The Relevance of Indicators in Monitoring the Progress of Indigenous Peoples

Toward Achieving Sustainable Development Goals

An Analysis Integral to the Indigenous Navigator

THE INDIGENOUS NAVIGATOR
Data by and for Indigenous Peoples

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In Deep Honor of Late Dr. Chaitanya Subba (1946–2022)

Visionary Leader in Indigenous Rights and Inclusive Development

This research report stands as a lasting testament to the extraordinary vision, wisdom, and lifelong dedication of Dr. Chaitanya Subba, whose leadership in the study ***"The Relevance of Indicators in Monitoring the Progress of Indigenous Peoples Toward Achieving Sustainable Development Goals"*** profoundly contributed to establishing the foundation for Indigenous advocacy toward self-determined development in Nepal. As an esteemed academic, policy architect, and Indigenous rights advocate, Dr. Subba brought unparalleled clarity and commitment to the question of how development must serve Indigenous Peoples—on their own terms and in alignment with their values, knowledge systems, and aspirations.

His insights into inclusive development—grounded in lived experience and decades of development works—shaped national policies, empowered Indigenous voices, and built institutional foundations that will endure for generations. His contributions to this study, which is integral to the Indigenous Navigator framework, highlighted the urgent need for culturally relevant, community-driven indicators of progress, reinforcing the Indigenous movement's call for justice, equity, and self-determination.

Though he is no longer with us, Dr. Subba's spirit continues to guide our work. His scholarly work, advocacy, and unwavering dedication to the dignity of Indigenous Peoples are deeply embedded in every page of this report. We express our profound respect and heartfelt gratitude for his legacy—a legacy that challenges us all to build a more just, inclusive, and respectful society.

We remember him and continue what he stood for

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Advocate Dinesh Kumar Ghale

Chairperson, LAHURNIP.

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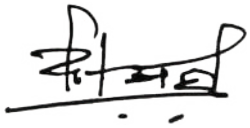
Each of these individuals contributed to the quality and integrity of this work, and we remain deeply appreciative of their time, knowledge, and unwavering commitment.



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Advocate Dinesh Kumar Ghale

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Introduction

1.Introduction

1.1 Context and rationale of the study

Development is anticipated for the prosperity of people in modern times all over the world, and Nepal is, of course, no exception. Nepal has a history of about three-quarter century of planned development. Nepal's development mission was gradually moved from the augmentation of the regulative capability of the state to education, infrastructure development, industrialization, and eventually poverty eradication. After the decade-long Maoist armed struggle, the government of Nepal realized that national resource distribution is not fair, and development investments and state opportunities are heavily skewed in favor of the state elite and traditionally dominant groups.

The Tenth Plan (2002/03–2007/08) focused on social justice and inclusive development, and the plan identified women by gender, Indigenous peoples (IPs) and Dalits by ethnicity, people of Karnali and mountainous regions by geographical location, ultra-poor by economic status, and persons with disabilities as excluded groups to be targeted by special programs. Within the short period of the previous decade, the periodic national development plans of the government began to lose their highly acclaimed inclusive thrust and essence of social justice, and now they have simply become a formal ritual[1]. The periodic development plan of the government of Nepal is expected to be inclusive, equitable, and tailored to the needs of deprived, disempowered, or excluded people. But the present planning document is still far from expectations and has almost failed to address the aspirations of the IPs and other marginalized communities.

As part of the Indigenous Navigator initiative, IPs of Nepal had developed "Indigenous peoples' Five Years Development Plan (2019/20 – 2023/24)" with the wider participation of Indigenous peoples and other stakeholders of various parts of the country and Indigenous peoples' organizations (IPOs), particularly involving their representatives, leaders and activists and planners, had conducted series of discussion with the officials of National Planning Commission (NPC) and provincial governments based on that plan in 2018/19 as the NPC was in the process of formulating Fifteenth Plan (Fiscal Year 2019/20 – 2023/24) of the government of Nepal at that time and provincial governments were also following suit subsequently. Now, the SDGs-incorporated Fifteenth Plan is under implementation.

A comprehensive study was done to assess the impact of the Indigenous Navigator initiative in Nepal[2], which identified that IPs aspirations to development have been addressed to some extent as some strategic and policy interventions suggested by IPOs were accommodated in the 15th Plan. However, the plan has totally undermined some major development agendas of IPs, such as respect for self-determined development, meaningful participation in development processes and outcomes, revitalization of traditional cooperatives and trusts (having land and other property), traditional judicial institutions, as well as customary laws for dispute mediation or resolution and accessible justice; recognition of customary rights to lands occupied and used traditionally and remapping of those lands and redress of land injustices; making the education system Indigenous friendly; recognition of Indigenous peoples' collective rights; and respect for Indigenous self-rule. The plan has claimed that the 15th Plan has mainstreamed SDGs in its sectoral plans of economic development, social development, infrastructure development, environmental protection, peace and diversity promotion, strengthening inclusive and accountable institutions,

1 https://www.lahurnip.org/uploads/publication/file/baseline-factsheets-on-the-situation-of-indigeneous-people-of-nepal.pdf
2 https://www.lahurnip.org/uploads/publication/file/in-impact-assessment-in-nepal.pdf

and governance reforms, and emphasis has been laid on the reduction of poverty, hunger, and inequality through various distributive measures, social protection, capacity enhancement and productivity increase, employment generation, expanding gainful opportunities, and accelerating inclusive economic growth. The objectives, strategies, policies, and national (federal) programs and projects are so wide and extensive that only the impacts on different sections of society can reveal the SDG achievements as anticipated.

The National Planning Commission (NPC) has customized 232 global indicators of 169 global targets of SDGs, resulting in a total of 479 indicators[3] (lately 494 indicators), comprising both global (237 indicators) and national complementary (257 national indicators)[4] to measure the progress for 16 SDGs, leaving SDG 14 relating to life below water considered inapplicable for Nepal in 2017. National indicators were to complement global indicators and fill the gaps in global indicators to reach sustainable development goals. The NPC of the Government of Nepal, the nodal institution of the government for streamlining SDGs in development plans and monitoring the progress toward achieving SDGs, has submitted its first national review of SDGs in September 2017 and the second national review of SDGs in June 2020. But both of these reports are not comprehensive enough to cover all indicators of the SDG targets, and whatever data has been presented is not disaggregated as needed to gain a full understanding of the achievements that can reveal who is being left behind.

It has been learned that the NPC is revisiting, re-customizing, and developing or updating its national SDG indicators and four milestone targets (for 2019, 2022, 2025, and 2030), considering the national development context, the immense adverse impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic, and the federal functioning of the state. The Central Bureau of Statistics of the NPC has conducted a National Population and Households Census from November 11, 2021, to November 25, 2021, a few months later than the pre-scheduled dates due to the government's control measures for the spread of the COVID-19 pandemic, which will generate a large amount of data for which one has to wait for one year. A Multiple Indicator Cluster Survey was conducted in 2018, which remained helpful to prepare a second review report in mid-2020. It is also made public that preparations are in full swing to conduct the National Living Standard Survey and the Demographic Health Survey, which have been delayed by the upsurge of the COVID-19 pandemic. Government is strengthening national statistical system, including Central Bureau of Statistics (CBS), key agency of data production/ generation, rectification, legitimation, disaggregation and dissemination, with the financial and technical support of development partners.

Equitable, inclusive, and speedy development through just and participatory development processes and appropriate mechanisms is the prime concern of the Indigenous peoples. They do not want to be victims of development projects or modernization drives and remain behind in the fair sharing of state resources and development benefits. They want to participate fully in the SDGs. They expect their rights to self-development and securing well-being with dignity fully realized. They want to know how the principles of SDGs like freedom from poverty and hunger; universal access to health, education, information, clean drinking water, and safe housing; substantive equality, meaningful inclusion, and accessible justice; eco-friendly and culture-sensitive industrial and infrastructure development; full employment and decent work for all; environmental protection and adaptation; and 'leave no one behind' are operationalized and realized.

3 Pradhan and Gurung 2020:4
4 NPC 2020: XI, 12

They think that the government's commitment to the SDGs is an opportunity to articulate their aspirations and development interventions. It is most opportune now to approach the NPC (i) to customize complementary national targets and indicators further to fully, reliably, and timely capture the SDG achievements of Indigenous peoples, (ii) to better identify who is left behind and why, and (iii) to fully integrate structural indicators, process indicators, and outcome indicators that encapsulate intersecting and multiple layers of discrimination, disadvantage, deprivation, and dehumanization, immediate or underlying or root causes that push someone behind or farthest behind and some to prosperity, generating huge inequality.

It is opportune for Indigenous peoples (i) to scrutinize SDG global and national indicators and better understand them as rights holders; (ii) identify and develop their own appropriate, culturally compatible, and developmentally sensitive indicators in a participatory, inclusive way; (iii) follow the provisions of international legal instruments and international and regional guidelines and frameworks; and (iv) integrate national indicators through lobbying, advocacy, and active persuasion. The support of the National Human Rights Commission, a fundamental agency promoting the operationalization and realization of a rights-based approach to development, has remained crucial to this mission.

Nepal is still assessing the full implications of COVID-19, but the signs are clear that it will have comprehensive and long-term cross-sectoral negative impacts, severely undermining the nation's capacity to implement the SDGs[5]. The multidimensional poverty, structural constraints, mountainous geophysical features, and detrimental impacts of climate change continue to pose a serious challenge for rapid, inclusive, and sustainable development in Nepal[6]. Such situations demand special strategic interventions and innovations, on which discourse is emerging.

In this context, LAHURNIP, with the cooperation of the National Human Rights Commission, has carried out a study on the relevance of NPC indicators for monitoring Indigenous peoples' progress in achieving targets of the SDGs in the context of Nepal's SDG performances and identified or developed additional national complementary indicators appropriate to monitor Indigenous peoples' progress that are instrumental in generating relevant, disaggregated data as part of the mission of the Indigenous Navigator. The study has also covered IPs' progress in achieving SDG targets in terms of the realization of their human and collective rights and the areas where they are lagging behind to date on the availability of both quantitative and qualitative data.

The findings led to the development and identification of indicators appropriate to Indigenous peoples, along with those of other deprived peoples, to be shared with NPC, the nodal agency of the SDGs. The NPC will request these proposed indicators for adjustment or incorporation into the national indicators framework to capture the progress of Nepalese Indigenous peoples. It will also be entreated for the frequent publication of disaggregated data by sex, social groups or caste/ethnicity, religious/linguistic identity, disability, age, location (rural/urban), ecological belts/regions (mountain, hill, and plain/Terai) to identify those left behind and to monitor the progress of Indigenous peoples.

5 http://www.sawtee.org/covid-19-may-disrupt-nepal's-progress-in-sdgs.php
6 http://www.sawtee.org/covid-19-may-disrupt-nepal's-progress-in-sdgs.php

1.2 Objective of the study

The main objective of the study is to scrutinize existing SDG progress indicators and examine their relevance in the context of Indigenous peoples and identify or specify and define appropriate indicators, as needed, that capture or reliably measure the emerging or evolving realities (statuses) of Indigenous peoples.

The other complementary objectives are as follows:

1.2.1 To review SDG targets, global indicators, and complementary national indicators.

1.2.2 To scrutinize national indicators and identify gaps in indicators to represent states or people's level of target achievements.

1.2.3 To identify, specify, and construct appropriate indicators that represent the contemporary lived experiences or realities of Indigenous peoples for the incorporation in the National Indicators Framework.

1.2.4 To develop better understanding of SDG indicators among Indigenous activists, development workers, and rights advocates through discussions, interactions, and sharing of knowledge and motivate them to generate parallel data of process, output, and outcome indicators of SDG achievements; and

1.2.5 To develop Indigenous SDG advocacy literature.

1.3 Research questions

This study has answered the following research questions embedded in the objectives outlined above:

1.3.1 What is the practical significance of SDGs from the people's perspectives, and in what way do the time-bound SDG achievements contribute to monitoring the change in the lives of the disadvantaged and disempowered people?

1.3.2 Do the global and complementary national SDG targets and indicators truly represent the context and changing statuses of Nepal and its peoples and perfectly measure the progress in achieving SDG targets? What are the major gaps?

1.3.3 How can we identify, specify, and construct appropriate indicators that represent the contemporary lived experiences or realities of Indigenous peoples for the incorporation in the National Indicators Framework?

1.3.4 What are the speedy and practical ways or methods to develop better understanding of SDG indicators among Indigenous activists, development workers, and rights advocates and motivate them to generate credible data relating to process, output, and outcome indicators of SDG achievements?

1.3.5 Do we need to develop Indigenous SDG advocacy literature targeting Indigenous peoples?

With the help of these questions (Annex 2: Interview guideline includes the open questions for each research question), mapping of the contents and dimensions, widening of the perspectives, exploring views, facts, and feelings, explaining phenomena, clarifying and probing

concepts/details, intentions/purposes, sequences, positions/propositions, and challenging or identifying inconsistencies and incompatibilities will be accomplished to serve the purpose of the study.

Review of the Literature

2. Review of the literature

2.1 SDGs and Indigenous peoples

Publications of UN agencies, particularly UNDP, UNDG, UNSDG, UN OCHA, UN DESA, WHO, UNICEF, UNESCO, UNHCR, OHCHR, ILO, and the World Bank and Asian Development Bank, have been reviewed for their understanding of the concepts, principles, targets, and indicators of the SDGs and their effective operationalization and implementation. Relevant IWGIA and AIPP publications were also reviewed for the analysis of various aspects of the SDGs from Indigenous perspectives. Most publications highlight the needs and significance of the SDGs and deal with several relevant areas of sustainable development. Some of these publications serve as guides and tools for SDG planning, implementation, and follow-up monitoring. The major themes and summary ideas are briefly outlined in subsequent sections.

The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and its Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) were unanimously adopted by heads of state and government in September 2015, reiterating a firm commitment to poverty eradication, elimination of discrimination and exclusion, reduction of inequalities and vulnerabilities, attainment of peace and prosperity for all, and protection of the planet. It has 17 SDGs and 169 related global targets to be achieved by 2030, leaving no one behind, that encompass all three dimensions—economic, social, and environmental—of sustainable development[7].

They are universal and apply to all countries; though they are not binding, each country is expected to take ownership and develop a national framework for achieving the 17 goals. The pledge of the 2030 Agenda, 'Leave No One Behind', carries far-reaching, transformative potential for the realization of equality, inclusion, and non-discrimination. The pledge is reflected in all goals (SDGs) and global targets that are integrated and interlinked with each other. The operationalization of 'Leave No One Behind (LNOB)' urges planners and development practitioners to'reach the farthest behind first' while formulating development plans, devising national frameworks, and obliges them to adapt and employ relevant tools for assessing 'who is left behind and why, sequencing and prioritizing problems and solutions, tracking and monitoring progress, and ensuring follow-up and review[8].

The comprehensive goals and targets of the 2030 Agenda are tailored to accomplishing the age-long aspirations of the people to get rid of persistent poverty and hunger, redeem themselves from entrenched discrimination and subjugation, exercise freedom and agency, and enjoy an environmentally safe, dignified, happy, and healthy life. From the perspective of human rights-based approaches to programming, LNOB imperatives for strategic frameworks, policy guidance, and global plans of action focus on three closely related but distinct concepts.

They are (i) equality: the imperative of moving towards substantive equality of opportunity and outcomes for all groups; (ii) non-discrimination: the prohibition of discrimination against individuals and groups identified in international human rights treaties; and (iii) equity: the broader concept of fairness in the distribution of costs, benefits, and opportunities[9]. The principles of equality, non-discrimination, and equity are imbedded in all SDGs in different ways. These are the basic conditions that accelerate the realization of the fundamental rights

7 UNDP 2017:5, UNSDG 2019:6
8 UNSDG 2019:6
9 Ibid., 7-8

to life, liberty, identity, dignity, prosperity, and happiness.

SDGs and associated targets, particularly LNOB pledge and urgency of poverty elimination, inequality reduction, ending of discrimination and exclusion and conservation of ecosystem and biodiversity, and the application of Human Rights-based Approach to Data as well have made more intensive and systematic data collection, analysis and disaggregation mandatory so that 'population subgroups' having different experiences according to their gender/sexual orientation, age, caste/ethnicity, economic status, educational attainment, cultural status, social identity, religion, place of residence, disability status, migration or displacement status, and other characteristics known as 'dimensions of inequality' or 'equity stratifiers' could be better identified and understood[10].

For achieving the 169 targets related to the 17 SDGs, 232 global indicators (revised in 2017 and further refined in 2021) have been developed, comprising all three types of indicators: structural indicators, process indicators, and outcome/impact indicators seeking both quantitative and qualitative results. It is assumed that systematically and comprehensively collected data based on these indicators after detecting and filling data gaps and the review and analysis of the aggregate data done meticulously to further produce data at disaggregated levels and find summary measures can provide evidence, information, and knowledge to identify accelerators, drivers, and constraints of the progress towards the SDGs, determine progress made by the nation and the population subgroups specified, and help to ascertain the immediate or underlying, even root causes of the poor results as well[11].

The mobilization of financial and technical resources and building partnerships, known as the Means of Implementation (MoI) and the Follow-Up and Review (FUR) processes and mechanisms, are essential components of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and are critical to ensuring its successful implementation, achieving targets, and the realization of human rights, including those of Indigenous peoples, as envisioned in international human rights instruments, including ILO C. 169, UNDRIP, CBD, and other conventions (AIPP 2017). WHO has prepared a Global Reference List of 100 Core Health Indicators (plus health-related SDGs), which is very useful for better identifying health indicators relevant to SDGs[12]. Several global targets of the SDGs are aimed at resolving Indigenous people's issues (poverty and hunger, exclusion, subordination, unemployment, low education and capability deficiencies, poor health, destructive development, etc.), safeguarding their rights, and ensuring their collective survival with dignified and happy lives.

For the reliable and precise measurement of the progress towards the SDGs made by the country as well as population subgroups within the country, leaving no one behind, the availability of accurate, precise, and more illuminating granular data, perfectly disaggregated as needed, is vital, which is a major challenge for a country like ours. The conventional official sources of data for Nepal are decennial population and housing censuses, Nepal living standards surveys, demographic and health surveys, multiple indicator cluster surveys, labor force surveys, household income and expenditure surveys, agricultural surveys and surveys of various purposes conducted irregularly within the gaps of some years, and administrative data sources like Vital Registration, Nepal Rastra Bank data, customs offices' data, data (MIS) of sectoral ministries, GIS and remote sensing data, and others.

10 WHO 2017:3, OHCHR 2018

11 See UNDP Bureau for Policy and Programme Support 2017, UNDP Sustainable Development Group 2019.

12 WHO 2018.

Both types of data made public or available in terms of Tier I (conceptually clear, established methodology and standards, and regularly produced) and Tier II (conceptually clear, established methodology and standards, but not regularly produced)[13] suffer from the same traditional weaknesses like problems of periodicity (frequency and timeliness), disaggregation (by sex/gender, age, ethnicity/caste, religious affiliation, linguistic identity, disability, income status, location/ecological belt), standardization (definition, measurement, sampling design/sample size, and methodology), reliability, trustworthiness, and quality assurance.

The implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development has already elapsed five years, but no such surveys have been carried out in Nepal within this period to meet the new and huge data need for tracking the progress toward the 169 SDG global targets as specified by 231 global indicators, apart from nationally adapted complementary indicators. Complaints are over-flooded in media that available data from these traditional sources is limited, often anachronistic (gaps in timeliness or data collection time and progress reporting time), and inadequate to disaggregate, thus deficient to identify people or population subgroups facing severe, intersecting, and multiple layers of deprivation, disadvantages, and multiple forms of discrimination (discussed in subsequent sections).

On the one hand, such a situation is attributed to the inadequate technical capacity of the Central Bureau of Statistics and other state organs of data generation, collection, analysis, and dissemination, and to financial and human resource constraints on the other. Different social groups like Indigenous peoples, Dalits (former untouchables), Madhesis (peoples of the plains/Tarai), Muslims, women, and other marginalized groups are complaining that it is the attitudes and prejudices of the ruling elites and dominant groups that made the data disaggregation by population subgroups non-viable to mask the mal-distribution of state resources, malpractices in project implementation and service delivery, and uneven development outcomes.

Experts of the concerned agencies claim that data disaggregation has become impossible in many cases because of methodological limitations, like a small sample size, dispersed social groups, and financial resource constraints that do not permit an increase in sample size to cover the diverse social groups—more than 100 distinct groups. Financially and technically weak national statistical systems, limited availability of data, gaps in data granularity for required disaggregation and disparities illustration, difficulties of data comparability, sparse data collected at irregular frequencies, inherent limitations in data, and measurement errors are major issues to monitor and report the progress in 231 SDG indicators experienced in the countries of Asia and the Pacific, including Nepal[14], as elsewhere in the world. SDG-related documents repeatedly affirm the critical importance of data and statistics for informing SDG-alienated, risk-informed development policies and actions, operationalizing the principle of 'leaving no one behind', ensuring accountability, participation, and empowerment, and tracking and monitoring progress in achieving SDG targets[15].

The importance of data, particularly disaggregated data and statistics, is clearly emphasized by SDG global targets. Target 17.18 aims to enhance capacity-building support to developing countries as part of global partnership in strengthening means of SDG implementation 'to significantly increase the availability of high-quality, timely, and reliable data disaggregated by income, gender, age, race, ethnicity, migratory status, disability, geographic location, and other characteristics relevant in national contexts' and Target 17.19 aims to adopt new measures of

13 Based on the Tier Classification of Inter-Agency and Expert Group on SDG Indicators (IAEG-SDGs) of the UN Statistical Commission.

14 See ADB 2020: 29–30.

15 UNDP Guidance Note, September 2017.

sustainable development progress beyond gross domestic product. Data disaggregation is vital to monitor the progress made in meeting almost all targets. The means of implementation of the SDGs obligate the developed nations to extend support to statistical institutions like CBS of the least developed or developing nations in building their technical and financial capacity for making productive use of information and communication technology, generating big data, and disaggregating it as needed, and Nepal can approach the concerned agencies of the developed nations if it feels such needs.

2.2 Social Inclusion and SDGs

The pioneering work of René Lenoir, titled Les exclus: Un francais sur dix (The excluded: One Frenchman out of ten), published in 1974 after the study of French social problems for 15 years, is regarded as a 'founding document' of the modern discourse about exclusion that shed light on the conditions of those citizens' separated from mainstream society because of factors like disability, mental illness, and poverty'[16]. According to Hillary Silver, social exclusion refers to those people who are excluded from a livelihood: secure, permanent employment; earnings; property, credit, or land; housing; the minimal or prevailing consumption level; education, skills, and cultural capital; welfare benefits; citizenship and equality before the law; participation in decision-making processes; public goods and services; and humane treatment, respect, personal fulfillment, and understanding[17].

The meaning of social exclusion altered during the 1980s and 1990s due to the sustained prevalence of long-term unemployment and increasing worries about racism and discrimination, and the terminology gradually became clearer to define contemporary social problems: having a strong biographical meaning referring to 'the personal experience of social and economic isolation supposedly related to unemployment, discrimination, and other social problems' and carrying a 'horizontal, spatial metaphor rather than a vertical model of inequality' that emphasizes 'income disparities'. ' From the perspective of the social exclusion paradigm, people are more 'in' or 'out' of mainstream society than 'up' or 'down' the class or the income distribution structure'[18].

Graham Room defined social exclusion as a multi-dimensional, dynamic, and relational concept, referring to social, economic, cultural, and political exclusion operating at different levels (macro, meso, and micro); dynamic in the sense that it has a changing and interactive nature, which means its forms, patterns, frequencies, and intensity keep changing over time; and relational, that is, rupture in the relationships between people and the society in which they live; and asymmetries in the power relations between groups, groups, and the state[19].

By the latter half of the 1990s, social inclusion as a political discourse and policy `blueprints' spread from France to Great Britain, which boosted the burgeoning social exclusion and inclusion literature, and by the turn of the 21st century, it dispersed to the European Union, then throughout the world. Social exclusion, as J. Estivill argues, should be understood 'as an accumulation of confluent processes with successive ruptures arising from the heart of the economy, politics, and society that gradually distances and places persons, groups, communities, and territories in a position of inferiority in relation to the centers of power, resources, and prevailing values[20].

16 Beland 2007:123–139.
17 Silver 1994:541.
18 Beland 2007:123–139.
19 Room 1992, 1995, cited in Mathieson et al. 2008:12–13.
20 Estivill 2003:19.

The conceptual shift from poverty to social exclusion have made society aware of its own dysfunction and look solutions and the 'shift implies a change in perspective: from static to a dynamic approach, from one dimensional to a multidimensional perspective, and also from a distributional to a relational focus' stressing 'not only the lack of fundamental resources, but also the to fully participate in its own society'; 'social rights as relational rights'; 'participation, involvement, and the customary life as against average income or basic needs/ baskets of goods, and a concept of well-being as primarily financial'; critical analysis of 'structure of social relationships and social ties' as individuals being socially embedded[21].Debates also intensified in the late 1990s on individual social rights as a way of social integration due to the demands of ethnic, community, or group rights for a radically different path to social integration, claiming that'social rights per se do not grant actual membership in a community, embeddedness in the meaningful web of belongings[22].

Political discourse on social exclusion pervaded the European continent by the late 1990s and the first decade of the 21st century, and scholarly works appeared in most Western countries that led to the emergence of planned actions there affecting the whole world. Ruth Levitas has identified social exclusion discourses of three types: (i) the redistributive discourse (RED), which emphasizes the redistribution of economic and material and power resources and the expansion of opportunities; (ii) the social integration discourse (SID), which focuses on social resources like social networks and institutions, education, health, housing, and participation; and (iii) the moral underclass discourse (MUD), which emphasizes cultural rather than material explanations of poverty and capability, describing the describing the underclass as inherently inferior. Nepali ruling elites indirectly favor MUD because of their hierarchical caste legacy, but somehow accept SID and are dead against RED. Today, the multi-dimensional, relational, and dynamic nature of social exclusion and 'deep exclusion', that is, 'exclusion across more than one dimension or domain of disadvantage'[23] has become a topic of hot debate that has drawn the attention of policymakers, and inclusion advocates and state authorities have started to respond accordingly.

Measuring social exclusion and inclusion is an essential part of addressing exclusion in all its dimensions, domains, depths, and complexities. France, the UK, the EU, Canada, and Australia have already scrutinized the concepts of social exclusion and developed appropriate indicators to monitor poverty and social exclusion. The UK was using several indicators sets, such as the Index of Multiple Deprivation, quality of life and well-being indicators, and sustainable development indicators (147 indicators), and was periodically conducting surveys to generate relevant data[24]. Most of the indicators measure the state of progress towards the SDGs. Such practices of quantifying the breadth and depth of social exclusion and monitoring progress have become regular business in most European countries, followed by Canada, Australia, and other countries in the world.

UNDP has recommended some crucial measures to build inclusive societies after carrying out a comprehensive study in Europe and the Central Asian region. Recommendations encompass genuine policy commitment to social inclusion; pre-emptive policies of quality education, health and basic services accessible to all, improving employability for the work force, revisiting social protection, services for the elderly, ensuring child benefits, social services to vulnerable families, expansion of unemployment benefits; turning drivers of social exclusion into drivers of inclusion such as making institutions inclusive, transparent, accountable and flexible, defining appropriate

21 Saraceno 2002:1.
22 Saraceno 2002:4.
23 Levitas et al. 2007; 9, 29.
24 Ibid. 32–85.

role for the state, improving government effectiveness, enhancing cooperation among regional local agencies, inclusive economic policies, redefining growth in a human development context, diversifying growth opportunities; changing mindsets towards tolerant societies embracing realistic approaches to anti-discrimination, inclusive education and labor markets; fine-tuning policies at the local context; and integrating monitoring and evaluation into the social inclusion policy process, among others.

