized	2
Citizen journalists trained	120
Development actors sensitized on needs	384
White papers for media	2
Socio-legal kiosks established	12
Users of kiosks during life of project	42,000
Volunteers trained to staff kiosks	193
Training modules produced	5

These findings contribute to **Conclusion iii.**

iii. Efficiency

Budget

The project budget was at first glance idiosyncratic, with almost half of the USD 295,000 for project implementation allocated to publications and other media (USD 115,920). The second-highest allocation was to staff and personnel expenses (USD 79,680) and yet, in a project with a large training component, there was no allowance for consultants who would contribute to

“These days more and more women come to my office to get subsidized seeds and fencing grants. Most of the men want to know about new schemes and bank loans. I think the activities have educated the villagers, especially the women, to enhance their economic status.”

K N Tewari, Horticulture Officer, West Kameng District, Arunachal Pradesh

“I taught the tribes about their rights in their local language”

"We had major success in Shakti village where we initially helped four or five people to file applications for the old age pension and widow's pension scheme. Later

IV. Conclusions

i. Based on findings presented under the 'Relevance' heading: ***The project was coherent, gender-appropriate and highly relevant to the needs of the beneficiaries.*** Pragya's organizational structure, which links field-based staff with headquarters colleagues through a formal and efficient system of information exchange and analysis, means that programme design responds closely to the needs of the target beneficiaries. The design of this project within a broader strategic planning and programming process also led to the individual actions being well designed and relevant.

ii. Based on the need for enhanced risk management: ***Inevitably, people who attempt to claim their rights and entitlements may not always succeed; also the services they are seeking will not always materialize.*** It is therefore extremely important to consider how this lack of success might be managed in order not to negate any positive impact of the training and awareness raising.

iii. Based on findings presented under the heading of 'Effectiveness': ***The project achieved its objectives and in many cases exceeded the quantitative targets set.*** It was extremely effective.

iv. Based on consideration of the project budget within the context of a larger programme budget: ***The project was "valued" at much more than the USD 320,000 it received in support, because it was subsidized through Pragya's core budget*** (Pragya had indicated it would provide USD 19,200 in-kind, but the cross-subsidizing of the project exceeded this).

V. Recommendations

- i. For Pragya*

ANNEXES

Annex 2: Documents reviewed

Background documents

Pragya website

UNDP: *Human Development Report 2013*

UNDP: *Access to justice for marginalized people* (Fact sheet, May 2012)

UNDP, UNICEF, UNFPA, GOI: *GOI-UN Joint Programme on Convergence* (Fact sheet, May 2012)

Project outputs

Manual: *District leadership training for elected representatives and CSOs*

Handbook for socio-legal kiosks

Civic legal education module

Manual on indigenous rights

Selected contents of Resource Centres: posters, publications and information materials

Project documentation

Project Document, UDF-IND-09-322

Mid-term Progress Report, UDF-IND-09-322

Final Project Narrative Report, UDF-IND-09-322

Milestone verification mission report (23-24 April 2011)

Milestone verification mission report (25 November 2011)

Annex 3: People Interviewed

Grantee personnel	
Ms Gargi Banerji	Director
Mr Sunil Pillai	Director, Finance
Ms Sejuti Basu	Project Specialist
Ms Ankita Luharia	Team Member, Monitoring Coordination and Support
Ms Mithilesh Dabra	Senior Team Member, Monitoring Coordination and Support
Mr Vikram Sarki	Project Officer, Tawang West Kameng district
Mr Anand Kumar	Former Project Officer, Kinnaur

Annex 4: Acronyms