Discourses of social exclusion surfaced in Nepal in the early 1990s after the restoration of multi-party democracy through the activism of Indigenous peoples, Dalits, Madhesis, and women. Research activities on social exclusion and inclusion began to be carried out in the late 1990s after the emergence of the armed struggle of rebellious Maoists. Economic, social, economic, cultural, and religious exclusion of ethnicities (particularly Indigenous peoples), Dalits, Madhesi people, Muslims, and women belonging to all castes and ethnic groups was reported in most publications between 1998 and 2010[25], and research from various perspectives on social exclusion and inclusion is continuing. The Central Department of Anthropology of Tribhuvan University conducted a major multi-disciplinary (both quantitative and qualitative) research project, the Nepal Social Inclusion Survey (NSIS), in 2011–2013 for the better understanding of the status of human and social development of all social groups (caste/ethnic groups, religious groups, sex/gender groups). This understanding helps to monitor the progress in addressing exclusion as well.

It has generated huge national aggregates and disaggregated data by 11 broader social groups and by each group of 88 castes or ethnicities surveyed on the social dimension (7 domains), economic dimension (9 domains), political dimension (4 domains or key indicators), cultural dimension (4 domains or key indicators), gender dimension (10 domains), and social cohesion dimension (4 domains). analyzing about 100 indicators and composite index of multidimensional social inclusion were also computed, which demonstrated that Hill Brahman, Tarai Brahman/Chhetri, Newar, Hill Chhetri, and some others were above the national average, and Mountain/Hill Janajati (Indigenous peoples), Tarai Janajati (Indigenous peoples), Tarai other castes, Muslims, Hill Dalit, and Tarai Dalit were below the national average (0.5818)[26]. The second round of NSIS was conducted in 2018, adding 40 additional indicators to support monitoring of SDGs with the suggestion of the NPC, and 98 caste and ethnic groups were reduced to 88 groups for methodological reasons[27]. Data were collected on eight dimensions to better track the SDGs, and they, except SDG-related data, were compared with those of the first round of the survey to monitor the progress made by 11 major social groups (Hill Brahman, Hill Chhetri, Madhesi Brahman/Chhetri, Madhesi other castes, Hill Dalit, Madhesi Dalit, Newar, Hill Janajati, Tarai Janjati, Muslims, and others) and each of the 88 social groups of Nepal[28]. The details as regards SDGs are dealt with in the subsequent section (see below).

2.3 Nepal in the Asia and the Pacific

Nepal has made, according to Key Indicators for Asia and the Pacific 2020, 51st Edition, published by the Asian Development Bank (ADB) in September 2020, significant gains in poverty reduction, improvement in undernourishment, decrease in maternal mortality ratio, increase in the proportion of trained teachers in primary education, decrease in the proportion of women who were married before the age of 15 or 18, and dramatic increase in the proportion of seats in

25 See NESAC 1998, Gurung 1998, DFID and the World Bank 2006, CBS et al. 2006, UNDP 2004 and 2009, Acharya and Subba (2008) Das and Hatlebakk 2010, ADB 2010

26 Das et al. (2014)

27 See Gurung et al. 2020.

28 Ibid.

the National Parliament held by women by 2020. Nepal lags far behind in using safely managed drinking water services (less than 30 percent of the population), though it claims that about 95 percent of its population has access to safe drinking water. Nepal is far behind in making gains in the increase of manufacturing value-added per capita as a percentage of gross domestic product (GDP) for 2000 and 2019, ranking 43rd among 46 developing economies (countries)[29]. Nepal ranks second from the bottom among 13 reporting economies (countries) of the region, whose proportion of urban population is living in slums (49.3%), followed by Myanmar and Bangladesh, whose population proportions living in slums are 56.2 percent and 47.2 percent, respectively[30]. Nepal has received $2.27 million in 2017 to build its public sector statistical capacity compared to the support received by Pakistan ($3.68 million), the Kyrgyz Republic ($3.04 million), India ($2.98 million), Myanmar ($2.78 million), Timor-Leste ($1.03), and 8 economies (countries) with less than $500,000 and 19 economies (countries) receiving less than $100,000[31]. In sum, Nepal is a moderate achiever among 49 economies (countries) in the key indicators of the SDGs in the Asia and Pacific region. The publication has pointed out huge data gaps and data-related issues for the monitoring of SDGs consisting of 169 targets and 231 indicators. It is also postulated that limited data availability, gaps in data granularity (for disaggregation by location, sex/gender, age, income, ethnicity, migration status, disability status, and other relevant dimensions; illustration of disparities; identification of vulnerable groups, etc.), lack of data comparability, sparse data and irregular frequency, data limitations, and measurement errors[32] confronting several countries are the major challenges for monitoring the progress towards achieving the SDGs.

2.4 National Review of SDGs, 2020: A Sweeping Observation

The National Planning Commission (NPC) of the Government of Nepal had prepared its first national review of sustainable development goals for submission at the international meeting of the High-Level Political Forum (HLPF) in June 2017. NPC had also developed Sustainable Development Goals: Status and Roadmap: 2016–2030, which were made public in December of the same year. In the course of developing its national review report, it identified some additional 204 national complementary indicators while contextualizing and customizing 221 global indicators (targets and indicators of Goal 14 were thought to be irrelevant in the context of Nepal), totaling 425 indicators of 159 targets (excluding 10 targets of Goal 14). Sustainable Development Goals: Status and Roadmap: The NPC has set 2019–2022, 2025, and finally 2030 as milestones in achieving targets. The NPC has prepared and published the second National Review of Sustainable Development Goals, highlighting the achievements by the 2019 milestone, covering the period between 2015 and 2019, in June 2020.

It has revised the list of indicator framework comprising 415 indicators developed in 2017 in course of publishing SDG Status and Roadmap report to better reflect the national context for the tracking, monitoring and review of the SDG progress against a total of 232 global indicators (recently revised 231) in 2020 after iterative consultations and frequent multi-sectoral and multilayered engagements with sub-national (provincial and local level) governments and other stakeholders and finally identified a total of 594 national indicators, inclusive of global indicators (221 indicators omitting 10 indicators related to 10 targets of Goal 14), emphasizing on robust SDG monitoring and evaluation[33].

29 ADB 2020: 14.
30 Ibid.: 19.
31 Ibid. 28.
32 Ibid. 19-20
33 See NPC 2020: 6.

The NPC is the nodal institution of the Government of Nepal for SDGs and is devoted to mainstreaming SDGs by landing and contextualizing them at national and sub-national levels and alienating them in national and provincial plans, accelerating policy interventions and targeted actions at various levels, and mobilizing national and international financial and technical support for effective implementation of SDGs. Likewise, various measures of SDG localization, like sensitization, developing and operationalizing indicator frameworks appropriate to national, regional (provincial), and local contexts, developing and strengthening data and statistical systems, building multiple partnerships, instituting coordination and review mechanisms, and monitoring SDG progress at various levels, have been attempted to operationalize issuing the SDG Localization Resource Book in line with the spirit of the Constitution of 2015 and the policy and program interventions of the 14th Plan (2016/17–2018/19) and the 15th Plan (2019/20–2023/24). Policy and planning commissions of some provincial governments, particularly Bagmati Province, Lumbini Province, and Karnali Province, have formulated SDG implementation plans, making some relevant baseline data public from where they aim to build their achievements.

The National Review of Sustainable Goals, June 2020, has covered the progress made between 2015 (the baseline year) and 2019, particularly the period beyond VNR 2017 and before the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic. NPC claims that evidence-driven actions have been initiated with the partnership of multiple stakeholders, maintaining vertical and horizontal policy coherence that brings about mutually reinforcing economic, social, and environmental transformation for the phased realization of the SDGs. The national aggregate data presented in the report demonstrate that Nepal has made significant gains in achieving time-bound targets of the SDGs. It is, however, accepted that data gaps are extensive with respect to hunger, industry, innovation and infrastructure, climate action, life on land, and other areas where indicators are required, and issues of periodicity, disaggregation, standardization, reliability, and quality assurance equally appear in the data made use of. It is almost obvious that the data presented in the report do not help to identify those who are left behind and tailor interventions to reach the farthest behind first. The facts and figures of this report also substantiate that SDGS-aligned development policies, strategies, and interventions, as claimed by the authorities, bear the same unequitable outcomes as in the past.

No One Leave Behind: National Review of SDGs holds that formation of various constitutional commissions to protect fundamental rights and other social rights and safeguard meaningful inclusion and their activation; enactment of laws and regulations relating to the right to food and food sovereignty (2018), right to housing (2018), right to employment (2018), rights of persons with disabilities (2017), right to safe motherhood and reproductive health (2018), social security (2018), child protection (Act Relating to Children 2018), and compulsory and free education (2018), and rigorous enforcement of caste-based discrimination and untouchability law and sexual harassment at the workplace law and reform in Community Forestry Act; building inclusive political and administrative structure, expanding social security and protection measures and targeted programs with focus on equity are creating conducive environment, though data are meagre to substantiate, for 'Leaving No One Behind'. But the review report does not delineate the real progress on the enforcement of laws and policies.

Reduction of poverty and hunger: The review report demonstrates that 15 percent of the Nepali population were below the international poverty line ($1.9 at 2011 PPP value) and 16.7 percent were living below the national poverty line in 2019, which was significant progress compared to 2015 proportions. These national aggregates are only approximations of the actual poverty rates due to the non-availability of data from the primary sources. In the same vein, 28.6 percent of the population were experiencing multi-dimensional poverty (poor health manifested

in poor nutrition, higher child mortality, low education seen in fewer years of schooling, poor school attendance, and a lower standard of living exhibited in a lower grade of cooking fuel, poor sanitation, a lower supply of safe drinking water, poor housing, non- or limited access to electricity, and a lack or limited assets) in 2019. The achievement seems to be encouraging compared to the targeted 35.1 MPI (Multidimensional Poverty Index) for 2019 and the baseline MPI of 44.2 in 2015. The proportion of the population living in poverty depends on the measurement of poverty, either restricted to a single dimension—income, often represented by consumption—determined on a basket of goods (food items, clothing and ornaments, agricultural and livestock inputs, festivals, ceremonies, and household goods) and services (education, medicines, medical care, electricity, water, telephone, mobile, internet, and direct taxes) deemed to be minimum requirements to lead a normal life or ensure survival, which is usually called money-metric poverty (poverty headcount rate) or measurement based on a multitude of other deprivations like lack of health care, education, housing, and household necessities. The second measurement of poverty is believed to truly measure the level of poverty. Both measures have been included in the global indicators of poverty eradication in the SDGs, and achievements on both of these indicators have been stated in the present national review report that have met the targets set for the 2019 calendar year. The negative effects of the COVID-19 pandemic have not been counted in this measurement of poverty.

As already discussed, poverty has multiple dimensions and multiple meanings. It is widely seen that poverty manifests in the form of hunger, undernourishment, health problems, diminished opportunities for education, unemployment or underemployment, a lack or extremely limited access[34] to productive resources, discrimination, and a lack of agency and opportunity to influence decisions. The national review report shows that 31.6 percent and 24.3 percent of children under 5 years are suffering from stunting and underweight, respectively, in 2019, which are the results of undernourishment, whereas the prevalence of undernourishment is only 8.7 percent of the population, revealing stark inconsistencies. The prevalence of anemia among 40.8 percent of women of reproductive age and among 52.7 percent of children under 5 years also contrasts with the data relating to the proportion of the undernourished population and the population proportion under moderate to severe food insecurity. Immediate causes of wasting (too thin or low weight for age) or underweight, stunting (too short for height), anemia (iron deficiency), hypothyroidism (iodine deficiency), and exophthalmia (vitamin A deficiency) among children are basically poor diet or micronutrient intake, poverty, economic insecurity, deprivation of resources, and lack of information. There are wide disparities in the distribution of undernourishment across spaces, regions, ethnicities, and social identities, which are reported time and again by the national media[35]. Impressive gains in poverty reduction, as claimed in the report, do not match the moderate gains in other areas equally relevant to the figures of economic progress. Poverty naturally deprives children of the minimum accepted diet, as again seen in the proportion of breastfed children (69 percent) and non-breastfed children (77.8 percent), aged 6–23 months, who had no at least the minimum dietary diversity and the minimum meal frequency during the previous day of the survey in 2019[36]. Thus, data sometimes creates confusion to represent real situations. There is no doubt that the COVID-19 pandemic has already reversed whatever

34 According to the 2019 report of International Food Policy Research, 21 percent of the Nepali population is not getting adequate food or is still suffering from undernourishment.

35 One such example is the publication of a report titled 'intergenerational cycle of undernourishment' by Vidya Rai and Chadani Kathayat, published in Kantipur Daily on September 5, 2021. The Kantipur Daily has published its editorial 'break the cycle of undernourishment' on the issue of September 6, 2021. It is also reported in the same daily on September 8, 2021, that 14,000 households in Bajhang district are experiencing a severe food crisis, and most women who have recently given birth to a baby and are pregnant and children are suffering from undernourishment exhibited in the forms of stunting, wasting, and being underweight.

36 See the Nepal Multiple Indicator Cluster Survey 2019.

progress has been made by 2019, and the worst economic, social, physical, and mental health sufferers are the people without resources or with the least resources to survive.

Youth under-employment: The quantified progress in achieving SDG targets of full and productive employment and decent work is perplexing because of the traditional understanding of the meaning of employment. The underemployment rate of youth, aged 15–24, was 21.4 percent of the youth population in 2019. The proportion of youth not in education, employment, or training (NEET), according to the report, was huge—35.3 percent in 2019. NEET youth are low-wage earners in the informal sector and are hidden from national statistics. Limited vocational and technical training opportunities and expensive technical education and training have made the working-age population with low income, particularly youth aged 15–24, incapable of entering the labor market. More than three-fourths of low-wage earners and seasonal workers are not covered by social security or protection measures of a meager amount. The formal employment sector is beyond their access. The report does not reveal the progress made by Indigenous peoples, Dalits, and other socially disadvantaged groups that does not match the speed of progress made by traditionally dominant groups[37].

Violence of various forms: Despite the commitment to building a peaceful, inclusive, and just society, 13.5 percent of the population was subjected to physical, psychological, or sexual violence in the previous 12 months of 2019, and 77.6 percent of children aged 1–14 years experienced psychological aggression or physical punishment during the last month of data collection[38]. It was also found that the proportion of victims of violence who reported their victimization to the competent authorities or mechanisms in the previous 12 months almost doubled from 4.2 percent in 2015 to 7.5 percent in 2019. The report fails to cover the incidences of structural and institutional discrimination, prejudices, and ill treatment or verbal abuse against service seekers by the duty-bearers, who are in huge numbers.

Climate change adaptation and disaster risk reduction: It is mentioned in the report that 342 community-level adaptation plans have been formulated to increase the ability of the communities to adapt to the adverse impacts of climate change. The information and messages shared by LAHURNIP rights advocates from different parts of the country, including those communities where the plan has been formulated, divulge that Indigenous peoples' engagement in concerned communities' planned actions is almost negligible. Indigenous peoples of Nepal are unknown about the National Forestry Policy 2018, Forestry Sector Strategy 2016-2025, National Climate Change Policy 2019, National Environment Policy 2019, National Ramsar Strategy and Action Plan 2018-2024, Environment Protection Act 2019 and related Rules 2020, Disaster Risk Reduction and Management Act 2016 and related Rules 2019, National Policy for Disaster Risk Reduction 2018, National Disaster Response Framework 2018, and National Framework for Local Adaptation Plan of Action 2019 as they have never been made to participate in the processes of such policy, strategy, and law formulation, though they were highly affected.

Natural disaster like flooding, landslides, soil erosion, destruction of river banks, and damages of bridges and roads and other basic infrastructures occurring every year almost in all parts of the country causing immense loss of life, livestock, houses, public buildings and other properties and heritage and natural sites show that environment protection measures, climate change mitigation and adaptation plans and disaster risk reduction interventions, including monitoring of climate changes and prevention of adverse impacts of climatic vagaries, risk awareness, disaster risk management and preparedness and capacity building for resilience and effective response,

37 Evidence abounds to lend support to this assumption; see Pradhan and Gurung 2020.
38 NPC June 2020:54.

among others, have not been operationalized effectively and systematically. The country is heavily affected by climate change and natural disasters like floods, landslides, soil erosion, fire outbreaks, earthquakes, disease outbreaks, and recently COVID-19 and other natural calamities, but the report has remained silent on such issues of public concern. The laws relating to genetic resources and Indigenous traditional knowledge and sharing benefits therefrom are not fair and equitable, which has not been mentioned in the report.

Inclusive and equitable quality education: Gender parity in educational enrolment and grade completion up to grade eight is well illustrated in the review report, and as the grade increases, disparities widen at the higher secondary level. The school completion rate is only 23.4 percent at the higher secondary level (9–12), which the report does not cover. There are enough indications that the gaps in higher educational attainment across different sections of society are huge. That can be seen from the coming census only if the data are disaggregated by sex, caste/ethnicity, religion, and location. Equity and quality in education are still burning issues in Nepal. The costs of high-quality education and technical education are exorbitantly high, and so they are within the reach of limited families. Learning achievement/score for grade five is presented in the report, which shows that students are poor in mathematics, English, and Nepali, with 55, 66, and 57 percent scores, respectively, in 2019. The score in Nepali is a debatable issue, and if it were science or social studies, it would probably become a widely accepted option. The completion rate for basic level (grade 8), secondary level (grade 10), and higher secondary level (grade 12), which are vital educational statistics for the understanding of minimum educational attainment and entering into higher education to lead a productive and gainful life, is what the report fails to deal with.

The report has shown that coverage of the student population receiving scholarships (38.3 percent) has slightly increased in 2019 compared to 2015 (37 percent), but it does not tell who the recipients are or answer the problems of irregularities raised from time to time. The Constitution of Nepal guarantees education in mother tongues apart from Nepali and other international languages. Mother language, or home language, as a medium of instruction guaranteed by the Constitution is one of the issues in education for effective learning outcomes. Though this report is silent about the basic education in mother or home languages, the Nepal Multiple Indicator Cluster Survey 2019 has revealed that the home language of 40 percent of the children aged 7–14 is not used at schools. Complaints are rampant that education in mother tongues has not been much emphasized as a policy commitment. Lifelong learning is still a distant dream for the vast majority of people, who are traditionally deprived of formal education.

Disaggregation of the data: Nepal Sustainable Development Goals Status and Roadmap: 2016–30. The baseline report of 2017 of the NPC identified 425 indicators, claiming that number may reach 600 in the future in the course of adapting global indicators for the monitoring of SDG progress in Nepal. It is maintained that out of the 425 indicators, only 249 were regularly or intermittently available, 75 were partially available, and 100 were not obtainable at all. It was also found in the report that the data for 178 indicators has no base year (2016) statistics, and most indicators do not have baseline disaggregated data, from which progress can be measured across gender, sex, age, social group, ethnicity, disability, location, income, wealth, and subnational levels[39]. The present national review report (NPC 2020) has stated that 494 indicators have been identified for 169 global targets (159 targets if 10 targets relating to Goal 14 are not counted, thinking them irrelevant), and among them are 237 global indicators (recently revised to 230 indicators) and 257 national indicators[40].

39 A Study on Development Data in Nepal, 2018: 7, 69.
40 NPC June 2020: 12.

It is argued in the same report that 51 indicators (10%), according to the classification of indicators by nature and availability, belong to Tier III with no internationally established methodology or standards and are under development. It is seen in the review document that relevant indicators of some targets appropriate to Nepal's situation and context have not yet been identified, and it has reported national aggregates or approximations (data) of some 173 indicators (global and national) only for the progress monitoring of SDG targets.

Disaggregated data are very limited and make disparities in achievements across gender/sex, age, social group/ethnicity/religion, disability, locality (rural/urban), and subnational level (province/local level) beyond our understanding, and the very essence of the SDGs 'leave no one behind' has been made an illusionary vision. The Nepal Sustainable Goals Status and Roadmap: 2016-2030 had committed to data standardization (definition, unit of measurement, method of computation) and data disaggregation by gender, age, ethnicity, religion, disability, location (rural-urban), administrative units/subnational level, and income or wealth[41], which, as the present review report exhibits, were not fulfilled. The long-institutionalized Nepali social structure is founded on the Hindu hierarchical varna/caste hierarchical system, which, though legally abolished about five decades ago, is still functional and embodied deep in our bodies, minds, behaviors, skills, and patterns of institutions and inter-personal and inter-group relations. If the data do not represent the realities of Nepali social structure, any assumptions to be made about Nepal are meaningless. From this perspective, it is also vital to see who is benefiting from the development processes, outputs, and outcomes and how historical injustices or cumulative disadvantages are addressed. Limitations relating to data generation and disaggregation of most indicators to monitor progress in achieving targets of the SDGs reveal poor strengthening of the national statistical system even after four years of implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

Striking gaps in monitoring the progress: Straitened ownership and control over land and other forms of property, poor access to natural resources and financial and other basic services, difficulties of living in harmony with nature, vulnerabilities to climate change and disaster risks, lack of capacity, and resilience are some of the basic, associated factors of poverty and hunger that are not dealt with in the report. Target 2.3 demands the status of Indigenous peoples, along with other family farmers, pastoralists, and fishers, relating to the increase in their agricultural productivity and agricultural production contributing to increased income for their food security and improved nutrition. In the same way, when dealing with educational attainment, the completion rate of secondary education and upper secondary education, which the global indicator 4.1.2 stresses, has not been presented where disparities of capability and productivity can be discerned if the relevant data is disaggregated. Gender disparity is presented in various target achievements in the report, but disparities on other identity grounds have not been elucidated. The report is silent about imparting knowledge and skills to the learners through education and information needed for sustainable development and sustainable lifestyles, appreciation of cultural diversity, and the culture's contribution to sustainable development. The report presents road density (km/sq.km) only instead of presenting proportion of rural population who live within 2 km. of an all-season road as part of quality, reliable, sustainable, and resilient infrastructure that supports economic development and human well-being with a focus on affordable and equitable access for all. It is clearly seen that the development thrust of governments of all levels is on road construction and expansion, and it is widely reported by mass media that the main cause of the natural disaster everywhere is haphazard road construction using bulldozers and excavators without conducting environmental assessment and geological survey. It is evident that the principles of infrastructure development of the SDGs have been almost ignored in practice.

41 NPC, December 2017.

Meaningful reporting of discrimination on various grounds is a complicated issue for Nepal because of its legacy and structural complexities, which are also evidenced in this report. This review report camouflages the progress on resolving the problems of slum dwellers, informal settlements, and inadequate housing, which goes against the spirit of the SDGs. The global target 11.4 relating to strengthening efforts to protect and safeguard cultural and natural heritage and mobilizing all levels of government for building inclusive, safe, resilient, and sustainable cities and human settlements (Goal 11) has been ignored in the report. Safe, inclusive, and accessible, green, open spaces for public use (global target 11.7 and indicator 11.7.1) are shrinking every day. Additionally, the concept of safe houses built after the earthquake disaster of 2015 (reconstruction works are still continuing as hardly 60 percent destroyed or partially destroyed houses were built) is unilaterally government-defined, with special attention to the disproportionately affected people and cultural perspective in reconstruction, rehabilitation, risk reduction, and post-disaster management. Some of the guiding principles of the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015–2030 have also not been followed seriously.

Imperfect progress report: The data tables presented in the report do not provide the data relating to the proposed 494 national indicators, and the data related to less than 175 indicators are only minimally helpful to monitor the progress in achieving SDG targets. The mapping of complementary national indicators with global indicators has not been done except for the comparative presentation of the number of global indicators and national indicators added. The list of similar indicators and the list of unaddressed targets have not been presented in the report. Data snapshots, as needed, have not been exhibited thoroughly. The problem of data periodicity is equally perplexing, as timely data generation has not been taken seriously in the last few years. One of the major drawbacks of the report is the lack of description of the achievements of institutionalization and localization of the SDGs. The progress at the sub-national (province and local) levels in SDG achievements has been totally ignored and, therefore, absent. It seems that NPC, being an SDG nodal agency, has not prepared performance indicators of SDG implementation for sub-national levels. In the same way, data disaggregation by location of residence (rural or urban) has also been disregarded. Lack of presentation of metadata delineating goal, target, indicator, data source, description or definition of indicator, unit of measurement, method of computation, periodicity, type and level of disaggregation, mapping of national indicators with global indicators, and references has also rendered the government's SDG progress review for 2020 imperfect.

2.5 Multiple Indicator Cluster Survey, Nepal 2019

Nepal Multiple Indicator Cluster Survey (NMICS) 2019 has a major contribution, as in the building of the SDGs data landscape as those of other demographic and health surveys, national living standard surveys, labor surveys, and other socio-economic surveys and administrative information management systems. It is claimed that NMICS 2019 has generated relevant data pertaining to some 40 percent of household-based SDG indicators[42]. Its unique contributions are the water quality testing for E. coli and arsenic, data provided since NMICS 2014, which served as a baseline indicator (Target 6.1 of Goal 6) for safely managed drinking water, and establishing the Multidimensional Poverty Index (MPI) 2018, a baseline indicator for poverty in all its dimensions (Target 1.2 of Goal 1). It has provided a lot of up-to-date information and cutting-edge evidence on the state of children and women. The report asserts that it has presented 'data from an equity perspective by indicating disparities based on the differences of sex, province, location,

42 Nepal Multiple Indicator Cluster Survey 2019: Key Indicators, *p. 2.*

education, household wealth, functional limitation, and other characteristics'[43]. It should be noted that the survey has overlooked the persistent and irremovable caste/ethnic features of Nepali society that privilege higher castes over lower castes or ethnicities depending upon the traditional order of caste hierarchy, and it seems that disparities based on caste/ethnicity have become taboo subjects in this report, not to displease the dominant ruling elites as in the past.

Data published in the NMICS report reveal that Nepal has made significant progress in some areas by early 2019, such as access to clean energy like hydroelectricity (89.9% of the population), youth and adult (15–24 years old) literacy (90.3%), and access to drinking water (92.1% of the population, but 75 percent of the of the source water is E. coli-contaminated). On the other hand, progress on several indicators is not as planned. Upper secondary school education (grade 9-12) completion rate is very poor, only 27 percent of the total related grade students. Only 8 percent of the population aged 15–49 have access to mass media, and about 11 percent are computer users, even in this age of rapid expansion of communication facilities. ICT skills related to computer activities are confined in about 16 percent of the population only which demonstrates that very few people have monopoly over information and knowledge. Substantial proportions of children aged 12–23 months (30%) and 24-35 months (86%) have not received basic vaccinations, and all vaccinations are recommended. Less than 5 percent of the of the population have health insurance coverage. NMICS also discloses that only 31 percent of breastfed children and 22 percent of non-breastfed children aged 6–23 months took at least the minimum dietary diversity and the minimum meal frequency in the previous day of the survey, indicating poor dietary supply and poor knowledge of care-givers. It has also been revealed that 24 percent of children under five years old are moderate to severely underweight, 31.5 percent are moderate to severely stunted, and 13 percent of the children under five are moderate to severely wasted, showing widespread undernourishment, mainly associated with extreme poverty. It is not possible to presume the possible progress of Indigenous peoples based on these national aggregate data, as they are not disaggregated by category or ethnicity.

2.6 Who Are Left Behind? Tracking Progress on the Sustainable Goals in Nepal

The Central Department of Anthropology, Tribhuvan University, conducted a comprehensive (both qualitative and quantitative) study and carried out the second Nepal Social Inclusion Survey, 2018, along with an ethnographic study with the support of USAID, Nepal, to generate extensive knowledge and evidence on the status of social inclusion among 88 social groups (almost covering all caste, ethnic, and religious groups) in the country for a comprehensive understanding of the up-dated state of social inclusion in Nepal. Huge amounts of data were collected, and analysis was carried out to generate national aggregate data and data disaggregated by caste, ethnicity, gender, religious identity (Muslim), location of origin or residence (Mountain, Hill, Madhes/Tarai), and other characteristics. The study covered a wide range of topics related to social inclusion, like basic social sector services and opportunities, household resources and economic opportunities, inclusion in state institutions, diversity and discrimination, gender inequality, progress in achieving the SDGs, and so on.

The study has presented data for 40 indicators following the NPC SDGs indicator framework, as they were directly related to SDGs along with the areas of social inclusion. Though it has provided ample evidence of development outcomes across different social groups, they were used to assess the level and dimension of inclusion or overcoming specific types of exclusion for studied groups, broadly relevant to SDGs, but not directly carry the typical results expected by each of

43 Ibid.

the SDG indicators. The study population of 88 caste and ethnic groups was clustered into 11 main social groups for the convenience of data presentation: Hill Brahmin, Hill Chetri, Madhesi Brahman/Chetri, Madhesi Other Caste, Hill Dalit, Madhesi Dalit, Newar, Mountain/Hill Janajati, Tarai Janajati, Muslim, and Other/Marwadi[44]. Data have been presented at the national and main group levels as aggregate data and disaggregated data by each group in the Annex of the report. The study reports (publications in four volumes) also contain a list of those groups at the bottom quintile for each indicator, revealing who is the farthest behind among them and who is in the top quintile, showing the groups most advantaged and advanced. The data presented in the reports is helpful for understanding how resources, rewards and benefits, social goods, opportunities, and power are unevenly distributed and who is disproportionately grabbing the development benefits and state institutions[45].

One of the volumes of study reports is 'Who Are Left Behind? Tracking Progress on the Sustainable Development Goals in Nepal: Evidence from the Nepal Social Inclusion Survey 2018' presents data on 40 indicators of 25 targets relating to the eradication of poverty (SDG 1), zero hunger (SDG 2), good health and well-being (SDG 3), quality education (SDG 4), gender equality (SDG 5), clean water and sanitation (SDG 6), affordable and clean energy (SDG 7), decent work and economic growth (SDG 8), reduced inequalities (SDG 10), sustainable cities and communities (SDG 11), peace, justice, and strong institutions. The data in this volume demonstrate that Nepal has met or exceeded the 2019 targets set by the NPC for 16 indicators, and targets were not achieved for 13 indicators at the national level. Women fared worse in all 40 indicators, with the exception of GPI in secondary education. Madhesi Dalits, Hill Dalits, and Muslims lag behind in most indicators (exceptions are some groups of Hill Janajati, Madhesi Janajati, and some other Madhesi castes). In totality, a large proportion of the population (a total of 51 different groups of Madhesi Datit, Hill Dalit, Madhesi Other Caste, Mountain/Hill Janajati, Tarai Janajati, and Muslims out of 88 groups) is being left behind in the country, and intra-group differences are also stark within the Mountain/Hill Janajati and Madhesi Other Caste categories[46]. This publication is helpful in monitoring the SDGs across gender and social groups, identifying who is left behind, and assessing whether or not the development interventions reached the farthest behind first.

2.7 Voluntary Peoples Review of SDGs in Nepal

The SDGs National Network of 153 civil society organizations has prepared a national voluntary review of SDGs in Nepal in 2020 and highlighted the recent progress and the gaps in achieving SDGs[47]. It has been underlined that despite the lofty state structure of SDG implementation, coordination, and monitoring progress as seen in official, research-based data, the progress is far from satisfactory. The report has optimally used data available from various sources, including government agencies, development partners, and research institutions, to provide up-to-date information on SDG progress. It has been pointed out that the data needed is not available, and data disaggregation has remained a major problem in identifying who is left behind. It has presented some progress data, though incomplete for a full understanding of the different aspects of achievements, as well as highlighted key issues, challenges, and gaps for each goal, and has also suggested some fundamental actions. It is argued in the report that the COVID-19 crisis has disrupted all development works and economic activities since early 2020, negatively affecting progress in attaining goals of eradicating extreme poverty and hunger, reducing

44 Pradhan and Gurung 2020.
45 Gurung et al. 2020.
46 Pradhan and Gurung 2020.
47 Voluntary Peoples Review of SDGs in Nepal, 2020.

inequality, ensuring healthy lives and quality education and skills, building resilient, people-friendly infrastructure, and promoting inclusive, sustainable industrialization. How COVID-19 responses and recovery contribute to SDGs has also been discussed in the report, along with navigating the path to reach the farthest behind first. It is posited in the report that inefficiency of the state institutions, lack of accountability of duty bearers, inadequate mobilization of resources for SDG implementation, poor localization of SDGs, politicization of development, and rampant corruption are the major hurdles to achieving SDGs. It has best tried to amplify the voices of the people for closing the gaps in the SDGs.

2.8 Indigenous peoples and Development

Modernization drive of the country of the last two hundred and fifty years in the forms of state building, nation-state building, nationalization of land and natural resources, assimilation (destruction of cultures, languages, and religions), territorial delimitation (disintegrating ancestral territories), power centralization, industrialization, infrastructure development, forced labor, commercialization of products, promotion of feudalism to capitalism, all have immense negative impacts on the lives of Indigenous peoples and they have the impressions that development is primarily displacement, land dispossession, living in disharmony with nature, natural calamities and disasters, forfeiture of means of livelihoods and occupational choices/ options, loss of cultures and languages and destruction of heritage. Once affluent people have now turned to impoverished people, only a few of them have succeeded in managing transition and overcoming the barriers of deprivation. There is no dearth of literature dealing with these burning issues, of which it is not possible to illustrate. Monitoring their progress and sharing development benefits is equally challenging and problematic. Now, it is universally accepted that poverty and prosperity, development and underdevelopment, power and powerlessness, peace and conflict are the results of unequal and unfair exercise or enjoyment of human rights by different sections of society and the outcomes of inhospitable relations between rulers and the ruled. Indigenous peoples of Nepal have a history of oppression, subjugation, domination, exploitation, marginalization, and deprivation spanning more than two hundred years, and development interventions need to adapt to be compatible with the perceptions, conceptions, behaviors, visions, aspirations, and lived realities of Indigenous peoples. Discourse on Indigenous peoples' development as defined and operationalized by themselves has appeared in the global forums since the early 21st century, with the spiraling implementation of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) in UN member countries. It has become a critical subject of deliberation in the academic circle.

CROP International Studies in Poverty Research's publication, Indigenous peoples and Poverty: An International Perspective, edited by Robyn Eversol and colleagues (2005), contains 16 articles from various experts critically analyzing and accurately clarifying the proximal concepts of poverty, including Indigenous concepts of poverty with diverse connotations, Indigenous peoples' subordination in the nation-state and existing patterns of relation with the state, Indigenous experiences of rights, citizenship, and self-determination, and Indigenous peoples' perspective on development. John-Andrew McNeish and Bobyn Eversole suggest that patterns of poverty need to be identified and the reasons behind observable disadvantage need to be explored, and further imply that 'unearthing the reasons—discovering what creates a situation of disadvantage—is a solid first step towards understanding what can be done to reduce or eliminate poverty' and transform the development policies for the security of the poor instead of prosperous[48].

48 McNeish and Eversole, 2005, Introduction: Indigenous peoples and Poverty (pp. 1–26), in Eversole, McNeish, and Cimadomore (eds.), *Indigenous peoples and Poverty: An International Perspective*.

In 2006 and 2007, various regional and thematic workshops were organized, according to State of the World's Indigenous peoples, a publication of UN Depart of Economic and Social Affairs (DESA) of 2009, to identify and define culturally appropriate indicators relevant to Indigenous peoples to measure status and trends of their well-being and sustainable development and identified these core issues and thematic areas for framing meaningful indicators: security of rights to territories, lands and natural resources; integrity of Indigenous cultural heritage; gender; respect for identity and non-discrimination; fate control and self-determination; full, informed and effective participation; culturally-appropriate education; health; access to infrastructure and basic services; extent of external threats; material well-being and demographic patterns of Indigenous peoples[49]. A series of national, regional, and local workshops facilitated by international and regional experts, presentations by technical experts, and intensive discussions and reflections of participants have succeeded in identifying a number of meaningful indicators for different thematic areas relevant to Indigenous peoples for measuring progress in reaching the MDGs[50]. They are still relevant and useful to measure SDG progress, and some of them have been adapted and listed in this report as well.

2.9 Literature on how Indigenous peoples were pushed behind

Literature abounds on how Indigenous peoples were pushed behind and are now left behind. State policies and processes that gradually compelled Indigenous peoples of various regions of Nepal toward descending journeys that steered them to powerlessness, subordination, deprivation, poverty, and a lack of education have been traced and scrutinized in the literature to find out the causes of their present state of underdevelopment. They are referred where they are appropriate and have not been dealt with here in detail.

2.10 NHRC Reports

The report published by National Human Rights Commission (NHRC) Nepaltitled 'The NHRI Nepal Joint Submission for The Third Cycle Universal Periodic Review of Nepal, March 24, 2020' prepared in cooperation withNational Women Commission Nepal and National Dalit Commission Nepal; NHRIs Report 2018 jointly submitted by NHRC and National Women Commission Nepal to the CEDAW Committee for the 71st session reviewing Nepal's 6th periodic report and National Human Rights Institution's Independent Report on The Convention on The Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD) submitted to The UN Committee on The Rights of Persons with Disabilities submitted by NHRC Nepal, 15 August 2017 were reviewed and the recommendations of the reports have been adapted in the forms of complementary national indicatorsof some relevant SDG targets.

49 DESA, UN 2009:41; Stankovitch et al. 2008:13.
50 Stankovitch et al. (2008).

Methodology

3.Methodology

Indigenous peoples who are left behind in Nepali society as a collective case, development interventions as national phenomena, and progress toward achieving SDG targets as a social process have been the subject matter and focus of this study. This study is a research project involving multiple methodologies and research practices. The research design, strategies, and methods employed in this research study are briefly discussed in the subsequent sections.

3.1 Strategies of inquiry

A combination of several research strategies was employed depending upon the topics of deliberation, analysis, and issues and problems underlying the subjects of inquiry to generate qualitative and quantitative data that answered the research questions posed by the objectives of the study. The study basically adopted a qualitative approach; however, a quantitative approach was also combined to better find out relationships between 'processual' aspects of social life and'structural' features of it and explain the reasons or factors underlying the specific types of relationships. Such a combined approach was also used to bridge the gaps between macro-level, or large-scale, structural attributes and micro-level, or small-scale, processual and behavioral features. As assumed, the findings of one type of inquiry were instrumental in corroborating the findings obtained from another type of inquiry. Some of the basic methods, principles, and processes of well-established research strategies, such as grounded theory, Indigenous methodology, oral literature, case studies, interpretive research and practice, narrative research, historiography, analysis of survey data and analysis of variance, and examination of relationships between variables, have been employed as found useful and necessary as the study proceeded.

3.2 Qualitative findings corroborated by quantitative facts

The quantitative research approach employs structured and predetermined research questions and generates answers or solutions in the form of numerical data. On the other hand, "qualitative research not only uses non-numerical and unstructured data but also, typically, has research questions and methods that are more general at the start and become more focused as the study progresses"[51]. In qualitative study, empirical materials include transcripts of interactive interviews, recordings and notes of focus group discussions and discursive sessions, documents and accounts of material culture, portrayals of lived experiences of some invisible groups, relevant reports and publications, and narratives relating to personal experiences. Quantitative data, that is, information about the realities in numerical forms, is collected from the fields and recently published documents; likewise, qualitative data, or information about the realities essentially in the form of facts, occurrences, or experiences in words, has been gathered from the fields. It is claimed that quantitative data, structured in terms of the number system, reflect researcher-imposed constructs, whereas qualitative data may range from structured to unstructured and may or may not involve researcher-imposed constructs[52].

This study has primarily adopted a qualitative research approach because of research questions that required understanding of social phenomena and their contexts and exploring issues of some complexity. Whenever possible within the time frame, most of the findings or conclusions were substantiated by applying a quantitative approach. From a research purpose perspective,

51 Punch, 2000,p. 29.
52 See Ibid., p. 61.

it was issue-focused, rectification-oriented, and concept-explication-directed. This study, in line with the traditions of qualitative research design, has gone through the phases of selecting and deciding the research strategy, working out the conceptual framework, deciding the subject matter and population to be studied, and finally, choosing the tools and procedures to be used for collecting and analyzing the empirical materials depending on the situation.

The most crucial aspects were the phases of data collection because of several types of mobility, contact, and interaction restrictions as measures of containing the COVID-19 pandemic, and alternative means that communications technology provides and is available to us were used. As it was a participatory, collaborative, interactive, and reflexive process, a lot of difficulties had to be surmounted. Non-availability, inaccessibility, and recurrent disruptions in available communications technology facilities have also posed frequent problems in maintaining the quality of interactive, collaborative dialogue and discussion and the effectiveness of the communication. Application of experiential inquiry led to the generation of valid truth or knowledge, as experience is epistemologically claimed as the foundation of valid knowledge[53].

In the final stage of the study, data processing and analysis, particularly in each rising level of abstraction in qualitative data analytic hierarchy, from indicators (discrete facts) to assigning meaning to data and tagging and sorting data by concept or theme to refining, distilling, and classifying data by abstract concepts or themes and categories and establishing typologies, and finally abstracting more accurate, collective generalization or explanation and triangulation for a descriptive or explanatory account, also became equally full of hurdles because of the continued unfavorable environment. Somehow, the hurdles were overcome by the cooperation from the fields, especially from the networks of LAHURNIP. Discourse analysis that embraced all aspects of communication and encompassed ideas, understandings, statements, or knowledge based on the experiences of participants was also time-consuming. This study has also focused on the analysis of documents and texts, probing their context of social production and interpretation, their deeper and more multi-layered meaning, and examining them from different theoretical perspectives.

3.3 Study population, sites, and samples

Diverse groups of Indigenous peoples and nationalities[54] residing in all parts of the country, in some places densely populated and, in some areas, sparsely inhabited, were the study population, and the sites where they lived were purposefully selected depending upon their settlement history, specific population density, linguistic specificity, informative and representative participants, areas known for Indigenous activism, and availability of communication facilities. Because of the COVID-19 pandemic, field visits were not possible, and so contacts, consultations, and interactions were made possible and lively through the facilities of communications technology. Some randomly selected 20 sites (districts) were made the nucleus of research participants, representing different places and Indigenous groups. Clusters of IPOs' representatives (M/F), Indigenous rights activists (M/F), Indigenous key informants (M/F), Indigenous development workers and experts (M/F) and differently abled Indigenous persons (M/F) representing different population sub-groups and localities were prepared after wider consultations and 60 samples

53 Kent, 2000, p. 80, in Truman et al. (eds.), *Research and Inequality.*

54 58 groups are listed in the Schedule of Indigenous Nationalities in the National Foundation for Development of Indigenous Nationalities, 2002. Prof. Om Gurung's commission, formed by the then government for identifying Indigenous peoples and nationalities, recommended about 80 groups be included in the Schedule of the Act in 2009. In the 2011 National Population and Housing Census, some 63 Indigenous groups were enumerated, though most of them have not been recognized as Indigenous peoples by the government.

were purposively selected (including Indigenous rights activists/advocates, field researchers, key informants, Indigenous experts and development professionals) for in-depth interviews, different discursive sessions and individual to collective interactions to make the inquiry more cooperative or collaborative and generate true propositions or knowledge (facts). Samples were drawn from the study population who could contribute to proposition or inference (theory) building, as in a grounded theory study. The sites and samples are presented in Annex 1 attached to this report.

3.4 Focus and subject-matter of the study

Levels and intensity of participation of diverse groups of Indigenous peoples in the ongoing development process, outputs and outcomes of Nepal is the major thrust of this study. The reference point for this is the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, with 17 goals, 169 targets, 231 global indicators, and 494 national indicators (including global indicators) claimed to have been mainstreamed in the development plan and actions of the government. Monitoring of the progress was the critical issue, as national aggregate figures published in periodic progress review reports generally camouflage the inequity and inequality of target achievements and do not distinguish the groups who are left behind that pose challenges to the dominant groups, policymakers, and ruling elites. In the study process, this issue has been discussed from different perspectives, and statistical fallacies were also assessed and identified. Another issue was the definition and understanding of the concepts and relevance of the indicators used in the national indicators framework and exploring or identifying suitable indicators that truly capture or perfectly measure the progress of Indigenous peoples. The equally challenging task was to devise an effective strategy to convince the authorities of the concerned agency of the government to incorporate suggested indicators into the national indicators framework and publish disaggregated data that SDG principles demand. This study has covered those aspects as well.

3.5 Tools and procedures of data collection

In-depth or interactive interviews, issue-focused group discussions, interactive dialogues, interpretive conversations on social facts, small group sessions for sharing experience and common-sense reasoning, and informal meetings were the major tools of data collection (facts, opinions, propositions, etc.). An open-ended questionnaire was developed for in-depth or interactive interviews, and a number of guidelines were prepared for facilitating group discussions. Topics of deliberation and SDG documents were also shared to make interactions more pre-informed, lively, and fully participatory. Because of the threat of the COVID-19 pandemic, frequent person-to-person contacts, meetings, or gatherings in any form were very difficult and risky. It was quite a difficult task to motivate research participants and remind them of their roles as co-researchers from distances through tele-communication means, though they were eager to take responsibility.

Facilities of communications technology, despite their limited availability, such as telephones, smart mobile phones, online meeting platforms, virtual meeting platforms, zoom meetings, and social media technologies, have been used to fill the gaps in the data collection procedures. For effective conversation, interaction and experiential knowledge sharing were organized and they were contextually oriented toward the task of finding answers to the research questions. Sounds and images of interactions were recorded and transcribed to produce the minute details of conversation or speech exchanges. A virtual interaction program was organized by NEFIN, where sustainable development goals, global targets and indicators, including national indicators, and their relevance in the context of Indigenous peoples were extensively discussed (see Annex). Two

interactive group sessions of one to two days involving more than 28 participants in each session were organized in Kathmandu, and issues, conclusions, and recommendations (indicators) were extensively shared, discussed, and vital inputs were received (Annex).

This study also adopted some methods of grounded theory as conclusions (theories or propositions) emerged when data were systematically gathered and analyzed, and as the continuous interplay between analysis and data collection continued, conclusions (progress status, development needs, and achievement indicators as grounded theories) further consolidated and reached perfection. As it was a cooperative inquiry, all those involved in the research were both co-researchers contributing to the generation of ideas, exploration of facts and truths, drawing conclusions or developing propositions, and co-subjects (co-participants) participating in the activities under study. It had also embraced the tradition of participatory action research that concerns power and powerlessness and advances the assumption that the established and power-holding sections of societies hold a monopoly on the definition and employment of knowledge, and so applied vernacular (often oral) traditions of communication and dissemination of knowledge in the course of data gathering and gaining conclusions in relation to powerless Indigenous peoples.

Another crucial aspect of the study was the scrutiny of relevant documents essential for textual analysis. The documents reviewed were of three types: official documents, civil society documents, and documents produced by Indigenous peoples. The documents (publications, records) were collected from concerned authorities or offices and verified on various grounds, like their authenticity, reliability, representativeness, and meaning (intention). Indigenous peoples always doubt the data of the government and believe that it is constructed to deceive them. They regard the validity of government data as ironic validity, truth as a problem, paradoxes, and complexities. So, this issue naturally surfaced during the deliberation sessions and, thus, became the subject of corroboration. The relevance and appropriateness of the sources of data used and the propositions derived in the documents and their underlying assumptions, interpretations, intentions, and meanings were keenly reviewed and referred to the research participants for their collective and collaborative review, contributions, and validation. Their responses were accepted at face value as expressions of lived experiences or phenomenological realities embodying interpretive validity.

3.6 Data analysis and report writing

Data (texts, information, images) analysis began with managing data (indexing field texts or identification of initial concepts or themes, labeling or tagging the data, sorting data by concepts or themes, summarizing or synthesizing verbatim and visual materials), meticulously reading, examining, and reflecting on them, and preparing notes and interpretations based on field texts or empirical materials. At the next stage, field materials (information, facts and realities, suggestions, reflections, interpretations, and conclusions) were further scrutinized, categorized, and classified according to substantive contents and dimensions of phenomena (Indigenous peoples' experiences, statuses, development expectations, and measuring their progress) under study to generate descriptive accounts (discussion on the issues and state of Indigenous peoples, development impacts on them, the concepts and relevance of SDGs to them, and appropriate measurement of their SDGs progress) and recommendations in the framework of SDG indicators. At the final stage, explanatory accounts (conclusions, findings, and recommendations in the form of proposed Indigenous peoples appropriate SDG indicators framework) were developed after examining descriptive and interpretive accounts and typologies (dimensions), finding patterns of association within the data, and explaining why those patterns occur using explicit reasons,

accounts, narratives, and 'common sense' understandings that were structurally corroborated and consensually validated.

As the study emphasized the interpretive paradigms of the research strategy[55], the research participants' Indigenous ontologies (multiple constructed realities and existential visions), Indigenous axiology (values), Indigenous epistemology (distinct types and patterns of knowledge having sustained, interactive ways of production, protection, sharing, and transmission of such knowledge), and naturalistic set of methodological procedures were regarded as the basics to reach the conclusions. The conclusions contained in the descriptive and explanatory accounts were shared among participants and received feedback from Indigenous experts, development practitioners, and other Indigenous stakeholders, and the report was thus finalized. Interpretive paradigms of this collective, cooperative, or collaborative inquiry have dispelled, to a considerable extent, the prevailing myths about aggregating numbers, typically aggregating individuals into sets of numbers that move people away from their understanding of lived experience or living realities, and have produced practical conclusions (findings) of high credibility and dependability. The major themes of the study report comprise the Indigenous peoples' social, cultural, and economic statuses and their enduring issues, appropriate development concepts, interventions, and dimensions for them, the relevance of SDGs for Indigenous peoples, the list of suitable indicators to monitor the progress of Indigenous peoples, among others, and areas of refinement in the national complementary indicators framework of the government.

55 See Denzin and Lincoln 1998: 26–28.

Findings and Discussion

4. Findings and Discussion

4.1 SDGs in Local Context

4.1.1 SDGs at local levels

Nepal's federal system essentializes the SDG localization imperative for the actualization of cooperative and competitive federalism and the realization of localized SDGs, localized development, and localized solutions to local problems. Interviews with chairpersons of some rural and urban municipalities[56] disclosed that SDG sensitization at the local level was inadequate, though some municipalities (both rural and urban) have mainstreamed SDGs in the local level planning process, program formulation, mid-term expenditure framework, and local institution self-assessment as best possible, following the instructions of the NPC and concerned federal ministries. They have received orientations on the SDGs and have tried to make their programs and projects contribute to achieving SDG targets. They were working without local indicator frameworks that revealed a greater need for improving their data ecosystem. The main thrust of internal evaluation conducted on a trimester basis is to see whether or not the programs and projects implemented are going in the right direction as expected. These municipalities are emphasizing employment generation, timely social security cash transfers, skills training, and various kinds of support for poverty reduction.

Pathibhara-Yangwarak Rural Municipality had conducted a household survey within its area (6 wards) to identify poor and unemployed persons and prepared a list of unemployed persons in some wards. The process has been delayed in some wards due to various reasons. The municipality is providing employment for those identified for 100 days under the Prime Minister Employment Program, and each employee is getting Rs. 517 per day, which is slightly above the minimum wage labor standard set by ILO (at least Rs. 13,500 for 30 days). Apart from short-term employment, poor households are provided financial support (Rs. 50,000 for each household) to buy corrugated sheets for roofing, and senior citizens' allowances are distributed on time. During the period of COVID-19 lockdown, poor families were provided uncooked rice, pulse, salt, and soaps that amounted to Rs. 7,000,000 in total. The COVID-19 Fund was created from the federal Financial Equalization Grant.

The chairperson of the municipality accepts that the poverty of those reduced drastically who had political access needs to be studied. He was worried that, despite the good intentions and efforts, interventions have not reached the target groups, and he had the feeling that interventions need better tailoring and timely monitoring of the target groups. A new initiative has been taken to preserve and promote sacred hilltop, where Yakthung (Limbu) mythical heroes Kesami and Namsami had grown up and spent their early lives playing and learning hunting skills. The municipality has enacted a law relating to the establishment and running of the local language school to save local languages and promote inter-generational language transmission in each cluster of local (mother/ancestral) language speech communities as the education in mother languages in primary schools became less effective to ensure inter-generational transmission of mother languages and prevent the likely death of mother languages. Every effort has been made to produce data disaggregated by caste or ethnicity, gender, and other relevant characteristics. The implementation of Yakthug (Limbu) as the official language of province 1, as recommended by the Language Commission, is facing several changes.

56 Mr. Keshar Menyangbo, Chairperson of Pathibhara Yangwarak Rural Municipality, Taplejung; Mr. Arjunbabu Mabuhang, Chairperson, Laliguras Municipality, Terathum; and Mr. Birbal Rai, Chairperson of Sadananda Municipality, Bhojpur:

Phalgunanda Rural Municipality of Panchthar district has initiated a policy of compulsory teaching of mother languages, pioneering local-level government to respect the right to education in mother tongue or language, in the district, and is providing grants to each school to appoint a mother language teacher. Mother language education has been implemented in 16 schools in that municipality; Limbu (Yakthung) is taught in 14 schools; and Tamang is taught in 2 schools. Preparations are underway to teach Limbu (Yakthung) language in an additional six schools, Tamang language in one school, and Bantawa language in one school[57]. The municipality provides a salary of Rs. 17,000 for a teacher who teaches mother tongue at the secondary school level (9–12grades) and Rs. 14,000 for the teacher who teaches at the basic level (pre-primary up to 8th grade). There are 10 higher secondary schools (9–12 grades), one secondary school (8–10 grades), 7 basic level schools (0–8 grades), 19 primary level basic schools (0–5 grades), and 3 lower primary level basic schools (pre-primary to grade 3). Neighboring rural municipalities are also benefiting from such arrangements. Phalgunanda municipality has also performed well in identifying the poor and providing short-term employment within its resource limitations. Its performance on rural road construction, health service improvement, and school infrastructure upgrades is exemplary.

COVID-19 spread everywhere and badly hit many rural municipalities and urban municipalities. The problem in town and city areas was alarming, and still it is exhibiting rise and fall erratically and has not been subsided significantly. During the COVID-19 pandemic, several municipalities (both rural and urban) have constructed temporary shelters to keep infected people in isolation, and some have expanded the physical facilities of health posts, health centers, and hospitals and provided essential medicines and medical equipment. They have managed it at the cost of other development programs through the equalization grant they received from the federal government. Local governments have gained unique experience managing health crises due to the lack of basic facilities at the local level.

Most municipalities outside of Kathmandu Valley have begun employment programs for unemployed youths. They have created funds to support those who have returned from foreign employment, have some skills, but lack financial capital and want to start some kinds of enterprises. They are launching such programs in cooperation with agricultural and commercial banks. But such support is only available to a few people because of limited funds. They have also improved their health facilities by building additional rooms in hospitals or health centers, purchasing medical equipment and drugs, and building isolation camps or holding centers for COVID-19 positive cases. The lack of health professionals and trained medical staff was widely felt during the peak hours of the COVID-19 pandemic. The pressure was high on them when migrant workers returned from abroad, particularly from India.

Judicial committees of municipalities, headed by the Deputy Chair, usually consist of women who are active in delivering justice to the victims in their respective jurisdictions. The cases are mostly related to wife-husband disputes, mother-in-law and daughter-in-law conflicts, domestic violence, land disputes, neighborhood quarrels, property inheritance or sharing, child marriage, forced marriage, divorce, reunion, and so on, which are resolved through reconciliation[58]. Cases of serious nature are referred to concerned authorities. Judicial committees run awareness programs for mothers-in-law and sons-in-law, family members, and young people to sensitize

57 Source: Bir Bahadur Kurumbang, President, Phalgunanda Rural Municipality.

58 Based on an interactive interview with Ms. Om Kumari Mahato, Vice-Chair of Madhyabindu Municipality, Nawalparasi district; Ms. Rita Kumari Chaudhary, Vice-Chair, Chaudandi Municipality, Udayapur; Ms. Chini Mayan Majhi, Chairperson, NIWF; Bina Pahari, Chairperson, Nepal Pahari Mahila Bikash Sangh; and Rita Majhi, Chairperson, Nepal Majhi Women Upliftment Association

gender issues and implement women empowerment programs to make women capable of raising voices and supporting them to have vocational training and start income-generation programs. Sometimes, land disputes are settled in the field with the help of land surveyors. But the most striking fact is that almost all, with the exception of a few, are not professional lawyers or trained law practitioners, which is posing problems in justice delivery.

The online conversations with the chair and vice chair of urban and rural municipalities reveal that local-level governments are somehow aware of the SDGs, but planned maneuvering in this mission seems imperfect due to the scarcity of capable or technical human resources with them. On the other hand, all local-level governments are heavily influenced by political interests rather than the interests and needs of the people.

4.1.2 Conceptual understandings and facts finding

The concepts, goals, targets, and indicators of the SDGs have been found to have been understood differently by policymakers, program and project implementors, local leaders, Indigenous people's rights activists and advocates, and Indigenous intellectuals, depending on their positions. Repeated in-depth and interactive interviews with Indigenous key informants, experts and activists disclosed that all 17 SDGs are least concerned with the issues of Indigenous peoples like recognition of their right to land and territories to reduce their rampant poverty; exercise their right of access to natural resources and territories to end hunger and access livelihood resources under autonomous management; ensuring right to education through the medium of mother/ancestral languages to improve learning achievements and educational attainment; promoting their right to access to technical education through various means to enhance their capability, skills and employability; well-being in their real sense; revival of their traditional occupations/enterprises for economic growth and productive employment; exercising 'free, prior, informed consent' and 'self-determined development' among others. The ways of prosperity and well-being of Indigenous peoples astonishingly contrast with the development concepts of the government, and their understandings are based on their experiences of customary life and those of the government's interests.

It has been argued that there is no goal particularly addressing Indigenous peoples' development issues and no overt target to meet Indigenous peoples' development needs. It will be difficult to think about the indicators that denote the progress of Indigenous peoples' development without any goal or target overtly mentioning Indigenous peoples. Existing indicators don't reflect any road map towards the progress of Indigenous peoples' development overtly. Indigenous peoples' cultural aspects are missing in goals, targets, and indicators. Existing indicators hardly generate a caste/ethnic or inter-group equality index or a caste/ethnicity or inter-group disparity ratio, as generally assumed, to identify 'who are farthest behind'[59] Indigenous peoples are also diverse groups with their own distinct perceptions, understandings, and conditions that also pose problems in data disaggregation. For an understanding of the actual situations of Indigenous peoples, we have to wait for census publications to place them into a few broader groups to make data presentation manageable at the national level for data aggregation and disaggregation. Group-exclusive and context-specific data should be kept on hand to monitor the progress made by diverse groups of people in unevenly achieving the SDGs and identify those who benefit most and who have not or least benefited from development interventions and investments. At present, limited data is available to measure a wide range of progress relating to SDG targets. Community-generated Indigenous Navigator data are helping to fill the gaps to some extent in

59 Indigenous experts' opinion is substantiated by key informants from the field.

our understanding, which are also extremely inadequate to fully measure the progress.

4.1.3 Poverty reduction

Poverty is an alien concept for Indigenous peoples. In many languages of Indigenous peoples, there is no term that exactly represents the modern concept of poverty. They simply have terms like 'pennilessness', 'empty store', 'nothing to feed', 'disempowered/crushed' and so on. It seems that 'poverty' is the construction of monetary economics. The once-affluent society of Indigenous peoples has now turned into a poor society. Poverty as material deprivation is just a manifestation of powerlessness and the deprivation of living in harmony with nature and losing Indigenous values. Government statistics say the proportion of poor households is decreasing slowly, but the field information denies such facts and divulges the reality that it is expanding at the base and tapering at the top of the of the corresponding wealth hierarchy with the caste hierarchy[60].

Box 1: Poverty as understood by Indigenous peoples

- Poverty is the product of state-enforced processes.
- Poverty is the state of powerlessness.
- It is the result of systemic changes in the ownership of lands, control of territories, and governance/management of natural resources.
- It is the outcome of land usurpation, dispossession, confiscation and alienation.
- It is the result of an imposed way of living in disharmony with nature that brings calamities and disasters.
- It is the outcome of the decay of compassion and human dignity.
- It is the result of the erosion of the norms and values of reciprocity, complementarity, bartering, solidarity, and collectivism.
- It is the result of the loss of traditional institutions and customs and the non-recognition of customary laws.
- It is the result of restricted access to traditional subsistence resources.
- It is the outcome of state oppression of various forms.
- It is the result of denial of Indigenous peoples' human rights to life, liberty, property, culture, language, governance, territorial autonomy, and valued resources.
- It is a state of deprivation of food, home, and clothes, and no one to care.

Source: Based on focus group discussions and key informant interviews

Development and poverty need to be seen from a cultural perspective. The definition of poverty is changing; absolute poverty as officially defined is gradually becoming irrelevant. It is time to

60 It is also substantiated by the NSIS data.

stress relative poverty for the understanding of the hierarchy of poverty and the nature of poverty to distinguish the poor from the rich or better off. Nomadic Raute are happy to live in the forest

in the western hills of Nepal without accumulated private property, and their leader says, 'You are kings (governors) of the country; we are kings (governors) of the forest; we don't want to be miserable agriculturists or farmers'. The sorrow of Raute is the depletion of natural resources and natural calamities brought about by development activities. Natural disasters, climate change, corruption, bribery, and malpractices are the results of development without culture that are making the elimination of poverty in time impossible.

In layman's terms, poverty is the lack of essential livelihood means for survival and the lack of basic education, sound health, and gainful employment necessary for a decent life. Human rights, such as the right to be free from poverty and hunger, are unenjoyable for people living at the margins.

Poor people, including poor Indigenous, Dalit, and Madhesi people, think that civil and political rights are rights of elites and are just public displays for them. Poverty is, in fact, powerlessness that left them without choices and eventually impelled them to material deprivation. Information received from the key informants from 20 districts (Taplejung, Panchthar, Jhapa, Morang, Terathum, Sangkhuwasabha, Bhojpur, Udayapur, Ramechhap, Kabhrepalnchok, Sindhupalchok, Lalitpur, Kathmandu, Chitwan, Nawalparasi, Baglung, Lamjung, Dailekh, Bardia, Dang) reveal that poverty have been eradicated of those groups who are in power, or better links with power-holders, particularly belonging to traditional high caste groups, which is apparently seen in their suddenly increased wealth such as buildings/ houses in various urban centers and expensive house utilities; motorbikes, cars, jeeps, trucks, buses and other types of vehicles; expensive smart mobile phones; capture of financial institutions like co-operatives, financial companies, development and commercial banks; overwhelming presence in development NGOs; employments in better payed jobs and good incomes compared to others. The overall economic conditions of various social groups reveal that Bahun/Chhetris (traditional high caste groups) are at the top, Indigenous peoples (IPs) are in the middle, and Dalits, Muslims, and marginalized Madhesis are at the bottom in the hierarchy of wealth status (see Box 2). The socio-economic status of IPs and Dalits has improved to some extent in the last decade because of foreign employment (in Arab countries, Malaysia, South Korea, Japan, European countries, etc.), but the improvement of Bahun-Chhetri is almost ten times higher than that of Indigenous peoples, Dalits, and Madhesi groups other than Madhesi Brahmans, Chhetris, and businessmen[61].

61 Understandings gained from the field information, Indigenous experts' opinions, and conclusions of the focus group discussions.

Box 2: Who are those fortunate who are lifted out of the ditch of chronic poverty?

In the 65 years of planned development history, about 30 years elapsed that development interventions primarily focused on poverty reduction. It is claimed that poverty has reduced considerably in the last 30 years, and by 2019, only 17 percent of the of the Nepali population was below the national poverty line, and 35 percent of the of the population was living in multidimensional poverty. In the development history of Nepal, the Central Bureau of Statistics published 'Poverty Trends in Nepal' (1995-96 and 2003-04) that provided data on poverty measurement by caste and ethnicity (8 major groups), which was further elaborated by another seminal publication, 'Resilience Amidst Conflict: An Assessment of Poverty in Nepal' with a groundbreaking analysis of poverty incidences. Unfortunately, the tradition was broken after 2010. NSIS, 2012-13, and 2018 have produced huge data disaggregated by caste/ethnicity that divulge the trend of poverty reduction by examining wealth possession, educational attainment, quality health service access, presence in state institutions, and participation in economic domains.

Now the question arises: whose poverty has been reduced? Field information received from the key informants, right activists, and Indigenous professionals of 20 districts reveals the poverty of those people eliminated who are either influential politicians or close to political leaders. A citizen of an emerging town told the key informant: 'Goods and services are first delivered to the political leaders of incumbent parties, then to the middlemen, and marginalized people come at the end for residual share'. Such responses are repeated from several urban centers. Service seekers in most offices complain that 'nothing can be realized without political connections and money' and they have the perception that 'the better the political connection and lager the amount to offer (bribe), the faster the service delivery and greater the benefits provided'. Political linkage has become a fortune that changes life overnight. Material prosperity of those fortunate is demonstrated in their affluent lifestyles, though not in national data. The trend is clear: Poor Brahman/Chhetris are lifted out of the ditch of poverty and are getting richer and richer every day because of political power, and a huge population of hill Dalits, Madhesi Dalits, marginalized Madhesis, and Hill and Tarai Indigenous peoples are living in miserable conditions in the ditch of chronic poverty due to a lack of political linkage and emancipatory state interventions.

Source: Interactive group discussions, in-depth interviews, and facts shared by key informants and rights activists.

There are some exceptional phenomena that are pushing Indigenous peoples to overcome their traditional barriers and modern obstacles to moving toward prosperity. Tamang communities around the capital city of Kathmandu experienced atrocities and exploitation beyond limits for about two and a quarter century. Till 2000 AD, they were the poorest among the poor. The economic condition of Tamang has improved in recent years; extreme hunger has been reduced considerably due to foreign employment and the flow of remittances; the expansion of cities and urban areas, where employment opportunities, particularly labor, in building construction, road construction and expansion, sand/alluvium and crushed stone supply, hotels and restaurants, toilet repair, taxi driving, and in other areas, increased; opportunities for opening small shops, tea stalls, and small-scale groceries also increased. One Tamang taxi driver trained up to 27 young

Tamang friends in taxi or car driving—just an example of mutual cooperation. Similar is the case of foreign employment, which financially supports relatives and friends to go abroad. Foreign employment, increased employment (menial work) in the private sector, and rapid urbanization have brought the poverty level in Tamang significantly down in the last one and a half decades. The evil of the closeness of Kathmandu capital city turned into a blessing to Tamang as the expanding city provided paid jobs (in construction works, building houses, driving taxis and other vehicles, making gravel and carrying sands, contracting infrastructure building, and so on) in huge numbers to hardworking people and opportunities to open tea shops, restaurants, and small groceries at the periphery of the city that changed their life situations. Those who have earned some money have begun to migrate to urban areas.

Poverty and hunger are synonymous with Bote. For them, poverty was the result of the end of traditional institutions that protected their territories, managed natural resources, regulated and maintained reciprocity, complementarity, bartering, caring, sharing benefits and burdens, and the spirit of collectivity of productions, along with collective security. Such institutions kept the Bote community members informed of community decisions and outsiders' potential aggressions, including government actions, and managed messengers to communicate vital messages of group concerns (see Box 3). They primarily depended on fishing, forest fruits, tubers, roots, and shoots gathering; collecting gold dust and sieving it in the sands of the rivers; hunting birds and fowl in the nearby forests that are almost restricted and penalized when engaged because of the expansion of Chitwan National Park; and now they have to practice subsistence agriculture on traditionally occupied infertile barren lands. As they cannot subsist on traditional occupations and less productive agricultural work, they mostly resort to farm labor in the adjacent villages and daily menial wage work in adjacent cities and construction sites. Alternative occupations are also less fruitful for them because of a lack of capability and skills.

Box 3: Loss of traditional institutions divested Botes of their rights to land where they have huts to live

Bote, one of the highly marginalized, minority Indigenous peoples whose population was in the 2011 census was 10,397. They are found in 11 districts of the country, but they are heavily concentrated on the banks of either side of the Rapti River, the Riu River, and the Narayani River of Chitwan and Nawalparasi districts. Their traditional occupation is fishing, collecting and sieving gold dust from the river sands, hunting wild animals and birds, gathering fruits, shoots, and roots, and seasonally engaging in horticultural/agricultural works. Their subsistence economy has been adversely affected by the demarcation and expansion of Chitawan National Park and Parsa Wildlife Reserve. Now their traditional access to natural resources has been totally restricted without providing them with alternative sources of subsistence. Overwhelming majority of Bote families are landless, and about 85 percent of Bote families have no safe houses to live in. Several Bote families have occupied and used lands on the banks of major rivers through centuries and have built huts to live there, but are not getting official papers of land title. About two decades ago, outsiders, mostly hill people, came on the bank of the Rapti River and built huts close to the Bote settlement. Bote families were claiming land ownership titles for decades as they became aware of the significance of land titles. When outsiders also joined them, their voices became more forceful.

A few years back, a concerned government agency sent a team to survey the land occupied by settlers (about 50-60 households), and the process was expedited to provide the land titles. But Bote families were not informed about the government action as they have gone to rivers for fishing or somewhere to earn a livelihood. All of the neighboring households belonging to so-called high caste groups have received land title papers, and the lands have been surveyed and registered in the names of their household heads. But Bote families did not know when and who came to survey the lands and identify the occupiers of the lands. They had already lost their traditional institutions that transmitted messages in the communities, kept them informed and alert, communicated in their own language for maintaining secrecy, protected them in times of difficult situations, helped them to make organized initiatives, and raised funds to perform essential works, among others. When they came to know that their neighbors received land titles, they also approached the concerned government agencies and claimed land titles as they were the bona fide land owners. They have been continuously demanding land titles for the last many years, but there is no one to listen to them. They missed one chance because of a lack of proper communication with all rights holders; they missed all opportunities to have land ownership papers. They are now bearing the brunt of the loss of traditional institutions that kept informed and alert community members. Now the only option left to them is to cultivate the infertile, barren lands they have occupied through centuries to grow food grains, and mostly they had to resort to wage labor in others' agricultural fields and the construction and repair of buildings, roads, irrigation canals, and assisting in household works. Their earnings are hardly enough to support families.

The impact of the COVID-19 pandemic is severe on Botes; there is no food supply, no jobs or work opportunities, and no social security support, except for meager mutual community support. They have no property, and so there is no question of women's ownership of property. Gender equality in property ownership is irrelevant to them[62]. Because of the expansion of cities in Chitwan, the availability of low-paid jobs, and social security support, some 2 percent of the local Botes' economy has slightly improved. The incomes of working Botes are almost fifty times less than those of dominant caste groups in terms of the amount of earnings and proportion of the particular population making such earnings. From all perspectives, Brahman, Chhetris, and Newars are the richest groups in Chitwan[63].

The economic history of the people of the last two and a half centuries reveals that everything, including poverty, in this world is transient and impermanent; only the poverty of the people of low social hierarchy has become permanent because of the socio-economic regulations as part of the divine codes prescribed by the persistent Hindu hierarchical caste system. The caste system is deeply embedded in society and is still operational in the public domain as well. The national data published by the government, which are disaggregated to a certain level, substantiate this assumption of hierarchical, inequitable resource and benefit sharing.

It has become apparent that Brahmans and Chhetris are the primary beneficiaries of development benefits, while Indigenous peoples are marginal recipients of spillover benefits from development investment. Even the residual benefits do not reach highly marginalized and endangered

62 Observations of key informants and Bote rights activists.
63 Assumption of the interviewees after field observations and focus group discussions.

Indigenous groups, Dalits, and Madhesi backward castes[64]. There is a dearth of Indigenous people-centered or Bote-focused development plans and programs/projects in their areas.

Bahun and Chhetris with good political influence are benefiting from development investments and grabbing state resources; they are becoming richer, and state resources rarely reach the poor and powerless, including marginalized Indigenous peoples, Dalits, marginalized Madhesis, and Muslims. A few Indigenous peoples, who are affiliated with ruling political parties, have taken some advantage of development programs and projects, but the majority of the of the rest are not aware of development interventions. Folk aphorism is that 'Indigenous peoples do only know to give but not to take' by their traditional way of life and values, and so they usually do not come forward to take advantage. That is also the reason why their pace of economic and social progress is not on par with that of dominant castes[65].

Total dependence on subsistence agriculture and a lack of market-oriented vocational skills have led Indigenous peoples, like Paharis, around the capital city to poverty. Once beneficial traditional occupations like bamboo work, wood work, and stone work are vanishing because of restricted access to forest resources, hill resources, and the rapid depletion of forest coverage due to fast-growing towns and cities. About 90 percent of Paharis have now turned from peasant farmers to low-paid wage workers, hardly employed 100 days in a year. Most Pahari families had to sell their lands to find two meals a day and afford the basic education of their children to the brokers of real estate[66].

The low socio-economic status of Indigenous peoples is reflected in the poor representation of Indigenous peoples in local state institutions. Chhetris are in the largest number in Baglung and are rich compared to all other groups, which is reflected in their ownership of large areas of paddy fields, good investments in financial institutions, the operation of fostering businesses, better representation in political positions, bureaucracy, and better linkages with power centers. The second-largest group is Magar, and they are in a subordinate position because of their low socio-economic status, poor linkage with power centers, and lower competitive capabilities[67]. The economic condition of Indigenous peoples of the western hills has improved compared to ten years ago; however, the pace of progress of dominant castes is much higher than that of Indigenous peoples and other subjugated groups; advanced groups are moving much faster than the underprivileged groups.

Women are poor as they have no due share of parental property, have no land or houses, and have no education or skills to be employed in decent jobs. They are too occupied with unpaid household work, agricultural activities, taking care of poultry, and raising cattle, and are mostly engaged in traditional occupations to meet household needs at leisure. If they are divorcees or widows, they are even more economically and socially insecure. They usually become the victims of in-laws' mistreatment, and if they are extremely poor, they are blamed as 'witch' or'sorceress' and are socially mistreated and physically abused. Poor women have to be involved in labor work to subsist, and some are forced to trade in flesh to survive. They have no minimum capital or collateral to get a loan or credit to start their own business. Poverty is more burdensome for women belonging to marginalized Indigenous groups[68].

64 For the recent detailed discussion on this subject, see Gurung et al. 2020, Gurung and Pradhan 2020.

65 Conclusions of interactive discussions.

66 Pahari, hey informant.

67 Observation based on interviews.

68 This presumption is based on the fact-based interpretations of interviewees from various parts of the country, including both hills and Tarai.

Santhal key informants claim that about 55 percent of Santhals still have no citizenship certificates. Their lack of citizenship certificates also hindered their ability to get rid of poverty, hunger, and multiple forms of exclusion. They are a merry-making, pleasure-seeking, and jolly Indigenous group (tribe). After the harvest, they get together, sing together, and dance together for about two weeks to three months until the stored grains are not exhausted. They hardly know how to accumulate, create surplus, and exploit others. They have learned to adapt to penury. Among Indigenous peoples, Santhals, Jhangads, Koche, Munda/Mudiyari, Kisan, Meche, Tajpuriya, Bote, Raji, and Dhanuk of the Tarai (Madhes) region and Chepang, Bankariya, Thami, Hayu, Sunuwar, Kumal, Lapcha, Singsa, Majhi, Bote, Byasi, Dolpo, Mugali, Lhomi, and Lhopa are highly vulnerable and experiencing moderate to extreme poverty and hunger[69].

The economic condition or wealth of Gurung and Sherpa has improved considerably in the last year and a half. The income gap between them and Hill Brahman is narrowing. But in terms of educational attainment, access to quality health care, and enjoying political power, they lag far behind Brahmans and Bahuns. The income and other wealth of Indigenous groups like Magar, Tamang, Rai, Limbu, Yakkha, Chantyal, Tharu, and some Tarai and Madhesi groups have also improved to some extent in the recent decade. Field information shows that Majhis' economic condition has also improved significantly within the last one and a half decades, but their pace of progress is lagging far behind that of the dominant castes around them. Some of the published data relating to social inclusion indicate that the economic status of Hill Dalits has improved to some extent in this decade, better than that of several Indigenous groups, including Madhesi Dalits and marginalized (backward) Madhersis. Indigenous peoples like Byasi, Chepang, Bankaria, Thami, Hayu, Lapcha (Lepcha), Singsa, Pahari of the hill and mountain regions, and Tarai Indigenous groups such as Santhal, Jhangad, Munda/Mudiyari, Kisan, Meche, and Kusbadiya fall at the bottom rung of the income/wealth hierarchy, close to Madhesi Dalits, Muslims, and Madhesi marginalized castes[70] living under utter poverty[71]. Most Indigenous peoples fall far below the median income range. Compared to the past decade, the overall economy of poor Nepalese households has improved considerably, but unequally, due to remittances from abroad (mainly from Arabian countries, Malaysia, South Korea, Japan, some European countries, India, and other overseas countries) and increased labor jobs within the country.

Indigenous child labor is rampant due to household poverty. Indigenous children are compelled to work in brick kilns along with mothers for almost six months to get food, clothes, and support families, and when the industries are closed in the summer season, they go back home with some money they saved. In the same way, children work in carpet factories along with their mothers, often in stone crushing and sand washing small industries, hotels and restaurants, transport companies, and in some households to support themselves and their families. Child laborers are cheaper than adult laborers. Child labor is banned in the country. So they have to work clandestinely.

The non-recognition of the traditional institutions and customary laws of Indigenous peoples and their traditional institutions' resistance to comply with state institutions and laws resulted primarily in the land dispossession of Indigenous peoples. Lands traditionally occupied by Indigenous peoples whose land titles were recognized by customary laws and institutions but not registered in the relevant government offices were confiscated by the government, rendering Indigenous land owners landless (example: Santhal, Jhangad, Rajbansi, Kisan, Meche, Koche,

69 NSIS 2018 data also substantiate this proposition.

70 Madhesi marginalized castes are those caste groups who are below the Brahmans, Chhetris/Rajputs, Kayastha, and traders/businessmen by tradition in the caste hierarchy but are above the Madhesi Dalits.

71 For details, see Gurung and Pradhan 2020.

Tharu, Danuwar, Bote, Darai, and several other Indigenous groups). Cadastral surveys of land carried out most frequently to raise taxes and levies also left many Indigenous peoples without lands as they were unaware of the process of registering lands to claim ownership. Heavy land taxes and associated burdens, ignorance of state land laws, harsh treatment of tax collectors, and the forgery of land-hungry government officials also caused the forfeiture of their lands.

An Indian landlord (of Mujaffarpur, Bihar) was also appointed by the Nepali government about 7-8 decades ago, who confiscated some 300 bighas (about 150 acres) of Santhal's lands in Morang, making forged documents[72]. There are several such cases to usurp the lands of the Santals of Jhapa[73]. Forgery of land title documents was a major reason for land transfers from Indigenous peoples to non-Indigenous groups in most parts of the country, particularly in Tarai, where such phenomena of injustice were pervasive. Some 60–70 percent of Santhals in Morang are landless; some Santhals are inhabiting uncultivated lands without land title papers; and 20–30 percent of Santhals have only a piece of land where just a small dwelling house rests. The Tharus of west Nepal have also faced similar situations, and mass landlessness was one of the consequences. Many Tharus had become bonded laborers who were redeemed in the past decade but were still facing huge problems of lacking shelter and employment.

Before the annexation of Indigenous states and chiefdoms into Nepal, the lands and natural resources of the southerly Himalayan regions were under the possession and control of Indigenous peoples. The lands and natural resources were the basis of their physical and biological survival, cultural and spiritual development, institution creation and management, and territorial consolidation. The history of Nepal and collective memories of Indigenous peoples show that the immeasurable devastations felled on them when their sovereign states and territories were defeated. Lands were confiscated from Indigenous owners and distributed to Brahmans and other rulers' favorites. Gorkhali (now Nepali) governments reigning after 1768 annulled Indigenous peoples' prior ownership right (customary right) on land they occupied and cared for and transferred those lands to new settlers (state favorites) as owners, introducing the system of land ownership by decrees (statutory right), transforming collective ownership of lands into individual ownership to promote feudalism. In the last two and a half centuries, most Indigenous households forfeited their lands under coercion, and now they are either landless or marginal land holders. Now, for a vast majority of Indigenous peoples, their basic sources of livelihood are less-rewarding agriculture and causal wage work. Elimination of their livelihood sources steered them to penury, indignity, and powerlessness[74]. Landlessness, marginal land holdings, and non-access to natural livelihood resources have added additional burdens to Indigenous peoples' efforts to come out of poverty and hunger.

Nearness (30 minutes's walking distance) to banks and other financial institutions and having a bank account cannot be counted as a measure of poverty, as banks and financial institutions have spread rapidly, almost in all rural clusters and urban centers, and bank accounts are open to receive social security allowances and remittances. It is a well-known fact that bank accounts are not disclosed and social security allowances cover only small parts of household consumption.

Nepal has never implemented a master plan for poverty reduction, and so-called poverty reduction programs are not properly and appropriately targeted at poor people belonging to different social groups. It was also disclosed during interactive sessions and in-depth interviews

72 Key informant from Morang
73 Key informant from Jhapa.
74 This conclusion is derived from a focus group discussion.

that the fund allocated for poverty reduction has been misused by political leaders in collusion with corrupt administrative staff.

The concept of purchasing power parity (2011), adjusted for official inflation rates, is also challengeable for Nepal. People everywhere argue that what consumption goods could be purchased for Rs. 100.00 10 years ago now cost at least Rs 300.00, a three-fold increase in price. So, annual household consumption per capita needs better adjustment for the measurement of poverty.

Themes of the interviews and group discussions suggest that measuring poverty from consumption and income is inconceivable and confusing to Indigenous peoples in general because consumption and income fluctuate every day depending upon food habits and choices and changing seasonal food products. Converting life experiences of food intake into numerical representations is a complex and confounding task, though it is part of wider practices. Root causes, underlying causes, and proximate causes of poverty and deprivation have not been taken into consideration while devising and revising global targets and indicators and national complementary indicators. Expecting lofty outcomes without resolving basic issues or root causes is naturally unattainable. That is why indicators become hardly sensible to Indigenous peoples. Land, natural resources, and power access are vital for Indigenous peoples, which global indicators are inadequate to capture. Such lacunae have to be complemented by national indicators. It is obvious that indicators for measuring progress toward achieving SDG targets need adaptation, considering the diversity and plurality of the population. Indigenous peoples simply understand that poverty is a scarcity of food to eat in times of biological need, a lack of a house to live in and the want of clothes to wear and cover the body, and 'no one to take care' (powerlessness), a manifestation of historical injustices and contemporary discriminations, deprivations, and power inequalities. If these factors are taken into consideration, half of the population of ninety percent Indigenous groups is living in extreme poverty.

4.1.4 Hunger elimination

Indigenous peoples began to experience hunger when they were dispossessed or deprived of their lands and restricted in their access to natural resources. When their chiefs and kings were defeated and killed in the war against Gorkhali aggression in the late eighteenth century, they not only lost their leaders but also their lands, houses, house utilities, cattle, and other domesticated animals and properties (cash, gold, silver, precious stones, and other ornaments), and those who surrendered were left without livelihood resources. Huger is the outcome of dispossession, confiscation, and alienation of their lands and state control of the natural resources of their ancestral lands. The conquering state used terror to subdue the people of the annexed states. Facing the threats of death and torture, they had to hide in forests for almost a century (19th century), clear small patches of land within forests, and go into the villages at night to barter fruits, shots, tubers, mushrooms, and the and the meat of wild fowl with seeds and food grains[75]. In this way, state repression of Indigenous peoples resulted in their hunger and misery. The cumulative impacts of repression and deprivation placed them in such dire situations that it has become an insurmountable task for them till now to change their underprivileged situations[76].

By the early nineteenth century, clearance of barren lands, bushy lands, and forests became widespread for cultivation that yielded tax to the government. Historical facts and oral histories show that forest people ('Jangali', people hidden in jungle or forest to avoid the threats of death

75 Historical facts are made known by key informants and Indigenous experts.
76 Assumptions based on in-depth interviews

from government) gradually developed villages and expanded cultivable lands. Some of the exiled Indigenous peoples also came back to their villages, accepting the suzerainty of conquering a state and agreeing to pay the taxes that the government imposes. Collective ownership of lands was systematically usurped by the state and distributed to the settlers who were ready to pay land taxes, a gesture of loyalty to the ruling government. The government encouraged feudalism and appointed landlords for tax collection, adjudication, and local administration, which brought land concentration into the hands of a few. The transformation of collective ownership of lands into individual ownership placed Indigenous peoples in a disadvantaged position: land parceling, a new way of land entitling, land title transfer, rapid land alienation, non-recognition of Indigenous or traditional ownership of lands, and rifts in communities, clans, and families[77].

Hunger is the result of the maldistribution of agricultural products and the monopolization of food prices in contemporary societies. It is also the result of the erosion of Indigenous values of naturality (living in harmony with nature, unity with bio-diversity—a fortune for humanity[78]), reciprocity, complementarity, collectivity, sustainability, compassion, and altruism (spirituality), and the loss of Indigenous traditional institutions that vitalize these values[79].

The far western hills are well-known as food-deficient areas because of low agricultural production. Indigenous peoples in hilly areas like Baglung can afford 6–9 months only by their own agricultural production. For the rest of the of the period, they face a food crisis, and to overcome this crisis, they resort to wage work, particularly in road and wall construction and building construction, especially during mid-March to mid-June. Indigenous peoples usually live on high hills (Dolpa, Kalikot, Humla, Mugu districts, etc.), usually at the top of the mountain ridges of Karnali province, have infertile lands, and always experience food insecurity. People have to leave Indigenous habitat, lose Indigenous identity, and resort to migration to escape hunger. The Constitution of Nepal provides the right to food security to every citizen (Article 36), but its exercise is extremely limited, and the food program has not reached where it is necessary. Food security program has not reached food deficit areas. *Lahures (*servicemen of the Indian and British Army) have left their native villages because of harsh life, came down to the lowland and town areas of Sirkhet, Dang/Deukhuri, and Banke, built houses, bought some small areas of land, and are permanently settling there. Some 20 percent of high-hill Indigenous peoples have left their native places to free themselves from hunger. These days, the migration of Indigenous peoples from their native places has become an almost regular phenomenon. No food security program has been launched in the hill districts of Gandaki province, including Baglung.

Majhis are fishermen by their traditional occupations and barter fish with food grains. Majhis of two-three villages only produce food grains enough to feed themselves throughout the year, and almost 20–30 percent of Majhis everywhere face food shortages for at least 9–10 months. Most of them do wage work, such as laborers, loaders, masons, carpenters, farm workers, boulder crushers, and stone-mine workers, and only a few join the army and police forces. In the civil service, lower positions like peons, runners, cleaners, non-gazetted staff, and officers are very rare. Some have gone to Arab countries for better employment compared to employment within the country. Such employment is helping them to meet food necessities, children's education, health care, and housing needs. Majhis living on the river bank close to the towns, like Majhis of Manthali, have a better income by fishing because the river is not tendering for fish collection by the related local government authority (Manthali Municipality). When the river was tendered for

77 Conclusions drawn from key informant interviews and group discussions.
78 John Bamba in Stankovitch (ed.) 2008: 246-247.
79 The motto of the ideas expressed in in-depth interviews.

fish collection, their income decreased drastically. They are getting good prices for their lands due to the location of their lands within Manthali municipalities; as a result, their land alienation is very rapid. All Majhis of Kosi river banks are fishermen, but they are displaced from their traditional occupation of fishing because the local governments are tendering the Kosi river for rent collection, which is a long and large river in eastern Nepal, for fishing in the river and paying a certain amount of money. Now they are engaged in cultivating and selling maize, ground nuts, and almonds, and involved in masonry, carpentry, boat making, and other available wage work. In the villages where Majhis are exclusively residing and outsiders are not there, there is no problem of extreme poverty or severe hunger[80].

Chepang, an Indigenous group of Dhading, Makwanpur, Gorkha, and Citwan districts, suffers from hunger from the womb to throughout their lives. Their traditional access to forest resources like yam, tuber, and other roots, which do not need seeds, fertilizers, or manures, has been restricted without providing alternatives, and their traditionally occupied lands (hill slopes) for shifting cultivation have not been duly registered in their names. As a result, most of them are landless. Chepang presents good examples of land dispossession and fraudulent land transfers. A few of them have infertile small patches of land and are unable to buy fertilizer and hybrid seeds, whereas native seeds have already disappeared, and climate change is also negatively affecting the fertility and productivity of the soil. They are uneducated and unskilled, and wage work is also rarely available to them. NGOs' support for some of them provides temporary relief, but as they stop their support, they face the same fate: living with hunger. The government has implemented the Chepang Development Project for more than three and a half decades, but Chepang hardly benefited from the project, and the resources evaporated within the bureaucracy that implemented the project, development experts claim[81]. In recent years, the availability of wage work, rising awareness, and access to overseas employment for a small number of Chepang have paved the way to improving their life chances. It is yet difficult to say how long it takes to spread such phenomena into the larger segment of Chepang society and lift the lift the majority Chepang families out of chronic poverty and hunger.

In the Tarai region, Santhal always experiences hunger. They are wage workers, usually employed 15 days a month (30 days) in low-paid work, with which they have to buy food and clothes. Food insecurity has become their destiny since the last 75 years, which has not yet improved[82]. About 15 percent of senior citizens belonging to Santhal have begun to receive old age benefits and allowances (Rs. 4,000 each in a year), and the rest have no money to open bank accounts, a complicated process for them, and so are unable to receive such social protection support. The new generation of Santhals is striving very hard to redeem themselves from inherited hunger, poverty, and deprivation, and only a handful of them are gradually succeeding despite adverse situations.

Lands, forests, rivers, and pastures provided food and nutrition to Indigenous peoples like Tharus of Tarai in the past, but the nationalization of forests, rivers, pastures, and land transfers, mostly through fraudulent means, compelled them to live in penury. Till the mid-twentieth century, Tarai and foothill lowlands, densely forested areas, were mainly inhabited by Tharus and some other Indigenous groups; none of the new settlers attempted to stay there permanently because Tarai was a malaria-infested area almost inhabitable to hill migrants. Rana and Shah rulers and top bureaucrats grabbed the vast track of lands from the original owners of Tarai lands like Tharus through state orders, leaving few patches of land to the original owners at their mercy during the

80 Claims made by Majhi key informants and activists.

81 There are several project evaluation reports that cannot be cited here.

82 Observation of Santhal key informants.

autocratic rule (1825–1950), and later hill Brahman-Chhetri captured the rest of the cultivated lands using various cunning means, which the Tharus had saved from the state encroachment. Tharus and some native others (Danuwar, Koch, Rajbansi, Jhangad/Uraon, etc.) were indigenous agriculturists of the Tarai, foothills, and Doon areas, mainly dependent on farming and animal husbandry. They became unable to raise livestock, one of their basic sources of livelihood, due to restrictions on their traditional access to and use of forests and pasture lands they had protected for centuries but were appropriated by the government without their informed consent. Such governmental measures have rendered them in miserable condition, and today, 90 percent of them resort to casual wage work to sustain themselves. Now they are habituated to work on others' farms or local industries or in various types of construction work until they are physically fit. Many old-age people are dependent on their daughters as their grown-up sons (generally above the age of 14 years) have left home and either gone to India or overseas countries in search of work opportunities.

The quality of the diet of Indigenous peoples is low because of a lack of traditional availability of food items and a narrowing of food diversity as a result of decreasing food production and falling purchasing power. In 2018, about 10 percent of Indigenous households were found to be landless, and among the rest, the majority owned small patches of land just to build houses[83], and a few owned some patches of land to grow food grains and vegetables. Their agricultural productions were hardly sufficient to support them for six to nine months, depending upon the quantity of production per household. Their problems of food deficiency are aggravated by their lack of productive land or extremely small areas of land and the low productivity of available land. Municipalities' officials claim that they have small emergency funds to provide support to poor people experiencing hunger and disease. They provided foods, medicines, masks, and sanitizers to poor people, particularly unemployed wage workers, during the period of 'lockdown' to combat the COVID-19 pandemic.

4.1.5 Health and well-being

Indigenous peoples' conception of health includes a holistic concept of physical, mental, and spiritual health, which contrasts with the modern concept of health, which encompasses purely physical and mental health. From Indigenous traditional perspectives, illnesses and diseases are the results of imbalances in relationships between human beings and divinities, spirits, and nature. It is believed that unnatural and immoral ways of leading life produce diseases, epidemics, and calamities. The Indigenous concept of well-being includes an aspired state of physical, emotional, and mental health and spiritual accomplishment; a good relationship with nature and supernatural entities; cultural integrity; respect for collective rights and individual dignity; Indigenous world vision and philosophies; reverence for the earth, ancestral territory, land, and sacred sites and objects; and the ubiquity of affluence, happiness, and enlightenment[84].

World experts on Indigenous affairs are of the opinion that well-being connotes full recognition and exercise of the collective rights of Indigenous peoples related to spiritual health, integrity of culture and traditions, respect for dignity and identity, protection of sacred sites and cultural and natural heritage, culturally appropriate education, sufficient land and recognition of ancestral territories, access to natural resources, full application of FPIC, the end of all forms of physical and structural violence, accessible, affordable, and culturally sensitive justice, equal power relations, and adequate resources for self-development (TETEBBA 2008).

83 Small patches of land for building houses were bought from remittances.

84 Conceptual explication of Indigenous activists and Indigenous rights defenders.

Both the traditional medical and healing systems and the modern health care system are in parallel operation. The Ayurvedic health care system is widespread as it is supported by the government, and it is often complemented by the Unani health care system, Amchi treatment, naturopathy, and other alternative medicines. Shamanic health care is generally used to heal mental health cases (neurotic cases) and other physical health problems through herbal medicines. But these days, their roles are limited to health care and much occupied with ritual performances and sharing cultural narratives. Traditional medicines, on which a large section of the population depended for their health care because of their easy availability and low costs, Traditional medicines and healing systems were widely practiced until the end of the 19th century. But now they are waning. Modern health care is provided in Nepal by the government through hospitals (specialized and general), health centers, and health posts, and by the private sector through sophisticated, well-equipped private hospitals and health clinics and labs. Government health institutions provide free medical check-up, but medicines and laboratory tests' costs in most cases have to be borne by the patients. Private hospitals are extremely expensive for common people. Poor and disadvantageous people, including marginalized Indigenous peoples and Dalits, first approach shamanic healers, and if not cured, go to government health posts, health centers, and district hospitals. Specialized health care, both governmental and private, is beyond their access, and the government's financial support is also beyond their reach due to a lack of political connection.

As a rare example, some highly disadvantaged Indigenous peoples get free medical services if there are specialized medical hospitals or colleges in their areas. Botes of Chitwan and Nawalparasi are supposed to receive free medical service from Bharatpur Hospital of Bharatpur Medical College of Chitawan, but they face lots of troubles in accessing health care due to perplexing processes. The delivery of free health care services is complicated and vexing for them if there are none to facilitate them. Without the assistance of Indigenous rights activists, such services are extremely difficult for Botes[85].

Majhi of Maring River widely uses traditional medicines, and shamanism is also widely practiced for healing. But because of new education, modernization, and migration, shamans are disappearing, and new generations are not interested in becoming shamans. Because of the loss of traditional medicine and healing systems and the commercialization of modern health care systems everywhere, marginalized Indigenous peoples are suffering most from various types of communicable and non-communicable diseases, and expensive modern health care is becoming unaffordable to them[86]. The services of health posts are the least effective due to the inadequacy of essential drugs, a lack of doctors, and a shortage of nurses and trained health assistants and workers.

The language barrier to Indigenous peoples, particularly women, in understanding the health instructions and technical guidance of the caretakers and understanding one type of disease as another type is also compelling them to experience unwanted consequences. For the treatment of chronic severe disease, the recommendation of local leaders is a must. That is the main obstacle for patients belonging to Indigenous peoples to find financial and medical support because they lack strong political linkage everywhere. Treatment support is generally extended to the supporters of the ruling political party(ies) only[87]. It is clear that Indigenous peoples who are residing close to the district headquarters or urban centers and have the capacity to bear the costs of health services have access to health care services, but such a population is very small.

85 Information provided by Bote, a key informant and rights activist.
86 Information shared by key informants from various districts.
87 Observations made by key informants and Indigenous experts.

The COVID-19 pandemic has brought about devastation in our resource-poor country with poor health care infrastructure. The negative impacts of these first and second waves of the pandemic were enormous; the toll was disproportionately heavy on underprivileged Indigenous peoples and daily wage workers. Media coverage was widespread that incumbent political leaders were using such an alarming situation for money-making, and vaccines, medicines, and other medical equipment were not supplied and managed in time. Health insurance coverage was extremely limited, and it was meaningless for ordinary people. People primarily relied on traditional or alternative medicines and therapies, which were beneficial to a great extent but whose impacts have not been properly studied.

It is reported from all quarters that mental health problems are increasing and patients are not receiving treatment. There are limited mental hospitals and mental health care facilities, and people from far-off villages are unable to access such services because of a lack of emergency savings. Indigenous patients and their families are suffering most because of a lack of political connections and support for them to bring them to mental health facilities and provide free treatment.

4.1.6 Education and learning opportunities

Government education statistics show that net and gross enrolment in primary to secondary education (10th grade) is encouraging, more than 96 percent, but the completion rate in secondary displays significant disparity along caste and ethnic groups. After secondary education, Indigenous students lag behind considerably with the rise in the level of education, and their participation in tertiary education is disproportionately low. Several causes can be attributed to the low level of educational attainment. Some obvious reasons are language barriers for early learning, an unfavorable school environment, culturally insensitive curricula and text materials, ill treatment of teachers, hardships at home, and parents's perceptions that education is unrewarding for them[88]. The state uses education as a means of socialization and indoctrination for conformity to state ideology. Education is unpalatable to Indigenous students due to such socialization, as they are raised with their own traditional ideologies, norms, and values. It is mostly seen that Indigenous children have no interest in education and leave schools early as they are unaware of the value or benefit of modern education. Beginning education in alien languages and cultures is also the reason to discontinue education despite enrollment in schools[89]. Lack of a multi-cultural or cross-cultural education system has not only pushed Indigenous learners behind but also failed to build social solidarity and harmony, wider unity in deep diversity, and a just civilized society.

In the past, Hinduization, Sanskritization, assimilation, and nationalization were the major causes of the loss of Indigenous languages, cultures, and customs, but now, party ideological colonization, politicization, migration, urbanization, modern education, and globalization, along with ICT advancement, have been found to be major causes of Indigenous languages, cultures, customs, and heritage destruction, perversion, and the emergence of antipathy toward higher education among the young generation. Language shift is taking place so fast that the new generation, below the age of 13 years, is completely forgetting their own languages, and mother tongue-speaking parents have to talk with their children in Nepali because of the increase in mixed society, the Nepali-dominated education system, and advancements in communication technology. There are a few schools where primary education is imparted in mother tongues, but due to a lack of mother tongue teacher posts, such classes are not becoming effective. Mother tongue teachers, appointed by local-level governments, are paid four-five times less than regular

88 Conclusion of group discussions.
89 Observation of interviewees from various districts.

teachers, are not trained, and so they are less enthusiastic to teach. The learning outcomes of non-Nepali-speaking students are poor compared to naturally speaking Nepali students. Every day, a situation is emerging: 'to learn mother languages like Indigenous students learning Sanskrit language', now Indigenous languages have to be taught in Nepali like English language. Those students who are learning their mother tongues in schools do not speak their languages in schools or in their houses. Such a situation has developed in the last ten-fifteen years in Taplajung and Panchthar districts, in the heart of Limbu (Yakthung) language speakers, and in Kabhrepalanchok, Sindhupalchok, and Nuwakot districts, the core areas of Tamang language speakers. Such conditions are emerging in several places where Indigenous peoples are densely populated. The lesson is that simply learning but not speaking mother tongues does not ensure language survival and inter-generational language transmission. It is obvious that current mother tongue education in schools is becoming ineffective for inter-generational language transmission and flourishing of the mother languages, with some exceptions, due to existing pedagogical practices and the negligence of the teachers and school management. Mother-language education in schools has brought some attitudinal changes to society, but its impacts are minimal at the community level. Schools that teach mother tongue as a medium of instruction and teachers who are well paid and committed have claimed that pupils learn more easily in their home languages and are better motivated to learn new things. Both pupils and parents also feel proud of getting an education in their mother tongues. Linguistic communities also harbor a positive attitude toward prevailing education[90]. The number of mother-language speakers decreased drastically as, as a result, native speakers started to go abroad in search of better employment, and their mother-language-speaking family members began to migrate to the emerging urban centers, and mother-language erosion became rapid in the mixed society. Such a situation has paved the way for the violations of the fundamental rights of Indigenous children to get an education in their mother tongue or language.

Most children of Botes leave schools early because they feel harassed or tortured psychologically when their families become unable to pay school fees of various kinds on time and cannot afford to buy stationery and school dresses, though the Constitution and education laws claim free education up to the secondary level of education. They rarely get scholarships and other incentives. As they don't get higher education and vocational skills training, their capability and competitiveness are limited, and their job opportunities are almost restricted. Botes are in 11 districts, but their language speakers are found in only two districts, Chitwan and Nawalparasi, and basic education in their mother tongue is a distant dream for them. They have the feeling that no one is sensitive to their education and language, like heritage preservation, because of their small number, which can impact elections and influence political leaders.

There are 13 mother-language teachers in Dailekh district who are each paid Rs. 16,000 by the local government. Magar children are taught in the Magarati language. There are a few people in Dolpa who speak Magar Kaike, but their children are deprived of learning in their mother languages and have no command in their second language (Nepali). Learning Nepali is as difficult as learning English. The Language Commission has recommended Magarati as an official language in addition to Nepali, but the recommendation has not yet been implemented.

Pahari parents these days have understood that they should educate their children, and they have also understood that their educated boys and girls cannot find jobs. Their low economy has forced their children to have a low education. Even the well-off families send their daughters to

90 Experiences of some basic schools in Taplejung, Panchthar, Udayapur, Kabhrepalanchok, Chitwan, Lalitpur, Nawalparasi, and Dailekh.

ordinary government schools, whereas they send their sons to private English boarding schools[91]. About 25 years ago, daughters were sent to crush boulders to make gravel, never to school. Now girls are eager to go to school as they have seen educated girls employed in prestigious jobs. Imparting primary education in Pahari language in the schools of Pahari concentrated settlements has been stopped after the imposition of containment measures for the COVID-19 pandemic. Because of the mixed community, mother tongues are ignored by the local authorities.

Primary education in mother languages has not been implemented in Baglung district, and no initiative has been taken so far to impart education in mother languages in primary or lower secondary education. Rumors that spread everywhere that education in mother tongues does not secure jobs also discouraged children and their guardians from educating their children in mother tongues, and Nepali is becoming no longer a barrier to learning[92]. It has been learned that some INGOs are trying to support education in mother tongue or language at the basic level, respecting the constitutional provision of the right of children to education in mother tongue.

Public schools are thoroughly politicized, and the resources available to schools are heavily misused. The physical infrastructure of public schools is poor, with some exceptions, and is not equipped with teaching and learning materials. They also lack ICT materials and have no internet connection, with some exceptions, which makes them unable to educate their students online during the period of 'lockdown' to contain the spread of the COVID-19 pandemic. Schools are not improving traditional pedagogical practices and are not preparing to produce brilliant students. Learning from the best practices of the world in this age, the time has come to create a STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics) group from among the genius students in each school to produce future promising scientists, technologists/technocrats, engineers, mathematicians, and experts in various fields to lead the country. The existing chaotic education system would take a new turn if this mission were driven by all schools[93].

Hardly 10 percent of Indigenous trainees have been admitted to various training programs of the training institutions affiliated with CTEVT in Baglung district. Opportunities are extremely limited to Indigenous aspirants to get admission in private colleges (both technical and non-technical) run by influential persons affiliated with ruling parties, and when approached, the concerned authorities' response is always 'quota already fulfilled'. Indigenous peoples even do not get information about when the admission opened[94]. This equally applies in other districts as well.

Santhal children have also begun to go to school; their absenteeism is high, and they leave school early due to economic problems in their families and a lack of awareness. About 65 percent of Santhal girls leave school early, marry early, usually at the age of less than 16 years, through arranged marriage or love marriage, and join the labor force to support their poor families. There are only two schools in Jhapa district where primary education has been given in Santhal for the last 14 years. Two teachers have been appointed there to teach students. Primary education in Santhal, the mother tongue, has not progressed as expected. The reason given by the local education authority is that students are few and are not eager to learn in their mother tongue. In the primary schools of Morang district, education in the Santhal language has not yet begun, even in Santhal-concentrated areas. Local governments are reluctant to initiate primary education in their mother tongues[95].

91 Observation of researcher/female key informant from Pahari.
92 Information received from key informants.
93 Opinion of Indigenous experts that triggered the group discussion
94 Field researcher and key informant.
95 Observation from the key informants in the field

The number of speakers of all the mother tongues is decreasing every day, as evidenced when the Language Commission's team visited several places where all the villagers, even children, spoke mother tongues in the past decade. No one could speak Nepali language in the Tamarkhola and Mikwakhola regions of Taplejung district, except Limbu language (Yakthung-pan), till the end of the twentieth century, but now none of the children below the age of twelve speak the language spoken by their parents. Not only Limbus, but Brahmans/Chhetris and Dalits as well used to speak Limbu (Yakthung) language for the past decade while communicating with Limbus. The interest of children in mother tongue education is decreasing because of the increasing influence of communication technology (cartoons, nursery rhymes, stories, U-tube programs, etc.) and the English language and school environment as well. Education in the mother tongue (multilingual education) is not implemented in its true spirit and is becoming less helpful in language retention and expansion. Well-off families are sending their children to English-boarding schools where primary education in the mother tongue is not imparted. Only the poor people of the villages are becoming retainers of the mother languages[96].

Those who are extremely poor and disabled are deprived of education. In the past, education was exclusively reserved for Brahman-Chhetri-like higher castes, but that gradually extended to other identity groups at a slow pace in the last 70 years, and it is still a luxury for well-off families. Parents are hesitant to send their daughters far away to study higher-level education because of the threat of security and unrewarding investment. Such a conservative perception has not changed yet.

Tharus are lagging behind in education because of their economic condition. Tharu boys, when they reach 14 years of age, leave school and home in search of employment. Many of them go to India, as it is near and there is no need for middlemen to whom they have to pay, but some of them go to overseas countries, paying a substantial amount of money, with salary earnings of nine months to one year of employment depending upon the employment agents. They have to work in the country of employment for several years to pay loans and get rid of poverty, a situation that makes it impossible for them to further their education in later life. Tharu children generally attend public schools as their parents cannot afford private boarding schools, and the quality of education in public (government) schools is poor because of the politicization of education. Some Tharu boys and girls have attained secondary education (10th grade completion), but they cannot compete with other boys and girls who have received quality education. Thus, wealth and education go hand in hand, generating a huge gap in competency for employment. That is also the reason that Tharu boys are less attracted to education, but girls have to somehow continue education. These days, more Tharu girls than boys have completed the 12th grade, but almost all of them are jobless. Tharu boys and girls, though all attend school, are deprived of quality education and technical vocational education.

Municipalities are also appointing teachers from their own resources to support local schools facing teacher shortages. Some municipalities have provided buses on a cost-sharing basis (for example, Madhyabindu Municipality of Nawalparasi, 70% municipality, and 30% school authorities) to secondary schools to bring students from distant places to school precincts. Municipalities also provide stationery to high school and secondary school students. Some municipalities provide scholarships to poor and diligent students, including those who are differently abled and belong to Dalits, Indigenous peoples, marginalized communities, and poor families (an example is Chaudandi municipality).

96 Information provided by key informants and Indigenous rights activists.

Indigenous peoples' access to ICT has improved in recent years. About 90 percent of Indigenous households have at least one member who uses a mobile phone, not necessarily a smart mobile phone. Less than 7 percent of Indigenous households have internet connections, whereas 33 percent of households of Hill Brahmans are enjoying internet connections as a major source of information and knowledge[97]. This shows that Indigenous peoples have extremely limited access to knowledge, despite some improvements in access to communication facilities.

One of the major drawbacks of the present education system is its blanket approach, which does not consider the situations of educationally disadvantaged children and their families and plan accordingly[98]. The education system needs to be diversified according to the needs and educational attainment of the diverse population groups.

4.1.7 Gender equality

It is generally assumed that there is no problem of gender inequality in Indigenous societies. They still have some residual practices of matriarchal society, but they are not taken seriously. As they are thoroughly Hinduized, they have borrowed the practices of female dominance from dominant castes, which were protected by state laws. Male chauvinism gradually emerged in their societies in the last hundred years. Now, it is widely accepted that gender inequality exists in Indigenous societies as well, but the degree of inequality and inequity differs from group to group of Indigenous peoples. Such problems differ from place to place depending on the neighboring population.

Highly marginalized Indigenous peoples like Botes have no wealth or property, and the issue of gender equality in wealth and property sharing or inheritance is irrelevant to them[99]. Physically capable Botes, both male and female, go to the rivers for fishing or gold dust collection or work all day long in others' farms, houses, hotels and restaurants, construction sites, and other places where they find casual wage work for the sustenance of their families. There is no gender inequality within Bote communities, but the inequality between Bote women and women of dominant castes is huge.

Women in general are deprived of their ancestral property rights, specifically the right to their parents' land. Parents and the whole society have the feeling that if land is distributed equally to sons and daughters, it will be transferred to alien groups, and their intact communities will be disintegrated. They argue that women or girls should get land titles from husbands and wives's families. Such traditional conceptions are pervasive in Nepali society, and Indigenous peoples are no exception. Because of low land registration fees while registering land title or ownership in the name of women and the migration of husbands to overseas countries, women's land ownership is slowly increasing. But the inheritance of ancestral property is a different matter.

Equal share in ancestral property is still a distant dream for marginalized Indigenous women. There are huge gaps in the revised Country Code and the actual application of the concerned provisions of the law. Pahari is one of the most highly marginalized indigenous groups in the country. Only a handful of Pahari women have received land ownership from their parents or senior members of their families. Land ownership by women has increased in recent years because of a 25 percent reduction in registration fees while registering land in the name of women in the course of land ownership transfer through the buying and selling of a patch or

97 Pradhan and Gurung 2020.
98 Observation of Indigenous Experts.
99 Opinion of the Bote key informant.

piece of land. Another reason is that husbands are working in faraway countries and sending money to their wives to buy land or houses in their names. Problems are also arising from such activities: wives are getting money, buying land and houses, but are running away with their new lovers with all the money and selling properties, leading to conflicts and litigation. But such cases, though serious, are rare; less than two percent of married couples with husbands working abroad. These days, such cases are settled by the local-level governments' judicial committees, usually headed by women's representatives[100].

Women's land title is just to pay less land registration fees when buying patches of land, and land ownership, in the inherited sense, is hardly exercisable in practice. These days, a campaign has been launched to raise awareness about gender equality and empower women and girls. Still, people are not aware, and even officials of rural municipalities are not fully aware that a nominal budget is allocated for women's empowerment. As the awareness level is improving, Pahari girls began to contact Pahari women's group activists when the advertisements for the posts for women in the in the army and women in the in the police were published in the national media, and they began to ask for guidance on applying.

Thus, gender equality in practice is not fully realized, with some exceptions. Participation of Pahari women is almost nonexistent in local-level programs of social audit, public hearings, plan and program formulation events, and other programs of public interest. They are always dictated by the party leaders and are less effective in holding duty bearers accountable, transparent, making them honest and responsible, and controlling corruption and malpractice[101].

Gender equality in terms of meaningful inclusion or representation is not fully realized at the provincial and local levels, and those belonging to so-called higher castes are better represented, while others are not represented proportionate to their particular population. Such a situation can be seen in almost all local-level representative bodies. Indigenous women's token representation can be found in most non-governmental bodies, but there too, they are less influential enough to affect crucial decisions. Till now, gender equality in wealth and productive opportunities is unimaginable for women; they are lagging far behind in every aspect compared to men. Even in the world of work, wage disparity persists. The only available employment for marginalized women and girls is in the in the private sector. They are almost unable to work in faraway places and male-dominated industries.

All women and girls usually do unpaid household work for quite a long time compared to their male household counterparts. But their contribution is not counted. Indigenous women are heavily involved in unpaid domestic work, from dawn to mid-night, for almost 18 hours. Such work ranges from child care, cleaning houses, cooking foods, washing utensils and family clothes, looking after domestic fowl and animals, and working in kitchen gardens and fields. The impacts of inequalities are more painful for women belonging to endangered, highly marginalized, and marginalized Indigenous groups and living in rural areas.

These days, urban municipalities and rural municipalities have begun to implement women's empowerment programs. As most urban and rural municipalities have women representatives as vice chairs, they assert in allocating budget for women's empowerment programs and instruct ward representatives to formulate women's empowerment programs and forward them to municipality offices. Women's voices are heard, and their demands are considered. Almost all municipalities have begun to invest about two to four percent of their total development budget

100 Information provided by deputy mayors of municipalities and Indigenous women activists.
101 Observation of key informants.

on women empowerment programs that encompass awareness-raising, skills training, education (stationery) support, and providing grants and free to low-interest loans without collateral to start small businesses, enterprises, all-weather vegetable farming, poultry framing, goats or cows/buffalos raising and keeping, and other enterprises as appropriate to the localities in cooperation with local banks (usually branches of Agricultural Bank). The grant amount is usually small, less than Rs. 500,000, and the loan amount is usually more than Rs. 500,000, depending on the annual budget of the municipality. Training programs are conducted with the cooperation of local non-governmental training institutions recognized by CTEVT. Agricultural experts are hired on contract to guide farmers and agricultural entrepreneurs. Most local-level governments have formulated gender policies to reduce gender inequality and have created funds to run various programs of awareness-raising, legal literacy and legal aid, income generation, skills training, and so on. They have also created a special fund to assist women victims of violence and provide various kinds of support. Single women and widows, senior women above the age of 65 years (for men, it is 70 years), and women with disabilities (different amounts depending on the type and severity of the disability) are receiving small amounts of social security allowances from the federal government at the recommendation of local governments.

In recent years, Indigenous women's participation in financial institutions, particularly cooperatives, has increased, but still, they usually do not run cooperatives of their own as other women, as they still lack the courage and skills to manage such institutions. Tarai Indigenous Girls are surpassing their counterpart boys in secondary and higher secondary education because boys leave schools when they reach a certain age and go to India and overseas countries in search of employment. But the girls have to stay home to look after their parents because they are insecure about going to India or overseas countries, and jobs for women are also not available. Due to the emergence of such a situation in western Tarai rural areas, gender parity in secondary education is tilted in favor of girls compared to boys. Tharu girls completing secondary education (12th grade) in Banke, Bardiya, Kailai, Dang, and Kanchanpur districts are found in almost all households, as higher secondary schools are found in every village, and road connections have also made school access easy. But most of them are not employed in the public sector and have to engage in household chores or some kind of income-generation activity.

In sum, efforts toward women's empowerment over the last four decades have begun to pay off. Women of dominant groups, having good political resources, are benefiting the most, economically, socially, and politically, and their offspring are also doing better, and spill-over effects can be seen at the marginality in terms of increased awareness, feelings of bitterness and deprivation, and rising perceptions of discrimination and social injustices. Disparities within women on the basis of their biological, social, historical, and geographical identities or diversities are stark. The persistence of the blanket approach of counting women as a single homogenous group has negated the plights of women at the margins, including Indigenous women and others. That is why gender equality and women's empowerment have become a recent phenomenon that impacts the lives of Indigenous, Dalit, Muslim, and Madhesi women, and huge gaps in the speed of achieving progress by women belonging to diverse groups in gender equality persist.

4.1.8 Availability of water and sanitation

The government claims that basic water supply coverage has reached 91 percent of the population in 2019/20, but only 25 percent of the population has access to safe drinking water[102]. It seems that the concerned government agency has changed the definition of safe drinking water, and

102 NPC 2020:38–39.

as a result, the proportion of the population decreased drastically. It is also claimed that basic sanitation coverage reached 99 percent of the population in 2019.

Households of Indigenous peoples and a few Dalits living in higher elevations of the hills and mountains of some districts are always suffering from water shortages, and they have to carry a few gallons of water from faraway places within two to three hours walk distance. Such a problem has not been solved so far as there are no water sources nearby and bringing water from distant places is expensive. They have approached the local and central governments for the implementation of the drinking water project. Recently, they have also requested local government. But none have responded positively.

Majhis are still depending on river water, which is not safe to drink because of occasional floods, landslides, heavy rains, and soil erosion that make the water of the river muddy and dirty. Filtering with cloth and boiling water is not enough to make river water safe to drink. This is a perennial problem for the Majhis living on the banks of the Kosi River and its tributaries. As a consequence, they mostly suffer from diseases of the abdomen and intestine, liver, kidney, swelling of the hand and leg, heart, and brain. They usually go to health service institutions when the disease becomes severe. But that does not solve their drinking water problem.

4.1.9 Access to sustainable modern energy

Hydroelectricity is widely used for lighting in houses, as it has become more accessible in recent years. Its use for cooking has also increased recently with the increase in hydroelectricity generation. Only households in remote areas are deprived of using such clean energy because of a lack of hydroelectricity supply line extension. Substantial populations are also using solar power for lighting houses and heating water, as government subsidies are available for it. But the coverage is limited. In recent years, hydroelectricity and solar power have replaced fossil fuel lamps, lanterns, and firewood. Gas stoves are also replacing firewood stoves because of the non-availability of firewood, though the price of gas stoves is comparatively high.

In the remote areas in the hills, many Indigenous households belonging to Bhote, Walung, Dhokpya, Lhomi, Lhopa, Tin-gaunle, Nishyangpa, Marphali, Dolpo, Byasi/Sauka, and others still primarily and partially depend on the firewood of their fields and private forests. In Tarai, many Indigenous households, like those in Koche, Jhandag/Uraon, Tajpuriya, Dhimal, Gangain, and Kusbadiya, also rely on dried cow- dung, dried leaves and straws, and logs carried by rivers because of their inability to buy gas- stoves and gas cylinders. Because of restrictions on firewood access to the forests, they are compelled to buy such expensive kitchen equipment, even borrowing money for heavy interests.

Santhals in Morang and Jhapa districts primarily depend on dried dung cakes, dried straws and grasses, and firewood, and hardly 0.1 percent of Santhal households use gas ovens. An extremely small number of Santhal households have buildings made of cement and bricks; a few have houses roofed with corrugated sheet; and most households have thatched huts, where the use of a gas oven is not possible or even dangerous.

4.1.10 Inclusive economic growth and productive employment

The annual GDP growth rate per capita is a contested issue in Nepal. Claims of the GDP growth rate change with the change of the government, and relevant data are manipulated accordingly. Data are interpreted to prove the legitimacy of the government. Growth can be established,

but not inclusivity, which is obvious. Some economists argue that current economic growth is transient and not sustainable, and environmentalists maintain that growth has been achieved at the cost of environmental destruction and the indiscriminate exploitation of rare natural resources. Sociologists and development advocates posit that development interventions aimed at economic growth are culturally insensitive, socially divisive, and against the spirit of distributive justice. For political actors, they are means of gaining a special advantage and expanding their influence. Indigenous peoples have experienced that economic growth is associated with the devastation of Indigenous habitats and territories, natural resources therein, pristine natural beauty and environment, and Indigenous economies; their land alienation and displacement; deprivation of their livelihood resources; and their cultural erosion and spiritual aggression[103].

Indigenous peoples rarely get opportunities for productive employment, 'an employment yielding sufficient returns to labor to permit the worker and his or her dependents a level of consumption above the poverty line'[104]. Whatever employment they get, they cannot support the cost of maintaining their families of four to five members, and some of the family members are working poor and some are unemployed and old. That is why the children of these families enter the workplace at an early age to support their families. Indigenous workers usually find deficit employment in the private sector, especially in the construction sector, household work, farm work, factories, etc. These days, the only permanent jobs available for Indigenous people are school teachers, and very few are employed in the civil service, Nepal Police, and Nepal Army. Among the teachers of Baglung, there are 15 percent Indigenous teachers, and about 15 percent Indigenous youths of Baglung are employed abroad. If foreign employment is closed, it will be a disaster for Indigenous peoples in many districts.

Youth self-employment schemes have been launched in all municipalities, and municipalities have created funds in partnership with the Agriculture Development Bank and other commercial banks. Support (a small grant and loan) has been provided to some unemployed youths. Skills training is provided to unemployed youth to help them start enterprises. People are complaining that this scheme is politically motivated, and youths affiliated with incumbent political parties are only benefiting from it. It is also argued that beneficiaries of the self-employment scheme are not properly identified. Key informants from the field claim that ninety percent of beneficiaries of such schemes come from the same traditionally advantaged groups.

Traditional occupation-based small enterprises and industries operated by inherited or ancestral property are the main source of broad-based, productive self-employment for Indigenous peoples. But they are eroding today due to the government's discouragement and the increased aggression of modern industries and international trade and commerce. Apart from agriculture and animal husbandry, Indigenous peoples were reputed for their traditional occupations of copper mining, gold mining, iron mining and smelting, salt extraction, precious stones mining; herbs collection, preservation/processing of skin, hide, fur, body parts like musk, liver, horn, peak, feathers, skin and other parts of hunted wild animals and birds by mountain Indigenous groups; preparation of traditional medicines, honey collection and wax making; making threads and weaving cotton, woolen and nettle or flax plants and other plants' fiber cloths, carpets and dyeing; capturing and taming/training falcons, elephants and other wild animals; collecting/gathering wild fruits, roots, shots, lichens, mushrooms for household consumption and bartering

103 Conclusions reached at interactive group discussions, in-depth interviews, and observations of key informants, Indigenous rights activists, and Indigenous experts.

104 ILO 2012:3

with other foods; ship, goat, cow, buffalo, yak herding and producing wool, milk, ghee/ butter, cheese, meat and leather; fishing and river-based fish rearing; bamboo crafts, wood works and carpentering; stone works and crafting; paper making; yeast making and producing alcoholic beverages (*chyang, jand, nigar, raksi*); seeds and plants protection, pasture lands maintenance and maintaining transhumance. But they are on the wane. Neither they could retain their traditional occupations of productive employment and inherent dignity under state restrictions and modern market aggressions, nor they could adopt new occupations in the age of narrow, exclusionary economic growth. The government has never realized the immeasurable impacts of the loss of traditional occupations.

Indigenous women are entrepreneurs because of their traditions. They are producers of traditional household materials and decorative objects such as clothes, shawls, blankets, carpets, garments, and other artistic items, as well as local alcoholic beverages, based on their traditional skills, knowledge, and technologies and mutual cooperation. They are also producers of horticultural and agricultural products; keepers of domesticated animals and fowl; and caretakers of seed preservation. They solely manage enterprises of various types of traditional production and thus contribute to the family economy. But today, their enterprises are in crisis. If these entrepreneurs are economically and technically supported, they can find an economic niche in the market and significantly contribute to broad-based, inclusive national economic growth[105].

After being displaced from traditional occupations, many Paharis started small-scale poultry farming, keeping hatcheries, and goat farming, but they completely failed due to larger-scale enterprises and contractors with huge investment in such businesses and the non-protection of the government[106]. Hardly 10 percent of Paharis are involved in various kinds of businesses and small industries. Everywhere, they have to compete with Brahman-Chhetri entrepreneurs, which is quite challenging.

Only 5 percent of people with disabilities are employed in some kinds of government and semi-government jobs. Diversity within persons with disabilities has not been considered. As a result, disabled people from dominant groups and those with political connections are benefiting the most from the employment quota allocated for persons with disabilities. Employment for persons with disabilities has been mainly obstructed by a lack of conducive physical infrastructure, poor educational attainment, ill treatment in offices and job places, and denial of registration attendance. Such factors compel them to leave jobs. On the other hand, they have no easy access to information to apply for the jobs reserved (5%), and those who have better access to information are getting jobs, but those like Dalits are never enjoying such opportunities. The amendments to laws relating to education, health, employment, and data disaggregation are utmost necessary to address the issues of differently abled persons.

Indigenous peoples' participation in bureaucracy is far from satisfactory because of their past legacy. However, their share in government service is increasing because of inclusive provisions in the Civil Service Act of 2007. About one and a half decades ago, only 2 percent of Indigenous peoples, apart from Newar, consisted of gazetted officers (executive level) of the Civil Service; now (in 2019), it has reached close to 8 percent of the gazette officers (6% male and 1.9% female) of the Civil Service, thanks to the inclusive measures. In the same way, women's participation in the civil service (non-gazetted and gazetted employees) has also increased substantially, from

105 Claims made by key informants
106 Pahari key informant

percent a decade ago to 26 percent now (2019), including 15 percent of women from Brahman and Chhetri only[107].

4.1.11 Building resilient infrastructure and inclusive, sustainable industrialization

Development history reveals that only culturally sensitive or conducive development is sustainable development. Development and power are interrelated. Power is always in favor of strengthening state structures, enhancing the government's regulatory capability, grabbing resources, and expanding the political base, and is insensitive towards people and their environment. That is why infrastructure is not sustainable and resilient. Culturally and socially insensitive development projects have caused widespread natural disasters like soil erosion, landslides, and flooding throughout the country that swept away hundreds of houses, destroyed properties, and brought immense suffering to thousands of people[108]. The way infrastructure development is undertaken, the infrastructures built are not sustainable and advantageous in the long run to the people where they are built, except for the for the availability of occasional wage work for local wage workers.

Infrastructure development is not sensitive to Indigenous peoples; instead, land and natural heritage loss cause immense negative impacts on them. The FPIC of Indigenous peoples and other local people is the primary condition for resilient infrastructure building and inclusive, sustainable development. But it is rarely practiced. FPIC was practiced very rarely. While repairing damaged roads and constructing public buildings like a school and police post, FPIC practiced in the peripheral town of the Lalitpur sub-metropolis, where a substantial population of marginalized Indigenous Pahari is found. It became possible because concerned officials were found favorable to Pahari there[109]. But that is not the case for all infrastructure development projects.

Santhals have a bitter experience of displacement, land confiscation, and sacred site destruction by development projects, especially road construction and expansion, and building construction. Compensation for them is very rare. In the name of development, 41 Santhal households in Katahari, 31 households in Sirsiya, and 45 households in Dhanpalthan of Morang district have been displaced and have become homeless, and their sacred sites and structures that are located in each Santhal village or settlement have been destroyed[110]. Concerned authorities have claimed that they have documents of their consent to provide lands with houses that were prepared by deception. After Santhal's incessant agitation, they have agreed to provide alternative lands, build houses, and construct or build sacred places with appropriate structures in each location for some households; for the rest, consultations are continuing.

Several large-scale and medium-sized industries are facing problems of various types, and most of them employ Indian citizens instead of Nepali citizens. Their focus on immediate gains and high productivity has led them to unsustainability and crisis. Indigenous peoples have no modern industries of their own, and their traditional home industries or cottage industries are gradually disappearing from both urban and rural areas. Traditional enterprises such as bamboo works; masonry and stone carving; carpentry and wood works; weaving, dying, and designing cloths of cotton, woolen, and other fibers; making mats from straws and reeds; producing alcoholic beverages; producing medicine from herbs and fowls' and animals' body parts are still somehow surviving and serving as cottage industries that cater to the local people, but they have not taken the form of sustainable industries as the government is reluctant to promote them. The

107 Pokharel and Pradhan 2020: 15–16.
108 Observation of interviewees and news relating to natural disasters are also widely covered by mass media.
109 Observation of the key informant.
110 Santhal key informants.

production of handloom-based cloths is decreasing dramatically because of the import of cheap cotton cloth woven by machines from India. Similar phenomena, though not sustainable, appear in the productions of small-scale industries.

Traditional enterprises of liquor (raksi) and other alcoholic beverages (jand, nigar, chyang, etc.), which are the basic income source of Indigenous women of poor households, are under constant attack by government agencies under the influences of modern liquor industries and multinational liquor companies, and the traditional entrepreneurs are generally penalized and marginalized in many ways. The expansion of multinational liquor companies has been interpreted as an expansion of industries that substantially contribute to national revenue. These days, Japanese and Korean alcoholic drinks similar to Nepali chyang or nigar are becoming popular in the Nepali market. The Nepali government is not ready to promote Tin Pane Raksi, a typical traditional Nepali liquor that is becoming popular in the U.K. If these traditional Indigenous liquor industries supported financially and technically, standardized their production, and extended support for their marketing gradually, huge employment would be created, most poor households' income would increase, bringing down the import of foreign liquor each year, and saving precious US dollars[111].

Support for start-ups and firms or businesses of marginalized Indigenous peoples for the production of consumer goods has not been initiated so far. As in many countries, Nepal needs to invest adequately in'start-ups' or enterprises to promote the manufacturing sector, particularly consumer goods that contribute substantially to GDP. Such measures would be immensely helpful to make Indigenous peoples innovative entrepreneurs[112].

Some municipalities have developed plans and started to build 'industrial villages'. Whether or not they have taken resiliency, inclusivity, and sustainability into adequate consideration is not known. Building industrial villages is still in its initial phase at all local levels.

4.1.12 Inequality reduction

Field information reveals that inequality reduction is not encouraging. The traditionally privileged sections of society are getting better than the traditionally deprived sections of society. The socio-economic progress of higher-income groups, that is, of Brahman-Chhetri, is much faster than that of Dalits, traditionally marginalized Madhesis (lower castes), and majority Indigenous peoples, generating huge gaps in income and capability. Political connection is the basis of speedy recovery and progress in every area. Now the caste core (Brahman-Chhetri) has not only captured state apparatuses but also taken over the financial institutions, business enterprises, trading companies, and institutions of service sectors like hotels, private boarding schools, colleges, and training institutes. Indigenous Newars, being urban dwellers and business people, were closer to them, but because of a lack of power nexus, they are lagging quite behind them. The economic progress of some Indigenous groups like Thakali, Sherpa, and Gurung has been encouraging in recent years, but because of their low educational attainment compared to traditionally advanced groups (caste core), their progress is not as speedy as that of caste core. Among Indigenous peoples Singsawa, Bhote, Larke, Dolpo, Byasi/Sauka, and some other Indigenous groups of the mountain region, Lapcha/Lepcha, Chepang, Hayu, Thami of the hills, and Kisan, Koche, Munda, Santhal, Jhangad/Uraun, Dhanuk, Bote, Majhi, Kusbadiya, and Raji of the Tarai region still fall at the bottom quintile of the income distribution. Their economic status has not improved significantly despite increased remittance flow to their families. Information collected from 20

111 Suggestion of focus group discussions.
112 Suggestions from Indigenous experts and key informants.

districts of Nepal shows that the economic progress of Indigenous peoples other than Newar, Thakali, Sherpa, and Gurung is nominal because they have to spend all their incomes on food items, clothes, health care, housing, and education for their children, and only a meager surplus is left for emergency expenses. But, on the other hand, none of the households of Hill Brahmans as such are in such a sluggish situation. Chhetris have made tremendous progress in the past decade as development activities intensified in the Karnali region[113].

There is a wide disparity in educational attainment between Hill Brahmans and Indigenous peoples. It is apparent that Brahman-Chhetri overwhelmingly dominates the various fields of tertiary education, and they comprise about 80 percent of the human resources with higher technical education. Inter-group disparity in education, especially at the at the higher secondary and tertiary levels, has become a serious concern for human rights activists as the disparity displays the inequitable access to and opportunities of higher education, rendering the right to education not enjoyable to a large section of society. Marginalized communities are facing a similar fate with regards to vocational and technical training. Affirmative action in education is least effective for whom it is conceived.

Inequality is stark in the protection and promotion of religions, cultures, and languages. The state especially treats Hinduism and neglects other religions. Islam, Christianity, and other religions, except Buddhism, are treated suspiciously and mostly ignored. The state has been taking special care of Hindu cultural heritage, but the cultural, historical, and natural heritage of non-Hindus is almost overlooked, and they are on the verge of extinction. It is almost clear that Indigenous peoples' cultural and linguistic rights, enshrined in the present Constitution, have not been respected.

Political inequality persists through the ages. State structures have been designed in such a way that the hegemony of the traditional power holders can never be challenged. Super-ordination of the caste core and subordination of Indigenous peoples, Dalits, and Madhesis have become the dictates of state management under the rubric of constitutionalism, multi-party democracy, and federalism[114]. Power decides policy issues, development projects, investment priorities and areas, resource distribution patterns, state resources, goods and services, and valued opportunities. Power relations determine who gets what, when, and how. The marginalization and deprivation of Indigenous peoples, Dalits, and Madhesis are the result of their unequal power relations with the ruling groups.

4.1.13 Safe, inclusive, resilient and sustainable human settlements

Human settlements become safe, inclusive, resilient, and sustainable when they are culturally propitious, ecologically suitable, socially harmonious, and just. People's heritage of traditional institutions that regulate distributive justice, save collective ideals, emphasize reciprocity, complementarity, cooperation, altruism, and the barter system, maintain peace, harmony, human dignity, social order, communication systems (message dissemination), and greater unity in wider diversity, and organize cultural and religious festivals and ceremonies are indispensable for equitable, harmonious, inclusive, sustainable settlements. The drive for modernization that is alluring to developing countries is not malleable for saving such heritage, and the relationship between political power and development investment is becoming more intimate every day. And now reckless development is becoming unsustainable and ecologically disastrous, causing

113 Observations made by Indigenous experts, rights advocates/activists, and key informants.
114 Key informants and Indigenous development experts.

immense suffering and destruction rather than leading people to prosperity at the expense of deprived and powerless people.

As far as the preservation, protection, and conservation of cultural and natural heritage are concerned, Indigenous cultural and natural heritage like Indigenous languages, myths, oral literature, folklore, sacred sites and places, monuments, historical structures, artifacts, myths, sacred scriptures, festivals, ceremonies, rituals, distinct ways of knowledge transmission, and distinct philosophies are disappearing every day, and the state's expenditure on the cultural and natural heritage of Indigenous peoples is negligible. Protection of intangible cultural heritage of Indigenous peoples like mother languages, oral tradition, oral literature, and mythologies has not been taken seriously by all levels of government, and living carriers and transferors of such intangible heritage are also on the verge of extinction as their futures are insecure. It is widely felt that the last resort left to preserve intangible cultural heritage is the revitalization of traditional institutions and specialists of such heritage, for which governments of different levels need to invest in such pious work[115].

The destruction of cultural and natural heritage has been accelerated in recent years in the name of the development of tourist destinations and spots. Forest Consumers Committees are converting Tinjure, Milke, and Jaljale, rhododendron forest hills and a scenic extension of sacred moor; the beautiful sacred hill of Menchyayam with forests, shrubs, and extended grassy flat and sloppy lands of Terathum, Sangkhuwasabha, and Taplejung districts, believed to be the entertaining place of mythical young men and women of Limbus (Yakthung), into tourist destinations by developing modern infrastructure there without the consent of the concerned peoples. Infrastructure building for tourism promotion around sacred sites (seats, resting or meeting platforms, playing fields, etc. of deities or divinities) and historical sites (forts, buildings, walls, playing fields, etc.) of Indigenous peoples without taking consideration of cultural sensitivity has been bringing cultural devastation and identity crises to Limbus and other Indigenous peoples. Likewise, encroachment through various development projects on natural heritage is causing disaster to the ways of life and belief systems of Indigenous peoples, as they have inherited a deep spiritual and holy relationship with nature for their survival[116].

Heritage preservation is becoming a burning issue today. In many places, Indigenous peoples are unaware of their own heritage due to Hinduization, cultural assimilation, and political party indoctrination. An example is the renovation of 'Kummayak' in Yasok, Panchthar. Kummayak became Siddhadevi a few decades ago. Renovation began with concrete works demolishing an old stone platform (Chautara). A wall has been constructed around the temple, and lots of tridents and bells were hung there, but the Sangbhe (worship place) of Yuma (the mother goddess) was not constructed. Mundhum (the Yakthung myth) reveals that Yuma appeared there in front of some Yakthung devotees. Now the discussion on Yakthung heritage is mounting. A similar case is about Timbu Warak, which was about to be renamed Bisnu Pokhari after erecting a statue of God Bishnu. After the protest of Yakthung cultural activist Bishnu temple, the renaming process has been stopped, but some new structures have already been constructed[117].

The cultural and natural heritage of Indigenous peoples is in danger everywhere because of the state's non-recognition, negligence, non-renovation, and development projects' encroachment. Infrastructure development projects, particularly road construction and extension, hydro-power projects, urban development, building constructions, industrial establishments, etc., implemented

115 Proposition from the key informants of Terathum district.
116 Details received from the key informant from the fields.
117 Facts related by field informants.

by all levels of governments, are causing carbon emissions, producing pollutants and huge waste, and destroying heritage sites, burial grounds, wooden or stone platforms, historical sites and forts, forests, pasture lands, watershed areas, water sources, ponds and wetlands, rivers, river banks, wildlife reserves, the natural heritage and beauty of the villages, and bringing devastating natural disasters, including floods, landslides, drying up water sources, etc.[118]. Natural heritage like mountain peaks, hill greeneries, scenic grasslands, hunting grounds, sacred lakes, wetlands, springs, water fountains, rivers, and forests of spiritual values are losing their spiritual and metaphysical values, cultural and emotional significance, vitality of maintaining bio-diversity, and environmental sustainability due to culturally insensitive, authoritative management and business enterprises that ignore or undermine human rights and corporate social responsibilities. Such phenomena are making human settlements unsafe and fragile.

Tharus' traditional institutions like Badghar (in Banke and Bardiya districts), Bhalamansa (in Kailai and Kanchanpur districts), and Mahatawa (in Dang district) have been active and functional for centuries. These institutions are playing vital roles in mitigating conflicts arising from family affairs, marital relations, crop damage caused by domesticated animals, discordant claims of land boundaries and land division, and providing speedy justice to the affected members, even penalizing perpetrators within their societies. They also disseminate messages through their traditional messengers (Chaukidar), mobilize community members to maintain and repair irrigation canals and other small-scale infrastructure development works, and keep records of community affairs through record keepers (Likhandar*)*. Under Badghar, Chirakiya performs worship of local gods and goddesses (gramdevata), and Guruwa manages cultural festivals and ceremonies and conducts major religious rituals. Badghar even punished their community members if they did not conform to the community rules, norms, and values and participate in development work when asked. Barbardiya municipality, Bansgadi municipality, Madhuvan municipality, and Thakurbaba municipality of Bardiya districts have recognized Tharu traditional institution Badghar by enacting local law that detailed their rights and duties and demarcated their traditional jurisdiction areas. They provide grants to Badghar to implement village development plans. In the same way, Suklaphanta municipality and Laljhoda rural municipality of Kanchanpur have also enacted laws for the recognition of Bhalamansa with their traditional roles, rights, and duties and are supporting these traditional institutions. It has been learned that some municipalities in Dhangadi are also enacting laws to recognize Tharu traditional institutions. But today, some uneasy situations are emerging. As a result of the of the expansion of administrative units due to road expansion, electricity extension, development of communication networks in villages, an increase in the number of police posts close by, lawyers and law practitioners everywhere, and settlement development committee formation in villages by some municipalities, they are under tremendous pressure not to exercise their traditional authority and apply customary laws. Police, government officials, lawyers, and court authorities are unhappy with them because they settle the cases through mediation, reconciliation, or compensation as deemed necessary, and their sources of special, additional income are drained.

Local-level government officials and political party leaders are also irritated with them because people wait for instructions from their traditional institutional head in the course of assessing community needs, planning programs and projects, mobilizing the community, and implementing projects and programs thought to be appropriate, and they have the feeling that traditional institutions have undermined their roles, making it difficult for them to expand their influence. Police accuse the institution head of committing the offense of violating the legal provisions of the criminal code (law) while penalizing the offenders of crimes committed according to customary

118 Ibid.

law. Police have started to enter villages in search of conflict cases and have begun treating ordinary cases as criminal. Local state agencies are thus troubling the people in different ways and upsetting the authorities of traditional institutions, which shows that the government somehow wants to undermine traditional institutions, people's nearest institutions, customary laws, and culturally and locally most appropriate laws. But because of the traditional influences and roles of these traditional institutions on Tharu communities, it is not easy for public administration to weaken them.

Traditional institutions of Santhal, like Majhi Hadam, chief and judicial authority; Jagmajhi, vice-chief; Naike, priest; Paranik, assistant priest; and Godit, are facing a lot of problems because of the frequent attacks by converted Santhal Christians. Indigenous Santhals claim that Hindus have done nothing directly to undermine their traditional institutions and culture, but Christians are aggressive and constantly attacking to destroy their culture and institutions[119]. Santhal Museum is under construction in Sirsiya, Morang, and some seven million rupees have already been spent of the total estimated budget of 60 to 70 million rupees. Wage workers on a daily basis are a few Santhals; contractors and petty contractors are party leaders' relatives or favorites, mostly from dominant categorical groups, and are the major recipients of the invested amount[120]. Transparency and accountability are becoming just rhetoric; all performances are conducted in complicity.

Several municipalities have claimed that they have allocated some funds amounting to 1-2 percent of their total development budget for the protection, promotion, and development of traditional occupations, languages, and cultural heritage. The way they are spending the budget for cultural heritage protection and promotion does not comply with the standard practices and principles of heritage protection and preservation. They have not properly conducted a survey of Indigenous cultural heritage and identified the sites, objects, artifacts, or symbols and their existing statuses. Similarly, intangible cultural heritage has not been systematically documented. Not only the government's apathy towards Indigenous cultural, historical, and natural heritage, but the increased phenomenon of rural-urban migration is also equally responsible for the erosion of Indigenous intangible cultural heritage like languages, customs, performance arts, and oral literature. Because of a lack of alternative opportunities in villages and less beneficial traditional occupations (agriculture in infertile, rainfed lands; animal husbandry; handicrafts making, etc.), villagers are bound to migrate to urban centers and live in a mixed society. Education in the mother tongue (multilingual education) is not implemented in its true spirit and is becoming less helpful for language retention and expansion. Well-off families are sending their children to English-boarding schools where primary education in the mother tongue is not imparted. Only the poor people of the villages are becoming retainers of the mother languages[121].

Indigenous peoples' settlements and villages are in disaster-prone areas like Helambu, Sindhupalchok (river flooding), Thasang, and Mustang (avalanches), and relief has never reached affected people, mostly Indigenous peoples, because of a lack of political linkage. Similar situations appeared in recent flooded areas of the Tarai region. People who were living close to the river banks suffered a lot suffered a lot as the river stretches were not embanked. Politicians were using the government's relief package as a means of building political supporters, and relief receivers were those who had a political connection or party affiliation. The same pattern was exhibited while providing relief support during the COVID-19 lockdown. Many human settlements

119 Santhal key informants and Indigenous rights activists.
120 Santhal is the is the key informant.
121 Opinion of interactive sessions.

where mostly Indigenous peoples live are becoming unsafe because of frequent occurrences of natural disasters.

New towns, not properly planned, are developing in several regions and areas, and well-off Brahmans, Chhetris, Newars, and a handful of Indigenous peoples and Dalits, returning from foreign services, are migrating there. These days, each village is connected by a mud-built or graveled road, and small towns are developing in most villages, where schools and health posts are in operation, but water and electricity supply, sanitation, and sewerage systems are poorly managed. Huge additional efforts have to be made to make these newly emerging urban settlements safe, inclusive, resilient, and sustainable. Most local-level governments have started a 'thatch-free house' campaign and are providing galvanized corrugated-iron sheets freely for roofing and some small amount of financial support for other expenses needed for roofing. Such houses are generally considered safe, especially against heavy rain and being caught in fire. Thus, thatched huts are disappearing in the villages, and urbanization of settlements and the non-availability of straw, reeds, and other materials are also contributing to the replacement of thatched roofs. People have begun to choose new urban centers that are developing quickly instead of going to large towns or cities.

4.1.14 Sustainable consumption and production patterns

It is a well-known fact that per capita food waste is high among urban dwellers compared to rural people. Rural people, including Indigenous peoples, are thrifty and better utilize every grain of cereal crop. They never waste food; even the leftovers they feed to their domestic fowl and animals. Food waste is mostly related to affluence and the culture of consumerism, but food waste is a sin for rural Indigenous people[122]. Farmers frequently experience food loss due to climatic vagaries, hail storms, soil erosion, landslides, floods, inundations, draughts, and other natural calamities, and the cost is particularly heavy for Indigenous farmers because they rarely have alternative options. Crop insurance has extremely limited coverage, and compensation for food loss is very rare. Food production in Nepal mainly depends on monsoons or climatic vagaries. So, Indigenous farmers exert enough efforts on sustainable production and are careful about sustainable consumption.

4.1.15 Urgent action to combat climate change and its impacts

Indigenous peoples are basically nature worshippers, and the sky, sun, planets, stars, galaxy, earth, mountains, hills, forests, bushes/groves, flowers, pasture lands, water fountains/sources, rivers, confluence of rivers, ponds/lakes, wetlands, wild animals and birds, and other natural objects or organisms represent their gods and goddesses[123]. They are adherents of age-old shamanism, an ecstatic religion[124], also now called Indigenous religion[125], that teaches them how to adapt to nature and harbor spirituality, morality, philosophy, and vision to live in harmony with nature, observing and following natural laws and commands. They claim that nature is their teacher, who teaches them how to live, and their mother, who nourishes them. They are highly sensitive to climate change as it impacts their way of life, cultures, and spirituality. According to a recent scientific report[126], the ten-fold acceleration in ice loss in the past few decades across the

122 People's opinions were collected by key informants from various districts.
123 Information provided by key informants from the mid-West.
124 For an insightful description, see Lewis 2003–1971, Stutley 2003, Vitebsky 1995, and Eliade 1964.
125 For analytical details, see Harvey (ed.) 2000 and Bahr (ed.) 2005.
126 Ethan Lee et al., December 2021. 'Accelerated mass loss of Himalayan glaciers since the Little Ice Age' in Scientific Reports (2021) 11:24284. www.nature.com/scientific reports.

Himalaya, far exceeding any centennial-scale rates of change recorded elsewhere in the world, is a grave threat to Nepali people and the people of Asia.

Changing temperature and precipitation patterns, deglaciation, and the increased presence of debris cover and proglacial lakes are enhancing the loss of extent and surfaces of glaciers, which are adversely affecting river systems and a range of ecosystem services that support food and energy production and sustain the water supply of the southerly Himalayan regions[127], including Nepal. Scientists warn that Asian people will face catastrophic consequences of the deglaciation of Himalaya if urgent actions are not taken to reverse the process. Mountain climbers and trackers are frequently sharing the information that the snow line in the Himalayas is moving up in higher elevation with numerous repercussions. It is a formidable task for resource-constrained Nepal and Nepal should take the initiative to bring South Asian countries and China together to check environmental degradation and air pollution and mitigate climate change to save Himalaya. High-mountain Indigenous peoples would be the first victims if actions were not taken with urgency.

A substantial proportion of forest areas are under the community forestry system. These community forests are managed by community forest consumer committees and groups. Indigenous peoples' participation in community forest consumer groups is significant these days in those areas where they are in majority, and forests are also safer or better protected there[128].

4.1.16 Sustainable use of terrestrial ecosystems and sustainable forest management

Indigenous peoples were the custodians, protectors, or conservators of forest areas, sites of terrestrial and freshwater biodiversity, water resources, mountain diversity, green areas, Himalayan sanctity, and lands' fertility and sacredness in the past. But the situation has greatly changed, and their rights as nature and land custodians have been nullified. Today, Nepal's development activities and modernization drives are destroying long-sustained terrestrial ecosystems. The rapid industrialization of neighboring countries is polluting the pristine Himalayan ecosystem, the white Himalaya is turning into a black mountain, and the water reserve of Asia is gradually drying up. The cost for Nepal is unimaginable. Indigenous knowledge of managing ecosystems has not been used, and Indigenous peoples are not meaningfully mobilized to combat climate change and make sustainable use of ecosystems. It is claimed that forest areas are not decreasing, but the quality of the forest is decreasing. Both government agencies and community forest consumer committees and groups are responsible for sustainable forest management.

The Federation of Community Forest Users Nepal (FECOFUN) is a powerful social organization captured by dominant caste members under the influence of large political parties, and it has earned a huge amount from forest resources and international support in the name of environmental protection[129]. In the past, almost 80 percent of the forest areas of the country were owned and managed by Indigenous peoples through the ages. They were nationalized in 1958 without the consent, compensation, or knowledge of concerned people. The owners of the forest came to know of this type of nationalization quite late in the 1960s, when their access to forest resources was completely restricted. They objected to the process but could not succeed because the authoritarian state had already become more repressive. After a few years of nationalization, densely forested areas began to deplete fast, environmental crises began to appear, and relevant international agencies started to express their concerns. The idea of community forestry emerged to combat the problem of forest depletion. Certain forests were declared community forests, and

127 Ibid.
128 Key informants' reflection.
129 Observations of key informants in various districts

consumers' committees, excluding former forest owners, were formed to manage the forests. This process spread rapidly, and large areas of forests came under their jurisdiction. Thus, the long-cherished government's intention of changing ownership of forests from Indigenous owners to non-Indigenous settlers materialized. Exclusion of Indigenous peoples from consumers' committees or groups forever was not an easy task for those who were taking undue advantage in the pretext of forest management. In the last two decades, the situation has changed gradually, and the inclusion of Indigenous peoples in consumers' committees or groups of community forests in their areas has improved to some extent thanks to the inclusive provisions of the forest laws and regulations. Still, Indigenous peoples, with the exception of party cadres, are less effective in influencing the decisions of the concerned committees or groups; their participation is mere tokenism and does not represent reparation for past injustices.

4.1.17 Peaceful and inclusive societies, sustainable development, accountable institutions and accessible justice

In reality, the transformation of a hierarchical, divisive, caste society into a peaceful, inclusive society is a daunting task for Nepal. Exclusionary state structures are the outcome of a hierarchical caste system based on the classical Hindu varna system and religious ideology. The so-called higher caste groups have been exclusively dominating the state structures and monopolizing valued resources, opportunities, and services of the state since the formation of Nepal some two hundred and fifty years ago. Regime changes, from autocratic rule to democratic rule, have not brought meaningful changes in the basic characteristics of the state. Some Indigenous groups, Dalit groups, and Madhesi groups have never been in governmental or non-governmental institutions; as a result, they are suffering the most. They are not aware of how inclusion, the crucial aspect of the present Nepalese Constitution, is operationalized. Those who have been represented or included in various positions of the government, legislature, and judiciary are not rising voices of the groups they represent, but rise vices of those political parties that they represent. Indigenous issues, concerns, and aspirations are overshadowed by party politics in the decision-making bodies[130].

Social inclusion has only rhetorical value. Political leaders have entrenched themselves through the legal provision of inclusion. They have been secured by this provision, and their inclusion depends on their discretion. Indigenous leaders closer to major party leaders are enjoying peripheral inclusion, advocating the party policies of their parties that coopted them, and not representing the concerns of their groups. Inclusion in areas like education, health, and government offices has been highjacked by political patronage and party linkages, forgetting those who have been excluded through centuries. Everywhere, people are not experiencing justice and real inclusion[131].

Fair representation in state organs is a crucial issue raised by Indigenous peoples, especially after the reinstatement of multiparty democracy in 1990[132]. Inclusive state building has been their major concern for the last 15 years. The representation of Santhals in local-level government is extremely poor. Santhals are poor and have no economic capacity to compete in elections or influence political parties, as politics and elections are dominated by money power. The inclusion provision has also been perverted by money politics and is beyond the reach of the poor, like Santhals[133]. Participation in consumers' committees or groups also depends on political

130 Reflections of focus group discussions and key informants.
131 Conclusions of focus group discussions and Indigenous experts and key informants.
132 Hangen 2010: 34–49.
133 Santhal is a is a key informant and field researcher.

linkages, and inclusion is at the mercy of the political parties. Where Santhals are represented, the committees or groups are led by the relatives of political leaders[134].

Justice in the present system is inaccessible, unaffordable, complicated, and time- and energy-consuming. Traditional judicial institutions that provided justice on the spot immediately and

customary laws that were culturally and socially appropriate and suitable have been disregarded, almost destroyed. Justice is hardly accessible to Majhis because of their oppressed identity, language barriers, difficulties in understanding complicated legal provisions, expensive judicial processes, and lack of linkage with political power. Access to the legal aid provisions of the court is also beyond their reach[135]. Similar is the situation for Thami, Hayu, Chepang, and other poor Indigenous peoples.

Reservation of persons with disabilities for inclusion has not come down to the lower echelon; it is confined to the higher caste and the higher class. Disaggregated data on persons with disabilities belonging to different identity groups has not been produced, which has glossed over the actual situation of benefit distribution. Most available data is either fake or manipulated. It is claimed that there are about 1,300,000 persons with disabilities, or about 1.4 percent of the total population in Nepal, and how many of them are female and how many of them are Indigenous peoples are unknown. Though they are recognized at the center level, they are not recognized at the provincial and local levels, so they have no participation at these levels.

There are no specific programs of empowerment targeted at people with disabilities. Diversity within persons with disabilities, which is central from a human rights point of view, is not taken into consideration; they are simply taken as a single group in our country, a fundamental flaw of state policy. Ten types of disability have been recognized, but their basic background characteristics, like sex, caste or ethnicity, language, religion, location, region, etc., have not been recognized so far. They are classified into three kinds: completely disabled, liable to receive Rs. 5,000; highly disabled, liable to receive Rs. 2,000; and disabled, liable to receive Rs. 1,000. Disabled people who do not fall into any of these categories don't receive any allowances. Again, the cash transfer depends on the availability of funds for local governments. Poverty has not been taken into consideration when providing allowances. Generally, the allowances to 'highly disabled' persons are distributed on the basis of political access.

Santhals' traditional institutions are active even today in managing the community's internal affairs, justice dispensation, rituals and festivals, and dealing with strangers and outsiders, but their suggestions and advice are not taken into consideration by the authorities when making decisions concerning them. Community conflicts, family feuds, neighborhood dissentions, marriage disputes, intra-group fighting, and other cases are resolved by traditional Santhal institutions because they cannot approach formal judicial institutions, which are culturally incompatible and financially unaffordable to them. Santhals never ignore their traditional institutions, though they are not recognized by the government. In Mustang and Manang districts, people do not go to the courts to access justice because local traditional institutions dispense justice to all according to their customary laws, and no one avoids the verdict of those institutions. For justice delivery, Tharu traditional institutions in far west Nepal are also active, though local government officials are not favorable to them.

134 Ibid.
135 Majhi, key informant/researcher

Indigenous peoples are not represented proportionately to their population in local-level governments. Huge inequality appears in local representation as well as in provincial and federal government institutions. From the perspective of power distribution, there is a stark inequality of inclusion: core positions are captured by members of traditionally dominant groups, and peripheral positions are given to members of subordinate groups at the generosity of dominant group leaders.

Indigenous peoples have not taken the SDGs seriously because of their experiences of deception in development. The high-sounding words like nation-building, modernization, industrialization, democracy, poverty alleviation, infrastructure development, environmental protection, education, health for all, and so on have always betrayed them. The misery brought about by land dispossession, alienation, and confiscation has not been addressed yet, whereas politically resourceful persons have amassed lands during a short period and became affluent class overnight who were already superior caste people. They have heard of the of the Millennium Development Goals, and Nepal claimed most of the goals were achieved. But Indigenous peoples were indifferent to goals, as development actions never reached them except with some exception.

The conventional official sources of data for Nepal are decennial population and housing censuses, Nepal living standards surveys, demographic and health surveys, multiple indicator cluster surveys, labor force surveys, household income and expenditure surveys, agricultural surveys, and other surveys conducted by CBS. Administrative data sources include Vital Registration, Nepal Rastra Bank data, customs offices' data, data of sectoral ministries, GIS and remote sensing data, and other management information systems frequently updated by sectoral ministries. The government rarely uses the data from social inclusion surveys conducted by the Central Department of Anthropology at Tribhuvan University with the cooperation of the NPC. Most government data suffer from the same traditional weaknesses like periodicity (frequency and timeliness), disaggregation (by sex/gender, age, ethnicity/caste, religious affiliation, linguistic identity, disability, income status, location/ecological belt), standardization (definition, measurement, sampling design/sample size, and methodology), and quality assurance. Government agencies have not provided data disaggregated by sex, caste/ethnicity, religious affiliation, linguistic identity, disability, and wealth status, with some exceptions, since the last 15 years. That is why 'who is left behind' is not known. Indigenous peoples have also relied on their own sources of data and information to understand their own status.

Quantitative information received from 20 districts of Nepal and recently updated community-based data from Indigenous Navigator, Nepal, show that half of the population of 90 percent of Indigenous groups is experiencing extreme poverty, and about 80 percent of Indigenous persons are affected by some kinds of diseases. Only Newar and Thakali are well off, and Sherpa and Gurungs are doing better economically these days. Lapcha, Singsawa, Thudam, Thami, Hayu, Chepang, Majhi, Pahari, Bote, Darai, Larke, Byansi/Sauka, Raji, Santhal, Kisan, Munda, Koche, Meche, Jhangad/Uraun, Gangain, Tajpuriya, and Dhanuk are far below the median-income groups. Extensive field information divulges that about 80 percent of Indigenous children have no access to quality education (well-equipped schools with good education) due to the heavy expenses involved, and 75 percent of young people aged 5–24 have not completed 10 years of education. They rarely fall under scholarship coverage, and less than 5 percent of educated young people have completed tertiary education. In terms of educational attainment, they are lagging far behind traditionally advanced groups with the rise in levels of education. Vocational and technical education institutes are mostly in the private sector; government institutes are very few. Private institutes are usually beyond the reach of Indigenous young people because of expensive education. Their participation in higher technical and vocational education is disproportionately

low. About 90 percent of the Indigenous workforce has not received vocational and technical training suitable for the labor market. Because of their low capability, their entry into productive employment and decent jobs is minimal.

A large proportion of Indigenous peoples in high-altitude settlements are still facing acute problems of basic water shortage. Indigenous Navigator data show that less than 15 percent of Indigenous households are using liquid petroleum gas (LPG) for cooking and heating, and the majority are still depending on solid fuels. It is also found that 70 percent of the Indigenous work force is underemployed. Very few Indigenous youths had access to financial services like credit facilities or loans to start businesses or some enterprises because of a lack of political linkages within the past half a decade. Indigenous peoples occupied about 14 percent of government jobs (both gazetted and non-gazetted positions) in 2019, and about 8 percent of them were gazetted officers. This is significant progress compared to those of a decade ago, as seen in the recently published data, which is substantiated to a considerable extent by the field information. Indigenous peoples' representation in state organs is satisfactory thanks to the inclusive provisions in the Constitution and concerned laws. But several minority Indigenous groups have not been represented as expected. Democratic politics naturally counts population strength and population concentration in electoral constituencies, and the rules and norms of inclusion have not succeeded in discontinuing the marginalization of minority groups or traditionally excluded groups. Corruption is rampant in the judiciary and administrative organs. Because of corruption, politicization, and evolving malpractice within the judiciary, justice is becoming inaccessible, unaffordable, and inopportune. Despite their significance in the state structures of Indigenous peoples, their representation in the command posts of the state is almost nil. The already affluent class of people is benefiting most from increased development investments and expansion of opportunities, and the deprived people have to remain satisfied whatever trickles down from the top. In sum, Indigenous peoples are just above the Dalit and backward Madhesi groups and below the Khas-Arya groups in all counts**.**

4.2 Causes ofIndigenous peoples' plights/predicaments

4.2.1 Existing state of Indigenous peoples

All problems have their causes. For a better understanding of the problems or plights of Indigenous peoples, the factors or causes that led to the existing dismal state of Indigenous peoples need to be properly documented and elucidated. Indigenous peoples' rampant poverty, widespread hunger, non-access to economic and natural resources, poor health, low level of educational attainment; near extinction of their languages, cultures, customs, ways of life, religions and destruction of heritage sites and objects and artifacts; increasing landlessness, poor housing and sanitation; marginalization and discrimination of their women; high unemployment rate; degraded social status; environmental destruction of their ancestral territories, immense sufferings from natural disasters; and persistent injustices and their exclusion from the state institutions are some of the manifestations of their enduring plights hardly changed in the last one century.

4.2.2 Causes of Indigenous peoples' plights and problems

4.2.2.1 Immediate causes

Immediate causes are obvious and direct causes for the occurrence of Indigenous peoples' plights and problems. The immediate causes are apparent: (i) continuation of traditional modes of domination because of lack of transformation of traditional state structure in the real sense according to the aspirations of the subordinated peoples; (ii) non-recognition of Indigenous peoples' rights; (iii) discriminatory state institutions, legislations and actions due to insensitivity of political leaders of major political parties towards historically oppressed peoples; (iv) persistence of untouchability, caste norms and female heteronomy (subjugation) ; (v) continuation of unequitable and unjust distributions of productive resources, opportunities, services and social base of self-respect and viewing Indigenous peoples as underclass (past labeling as Matwali or alcohol drinkers) not counting as rights holders and perpetuation of unequal power relations between them and former Tagadhari (sacred thread wearers, higher holy castes) groups, now named Khas-Arya, by the present discriminatory Constitution promulgated in 2015; (vi) weak/ poor securalism and multiculturalism; (vii) cultural and epistemic colonization of Indigenous peoples' ways of thinking, viewing, perceiving and judging; observing and analyzing situations, issues and problems; understanding and examining state of cultures, customs, languages, oral and scripted literature, traditional knowledge and methods of inter-generational knowledge transmission, religions, ontological positions, distinct philosophies and ideologies (collectivism, communitarianism, reciprocity, complementarity, compassion, good and evil, sacred and profane, immaculate/unsullied governance, etc.); and so on; and (viii) politicization and manipulation of Indigenous peoples' concerns, issues, problems and demands by political parties for the their benefits. The political, social, and economic transformation has been confined to the speeches of political leaders. The distribution of state powers and resources barely crosses the traditional vertical and horizontal boundaries.

The major causes of Indigenous peoples' existing state of lagging behind, as discussed above, can be represented in the form of a pyramid, from immediate causes at the top or surface level to deep-level root causes (see Figure 1: The causes of the plights of Indigenous peoples).

4.2.2.2 Underlying causes

The immediate causes are the derivatives of the underlying causes. Underlying causes are (i) loss of autonomy, self-rule, and territories; (ii) strengthening autocratic rule; (iii) destruction of traditional institutions and customary laws; (iv) institutionalization of slavery of subjugated, poor, and rebellious people; (v) land confiscation, dispossession, alienation, and displacement; (vi) restrictions on traditional access of Indigenous peoples to natural resources; (vii) economic exploitation and marginalization; and (viii) imposition of feudalism to displace Indigenous economy. Likewise, (ix) hierarchical division of egalitarian society; (x) entrenchment of untouchabilty for social segregation and descent purity, (xi) institutionalization of female heteronomy/ subordination: (xii) entrenchment of caste-based hierarchical access to power, resources, privileges, rights and freedoms and benefits and burdens; (xiii) enforcement of caste appropriate social values, norms and behaviors; (xiv) institutionalization of Brahminism/ Brahmanocracy; ((xv) Brahmanic ritual occupancy of Indigenous areas; (xvi) systematic destruction of Indigenous belief systems and rituals; (xvii) suppression of non-Hindus; (xviii) ruthless ban and cruel punishment on cow slaughter and beef eating are also underlying causes evolved from root causes. Similarly, other vigorous underlying causes include (ix) destruction of Indigenous identities, territories and ethno-

histories; (xx) suppression of diversity to establish caste-core (Brahman-Chhetri) hegemony; (xxi) nationalization of natural resources that were owned, used, controlled and managed by Indigenous peoples; (xxiii) destruction of cultures, languages, symbols, artefacts, documents, and other cultural and natural heritages to build mono-cultural, monolingual country (xxiv) suppression of political opponents to strengthen repressive regime and (xxv) enforcement of official nationalism of non-national groups/caste core. The disposition of traditional dominant ruling groups and castes, crucial policy designers, has been exhibited in the form of resistance to change the rules of the game according to the changed context. Some level of hierarchical system is deeply embedded in the hearts and minds of dominant groups. The ideology of Brahminism, which cannot be replaced by modern political ideologies, innately nourishes their disposition and outlook. The present Constitution and several existing laws are their creation, which have entrenched them again to remain adamant in their traditional position. The discriminatory Constitution of Nepal promulgated in 2015[136] and the discriminatory laws and policies (past and present) in operation are basic underlying causes that, in turn, condition and nurture the disposition and outlook of ruling elites. These underlying causes are the upshots of root causes.

4.2.2.3 Root causes

Root causes are most complex, both processual and structural—the products of ontological, religious, political, social, cultural, and economic motives, interests, and visions of traditional dominant caste elites and also, in some way, their perception of eventual threats to their long-term survival. The oppressive state structures and unjust political, economic, social, cultural, and religious policies, processes, and actions, which are dealt with in the subsequent sections, are the root causes of the plights and problems such as political subjugation, physical annihilation, land dispossession and confiscation, economic exploitation and marginalization, social exclusion, cultural destruction, Hinduization, and religious repression that compelled them to live in or with poverty, hunger, ignorance or illiteracy, ill-health, indignity, and misery.

Scattered archaeological evidence and mythical narratives reveal that the ancestors of Indigenous peoples (also called Indigenous nationalities or Adivasi Janajati) developed Neolithic culture in the Cis-Himalayan regions some eight thousand years ago. As hunters and gatherers, they occupied vast swathes of the southerly Himalayas, rich in natural resources, where they gradually developed their ancestral territories. It is claimed that these peoples spread from the Himalayas to the Tarai region with their Neolithic culture from 3000 BCE onwards and started herding and sedentary agriculture along with the practice of shifting cultivation by 2000 BCE in this region[137]. They gradually developed distinct cultures in different parts of the region and ruled over Kathmandu Valley (300 BCE to 300 AD[138]) and adjoining areas in the first millennium BC. They have historical continuity with the pre-Gorkha invasion sovereign or autonomous societies and states or chiefdoms and have been experiencing oppression, subjugation, dispossession, forced assimilation, domination, and various forms of injustice and disadvantage since the last two and a half centuries after the colonization of their states or ancestral homelands. During the early years of Gorkha expansion (1768–2014), the Gorkhali state authority called 'Bhari Bokne Jat (load carrying castes) to some of these subjugated Indigenous peoples, and later, in the first

136 For an analytical discussion on the discriminatory provisions of the Constitution (11 articles against Indigenous peoples, 23 articles discriminatory against Indigenous peoples, 49 articles exclusionary to Indigenous peoples, and 5 articles for retaining single (high) caste supremacy, see Limbu et al. (2016).

137 For summary discussion, see Whelpton 2005: 8–18.

138 Most historians agree that the Kirat dynasty, an indigenous nation, ruled over Kathmandu Valley and adjoining areas from 300 BC to 300 AD. Available chronicles claim that the Gopal dynasty, a dynasty of cow-herders, and the Mahipal dynasty, a dynasty of buffalo-herders, were indigenous groups that ruled over this land prior to the Kirat dynasty for millennia.

half of the nineteenth century, they were called 'Praja" (subjects in the sense of porters of the government or servants of the royal palace), a state-ascribed identity that prevailed till the end of monarchy in 2008. By the middle of the nineteenth century, the government began to call them Matwali, alcohol-drinking castes (mostly enslavable and a few non-enslavable), under the hierarchical caste system formally enforced through the Country Code of 1854. The Government of Nepal has recently recognized 59 Matawali groups (two of which have already disappeared) as Indigenous nationalities, that is, Indigenous peoples, by enacting the National Foundation for Development of Indigenous Nationalities Act, 2002, under the pressure of Indigenous peoples' organizations (IPOs), and the rest of the of the groups are still struggling for substantive politico-juridical recognition. Indigenous nationalities and Indigenous peoples are used interchangeably in Nepal today to denote the same Indigenous ethnic, tribal, or national groups.

Indigenous peoples were the primary victims of Nepali state building and later nation-state building manifested in Hinduization, nationalization, forced assimilation, elimination of local and Indigenous autonomy and customary legal systems, seizure of communal ownership of lands, forests, pastures, rivers, lakes, and other natural resources, and deprivation from development benefits (education, health, and other goods and services, trade and commerce, and other economic activities, infrastructure development, and so on).

They are the worst victims of absolutist monarchy (1768–1844, 1961–1990), the autocratic Rana regime (1844–1951), and Brahmanocracy (a system of governance based on caste hierarchy, that is, Brahman/Chhetri supremacy). Political institutions and social structure entrenched in the last two hundred and fifty years have rendered them disempowered, disadvantaged, discriminated against, and excluded from rights, resources, goods, and services, as well as participation in economic, social, cultural, and political arenas.

Indigenous peoples and nationalities had their own traditional social, cultural, religious, political, and economic institutions that guided their ways of life; managed community affairs and natural resources, including lands; maintained cultures and customs; protected traditional values, norms, religions, and philosophies; transmitted ancient myths, narratives, histories, literature, wisdoms, and knowledge; promoted languages; maintained community solidarity; and defended their societies from external aggressions of various sorts and inspired them to resist state oppressions. These rich heritages were destroyed in the last two and a half centuries in the course of Gorkha expansion and Nepali nation-state building; however, their remnants are still surviving in rudimentary forms today. Indigenous peoples are trying to revive them since the last half a century and have started to get organized in a new way also in the democratic era (1950s), but the efforts were nipped in the bud during the Panchayat era (1961-1990). However, they did not abandon the efforts of forming organizations to face the new contemporary challenges of democratization of the country, the end of Brahman-Chhetri authoritarianism, and the and the elimination of discrimination based on ethnicity, language, religion, sex/gender, and place of residence. A Vehement objection was made by Gopal Gurung against caste rule by publishing a book, The Hidden Truth of Nepalese Politics, in 1985[139]. The attempts intensified after the reinstatement of multiparty democracy in 1990, as the democratic environment became comparatively favorable for forming social organizations and articulating grievances. Political parties like the National Mongol Organization (NMO), founded by Gopal Gurung; the National Liberation Front, founded by M.S. Thapa and Gore Bahadur Khapangi; and the Nepal Janajati Party, organized by Kajiman

139 The author, Gopal Gurung, was imprisoned immediately for writing and publishing the book and released only after the restoration of multi-party democracy in 1990. After his release, he immediately organized a political party named the Mongol National Organization. For a detailed discussion, see Hangen, 2010.

Kandangwa, Khagendra Jung Gurung, and others surfaced to challenge Brahman-Chhetri political hegemony under the rubric of democracy.

Some Indigenous people's organizations (IPOs) appeared in the early 1990s and formed the Nepal Federation of Indigenous Nationalities (NEFIN), a federation of Indigenous IPOs, in early 1991. It has 56 affiliated IPOs as members as of now. IPOs, including NEFIN, have been engaging in Indigenous peoples' rights advocacy, capacity enhancement of Indigenous activists, and protection and promotion of Indigenous cultures, customs, traditions, ways of life, institutions, languages, cultural heritage, arts, knowledge, and religions. Several Indigenous cultural, linguistic, religious, and civil society institutions have appeared in the last three decades. All of them have played an active role in making Nepal a secular, multicultural, multi-ethnic, multi-lingual, inclusive state from a mono-cultural, mono-linguistic, exclusionary Hindu kingdom. As a result of their advocacy, the Government of Nepal ratified the ILO Convention (No. 169) Concerning Indigenous and Tribal Peoples in Independent Countries, known as ILO C. 169, and the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous peoples (UNDRIP) in 2007.

It has been attempted here to present brief descriptions of historical processes that Indigenous peoples experienced for the purpose of analyzing one of the 'hardest cases' of injustice[140] that placed them in a disadvantaged and disempowered position, shaped their life chances, and affected their life conditions till today. It is also discussed here the contemporary issues and problems faced by these peoples that need to be addressed judiciously and sensibly in the context of achieving the SDGs.

State structures, actions, and historical experiences of Indigenous peoples or nationalities are preserved in (i) historical documents, archives, manuscripts, and other materials of archeological and historical value; (ii) living collective memories of the past sustained by words of mouth (oral tradition); (iii) cultural narratives, expressions, symbols, and rituals of Indigenous peoples or nationalities; and (iv) publications on anthropological and sociological studies. Literature has burgeoned in recent decades on the analyses and interpretations of such documentary evidence, scripted oral histories, and cultural narratives. Recent publications on socio-economic studies and development impact assessments shed light on the current cumulative impacts of state policies and actions on diverse groups of people, including structurally subordinate Indigenous peoples, Dalits (former untouchables), and others. This report particularly focuses on Indigenous peoples. Some of the socio-political structures, state actions, and historical processes that are the root causes of the plights and problems of Indigenous peoples are numerous, but only some of them have been elucidated in the following four major areas:

4.2.2.4 Historical sovereign status as source of oppression, subjugation and domination

Nepal was formed by the forceful annexation of about five dozen small states or kingdoms by Gorkhali conquerors by the late eighteenth century. Wide variations exist in the historical experiences of oppressions and injustices of Indigenous peoples and other subjugated people in the course of building the modern Nepali state; however, the nature, intensities, and patterns of oppressions and injustices experienced by Indigenous peoples have remained almost the same for most of the groups. Khasas, believed to have first penetrated Himalayas west of present Nepal around 1000 BC and reached the Karnali basin early in the first millennium AD, had established their kingdom, Khasan, in early second millennium that covered about the areas of 142,000 square

140 'Hardest cases' of injustice, according to Brooke Ackerly (2013: 27–51), are 'cases' of injustice suffered from multiple harms but are invisible and are not properly analyzed or systematically inquired into, and so, not well understood and not attended to.

kilometer at the apogee of its career (fourteenth century) whose monarchs were called Challa, later Malla, which was disintegrated into Baisi Rajyas (twenty-two states) around the beginning of fifteenth century when Brahmans and Rajputs (Thakuris) developed their own petty principalities after having received and enjoyed decades of state patronage, large-scale land assignments, and tax collection and local/regional administrative and judicial powers from Buddhist Malla kings during their reign (Whelpton 2005:8-9, 22, 26; Pradhan 1991: 15-20). The Khasa kingdom at the peak of its power and expansion (13th to 14th century), extending from Garhwal-Kumaon in the west to Gandaki River in the east and West Tibet/Purang in the north to Siwalik range in the south, was divided into two regions, Khasan in the south and Jadan in the north[141]. Jadan is the historical toponym of the territory probably given by Khasa authorities inhabited by Tibetanids/Tabitanoids (Bhotias) living there through ages, and this region was also known as Bhot des or Bhotant[142]. It lost its sovereign status sometime in the thirteenth century, though it enjoyed autonomy for the last few decades because of topographical difficulties of governability by the central government.

Magar histories and cultural narratives divulge that independent, sovereign Magarant (Magar country), a confederacy[143] of small republics, chiefdoms and kingdoms/ principalities, mostly segmentary political structures organized by kinship /ethnic ties, separate or sometimes shared territories, and administrative functions, extending east of Gandaki region to Kathmandu Valley, lost its independence and sovereignty when the Thakuris/ Rajputs and their soldiers (Chhetris), Brahmans and artisans and their descendants gradually swamped this territory by fourteenth century to fifteenth century and Thakuris/Rajputs succeeded somehow to become kings in some areas, who eventually defeated Magar leaders/ chiefs or kings around the fifteenth century and emerged Chaubisi Rajyas (twenty-four kingdoms), as they were weak during this stage of development of state system due to their lack of unity, absence of ethnic solidarity, presence of clan rivalries, matrimonial relations with Thakuris and Khasas[144], ritual friendship, Indigenous system of annual selection of kings/chiefs, increasing socio-economic and political contacts with Khasan, growing influences of Hindu Aryan culture and adoption of Hindu religion by powerful Magar kings[145]. The northern region of the Kaligandaki River, to the north of Magarant, was ruled by the league of Gyu Rong (nine chiefs) of Gurung/Tamu[146].

After the dethronement of Ghale kings from the kingdoms of Lamjung and Gorkha that extended north of Magarant by Thakuri kings with the alliance of certain sections of Tamu and Magar, Tamu-mai-hyula (Tamuwan), Tamu country, lost its sovereign identity for ever in the sixteenth century[147].

141 See Pradhan, 1991: 15-20.

142 Burghart 1996:236, 244. Bhot is recognized as both people and a place (*Pradesha*) (Ibid., p. 252).

143 The histories and cultural narratives of Magars, Tamangs, Khambus (Rais), Limbus, and Tharus reveal that confederacy is an ancient Indigenous political institution. It is a confederation of states as understood in modern times; additionally, it connotes, at the same time, the geography of common ancestors, common origins, and shared cultural areas as well. Tibetan history also reveals the concept of 'cluster of border kings', close to the concept of 'confederacy' (see Tamang 2008:84–86).Common sub-tribal or clan names such as Thapa, Rana, Budhathoki, Roka, etc. bear the testimony of matrimonial relations between Magar and Khasa, upgraded as Chhetri (amalgamation between two races or tribes), which were most frequent. The process has lately stopped as the conversion of Mongoloid hill tribes into Chhetri was discontinued (Pradhan 1991:36).

144 Whelpton argues that the caste boundary between Magars and Khasas was fluid till the eighteenth century, and so Karkpatrick, who visited Nepal in 1793, referred to 'Khasa and Magar tribes' as 'Chhetri class' (Wheplton 2005: 32).

145 Lecomte-Tilouine 2009: 61, 91–99; Pradhan 1991; Hamilton 1819. 'The Sena rulers of Palpa and Makwanpur are referred to as Magars in documents from the Kathmandu Valley and from Sikkim. The Shahs of Gorkha were also sometimes described as Magars, and the names Kancha (Khancha Khan) and Micha (Micha Khan), which occur in the genealogy linking the dynasty to the brother of a Chittaur ruler, perhaps support this. The ruler of Baldeng (near present-day Butwal), overthrown by Palpa and other Chaubisi states around 1700, was also supposedly a Magar' (Whelpton 2005:23).

146 Mabuhang 2012: 39

147 Tamu or Gurung territory was repeatedly invaded from the fourteenth century and Drabya Shah had seized Gorkha (strategic part of the territory) from Tamu king (Ghale) in 1559 with the support of hordes of migrants led by Narayan Aryal, a Brahman from Isma, Sarveshwar Khanal, also a Brahman from Argha, Ganesh Pande and Bhagirath Pantha, two Brahmans from Kumaon,

Kathmandu Valley has the longest recorded history (more than two thousand years) of rise and fall of kingdoms and royal dynasties. Around the Valley, Tamang kingdoms had flourished since the beginning of the first millennium AD[148]. After the conquest of Makwanpur, Hariharpur, Chaudandi, kingdoms of Magar kings in 1762 on the south and south east of Kathmandu Valley and capture of small principalities in the north-east of Kathmandu Valley like Sanga-Jong (1752), Banepa (Bhonta), Palanchok and Kabhre, Dhulikel, Naldum/Nagarkot (1754), Temal (18 September 1762), Bigu, strategic locations of Gyalbo Chyungi- Circle of Twelve Tamang Kingdoms, called Mang-yul, a region between Bod-yul (Tibet) and Bal-yul (Kathmandu)[149] (now known as Tamangsaling/ Tamsaling) and Chaukot (Near Kirant) in 1762-1763 and particularly after the fall of Kirtipur in 1766 and years of blockade and notorious 'punitive expedition' of defeated people Gorkhali invaders/ army succeeded to defeat the kings of Kathmandu Valley, lands of cross country business and civilization, in 1769 (see Box 4). Since then, Newar have had the feeling that sovereign Newar people became the subjects of alien rulers forever.

Box 4: Gorkhali atrocities against people of the defeated kingdoms

After the fall of Kirtipur, Prithvinarayan Sah ordered 'the principal inhabitants of the town (Kirtipur)' to be 'put to death' and 'to cut off the noses and lips of everyone, even the infants, who were not found in the arms of their mothers'. Father Giuseppe, who visited Nepal in 1769, adds that Prithvinarayan also ordered'all the noses and lips that had been cut off to be preserved, that might ascertain how many souls there were, and to change the name of the town Naskatapur, which signifies the town of cut-noses' and says that 'Father Michael Angelo had intercepted on behalf of the inhabitants, many of whom killed themselves in despair, and 'others came in great bodies to us in search of medicines. He further adds, 'It was most shocking to see many living people with teeth and noses resembling the skulls of the deceased.' Kirkpatrick, who visited Nepal in 1992, 'had seen a remarkable number of porters with cut-noses'. A paper in the Hodgson Collection (Vol. 52 No. 47) 'describes that the noses weighed 12 seers and 1 tola and that 865 people lost their noses'. Though some Nepali historians are skeptic about this horrendous incident, there are testimonies to corroborate this historical fact beyond doubt. For example, an old author, Sundaranand, in his Triratna Soundarya Gatha'(1839), relates that after the occupation of Kathmandu, when the village of Chopur rebelled, Prithvinayan punished the villagers by cutting of their hands'; 'the hand and also the nose, as in the case of Kirtipur, of every one of the villages of Chopur were chopped off'. ' Folk memory carried down through generations still recounts the macabre incident (Pradhan 1991: 101-102).

Keshav Bohra, a Chhetri from Salyan and Gangaram Rana, a Magar from neighborhood and a few occupational castes such as Kami, Damai and Sarki who played crucial roles in colonizing the land between Marshyngdi and Chepe and seizing Gorkha was made possible by creating division within Gurung /Tamu (Char Jat and Sora Jat) under the influence of Hinduism, building alliance with Hinduized groups like Lamchhane and Kon (Pradhan 1991: 25-26, 36-38). Gorkha Palace permanently rewarded these groups as members of Tharghar (the Royal Advisory Council), except Gurung and occupational castes.

148 For historical discussion on Tamang kingdoms, see Tamang 2008: 68-87.

149 See Tamang (2008) for historical accounts of Gyalbo-Chyungi, the Circle (Confederacy) of Twelve Tamang Kings that waged wars with Gorkha Kings since the late seventeenth century and reached its climax during 1743 to 1763. His analytical description of the Tamang nation, the Gorkha conquest of Tamang territory, and the Tamang movement against Gorkhali subjugation and dominance is quite illuminating and inspiring.

All the small surrounding states of Koinch (Wallo Kirant/Near Kirant) and Khambuwan (Majh Kirant/Central Kirant) could not stall the advance of a well-organized modern Gorkhali army

equipped with modern firearms and secretly cooperated by Brahmans and Khasas already settled there. The troupes of Namsing Rai and Mahendrasingh Rai had tried to resist the eastward move of the Gorkhali army in 1763 but could not succeed. In Majh Kirat, Khambu leaders Chatin Raya of Rawakhola and Atal Raya of Penakhola offered stiff opposition that inflicted heavy casualties on both sides but failed to block the invading army due to further supply of arms and ammunition (Pradhan 1991:115). Khambu king Ulinghangand Walinghang fought for seven years with the Gorkhali army around the Tamakosi River but were subdued in 1773[150]. The fall of Chaudandi, Sena kingdom of Majh Kirat, because of the betrayal of a royal priest belonging to Pokhrel Bahun[151] of Kharpa, eastern bank of the Dudhkosi River, left Kirat chiefs without recourse to effective war. After a long war, Gorkhali king succeeded to content a section of Limbu kings/leaders (Hang) of Limbuwan, Pallo Kirant (Far Kirant), and came in treaty agreement with them[152] after the fall of Bijayapur, Sena capital of the far east, Buddhikarna Raya as its de facto ruler since 1769. The then Bijayapur was protected by self-governing Limbus (Limbuwan confederacy), but it was already under the control of higher-level Khas Chhetri civil servants and military officers and the heavy influence of wealthy, landed gentry of Brahmans as key advisors, senior officials, clerks, interpreters/translators, and negotiators, the fall of which brought an end to eastward Gorkha expansion[153]. The treaty agreement, known as Lal Mohar (Royal Red Seal) of 1774 (1831 BS), had guaranteed retention of customary land rights, cultural autonomy, customary laws, traditional judicial institutions and practices, the right to natural resources, and customary self-government rights to Limbus of Pallo Kirat Limbuwan[154]. In the west, the expansion expedition was effective after the death of Prithvinarayan Shah, extending as far as the Kumaun region, which was continued till the Treaty of Sugauly (1814-16) had thwarted it.

Inner Tarai (Chitwan, Nawalparasi, Dang-Deokhuri, Surkhet, Udayapur, and other dun valleys) and Tarai (Southern plain areas) were less habitable areas till the last half a century, and a malarial, impenetrable, dense forest of Tarai, about nine hundred kilometers long and a few kilometers to fifty-three kilometers wide, served as a bulwark for the protection of hill rulers from powerful monarchs and emperors of the Southern Plain, which was sparsely populated. Majhi, Bote, Darai, Danuwar, and Tharu were the aboriginal inhabitants of Inner Tarai with their own traditional governance institutions and frequent contacts with hill people and Outer Tarai (Tarai) people. Tharu, Koche/Rajbansi, Meche, Dhimal, Gangain, and Tajpuriya were native peoples of Tarai (outer Tarai) who came into cultural contact with the people of the Gangetic Plain during the early first

150 Jovan Singh Limbu's manuscript in Limbu Language and Sirijonga script written in 1843 from Hodgson Papers, Vol. 85, pp. 132-149.

151 Hill Brahman is popularly known as Bahun in the hill region, whereas Tarai inhabitants call Tarai Brahman a Brahman. The term 'Brahman' has been used in historical and official documents for all types of Brahmans, irrespective of Brahmans of the hills and Tarai-Madhes, or West Nepal, Central Nepal, and East Nepal. The term Brahman or Bahun has been used as appropriate to the contextual discussion.

152 Jamun Raya of Chaubis, Fung Raya of Panchthar, Jang Raya of Atrai, Athang Raya of Phedap, Mongpahang Raya of Yangrup, Subhawanta Raya of Tamor, Raina Singh Raya of Mewa, Sridev Raya of Maiwa, Ashdev Raya of Chhathar, Harshamukhi Raya of Chainpur, and Sunuhang Raya of Arun were Limbu chiefs/kings of Pallo Kirat Limbuwan in 1774 (Sikkim source/chronicle of Sikkim rulers in the Limbu Language: Pradhan 1991:117). According to other sources: 10 kings/chiefs: (i) Jamun Raya of Chaubis, (ii) Fung Raya of Panchthar, (iii) Jang Raya of Atrai, (iv) Athang Raya of Phedap, (v) Dev Raya-Maiwakhola instead of Sridev, (vi) Sunuhang Raya instead of Ashdev Raya of Chhathar, (vii) Ashdev Raya of Phakphok, (viii) Jasmukhi Raya (Jairkarna Raya) of Chainpur, (ix) Subhawanta Raya of Tamor, and (x) Raina Singh Raya of Mewa. Among them, Jamun, Fung, Jang, Athang, and Dev were in favor of agreement with Gorkha (Ingnam and Ingnam 2013).

153 For elaborate discussion, see Chemjong 1969, Pradhan 1991: 106-149.

154 For detailed discussion, see Chemjong 2003/1966, Regmi 1978, Caplan 2000/1970, Shrestha 1985 (2042 BS), Sangraula 2010 (2067 BS), and Ingnam and Ingnam 2013 (2070 BS).

millennium AD. Indigenous Tharus, described as the only autochthonous group believed to be immune to malaria till recent decades, is the largest group living in Tarai land historically

and culturally known as Tharuhat (Tharuwan) with their Indigenous political, social, cultural, and economic institutions. In the middle of the first millennium BC, Magadh (Bihar) monarchs of Ganges Valley succeeded in subduing tribal confederacies of Tarai now belonging to Nepal after a long struggle, including Licchavis and Shakyas (Whelpton 2005: 18), and Tharus, being Indigenous

tribes, with their confederacy of republics also might have suffered beyond doubt as they claim to belong to the original Shakyas, whose most distinguished scion is Gautama Buddha[155]. But the Tarai environment made such subjugation impossible. There are sketchy indications that the confederacy of Tharu kingdoms, republics, or chiefdoms, Tharuhat/Tharuwan, Bhabar (inner Tarai), and Butwal of Magar chief Balihang or Baldhyang, lost its sovereign status to a considerable extent during the reign of Mukuna Sena (c. 1540–75), king of Palpa-Makawanpur, though the Senas had served first under Tharu (Pradhan 1991: 21, 54). Tharu chiefs were enjoying a great deal of autonomy as 'little kings' until the early eighteenth century, which was greatly reduced in the nineteenth century with the gradual consolidation of centralized state administration and changes in the system of revenue collection, particularly the land tax farming system of modern Nepal and the availability of migrant cultivators in Tarai (see Krauskoff 2000: 31-35; Guneratne 2002: 50-61). Prithvinarayan Shah, founder of modern Nepal, was the first king who took special interest in controlling Tarai, though malaria-infested, because of its revenue potentials (timber, animal resources, particularly elephants, paddy, and other agricultural produce, and trade transactions).

As the sovereign states, republics, chiefdoms, and confederacies of Indigenous peoples were crushed, (i) they were indiscriminately murdered, inhumanly oppressed, subjugated, and their property plundered by the brutal Gorkhali army and coercive administrative apparatus under patrimonial absolutist monarchy, whose higher echelon of bureaucracy was dominated by so-called high caste elites[156]. Thousands of them died in the defensive wars, thousands injured, limbs of thousands were amputated, thousands of them and their family members were enslaved, raped and many had to flee from their ancestral lands and territories to escape from execution, physical torture and slavery and enter into Indian territories beyond Nepal border and those who surrendered to new authorities had to live under complete subjugation deprived of the rights to life, family, property/wealth, land, natural resources (see Box 5), liberty, language, culture and religion as the conquered territories were completely colonized[157] by the new ferocious rulers for resource extraction, labor exaction, political domination, cultural assimilation and economic exploitation. Their human security was perpetually threatened and they had to survive in indignity and humiliation.

155 For the brief discussion on as descendent of original Shakyas, see Guneratne 2002: 154-157.

156 For detailed discussion, see Stiller 1998; Regmi 1995; Neupane 2000; Gurung 2007:3-53; Yadav 2007:95-124.

157 For the description of the processes of colonization by the Gorkha Empire with reference to the Kumaun region, see Regmi 1999.

Box 5: Plundering, looting, and extortion: A Gorkhali way of sustaining a large army

Apart from land grabbing, plundering, looting, and extortion of wealth and riches, 'a type of organized banditry' (Olson 1993, Riaz and Basu 2007 cited in Tamang 2008:117) was a usual way of sustaining and retaining large Gorkhali army, who were 'well-adapted to the use of arms but incapable of existing otherwise than war and raids' (Levi 2005 cited in Tamang 2008:117) for more than sixty years.' An order issued to Kirtiman Singh, Badal Singh, and Purnnanda Upadhyaya in 1791 for the establishment of three companies of soldiers in the region between Dudhkosi and Tista specifies mechanisms for the distribution of plundered wealth in the following ways: (i) food items found in the Lama Monasteries, Ghewa and houses of nobilities to be used immediately by the soldiers, (ii) 1/5th of the gold and silver jewelries including turquoise and pearl found anywhere to be given to soldiers who plundered and rest to be presented to the government, (iii) 1/6th of the Kuchin and high value cloths to be given to the concerned soldiers and the rest to be presented to the government, (iv) all copper, brass and other metal utensils including horses and mules to be distributed to soldiers who obtained, (v) 1/10 of yak tails to be given to soldiers who obtained and the rest to be presented to the government , and (vi) regarding cash, distribute to soldiers after setting aside portion of it to the government' (Sharma, Vaidya and Manandhar 1992:101 cited in Tamang 2008:117). The Gorkhali army, after long experiences (1743–1814) of war and raids (surprise attacks and looting, plundering, and extortion), had harbored the assumption that war itself supported the war, which was expressed in 1840 while arguing for waging war against British India in response to the king's opinion that the kingdom had no money to indulge in war at a time when six thousand soldiers had revolted in Kathmandu that was somehow brought under control (see Pradhan 1991:195). The cost of war was precariously heavy on the people of defeated countries.

With the annexation of their sovereign countries with modern Nepal, (ii) Indigenous peoples' autonomous system of governance and traditional regional/local political institutions were destroyed[158], and every effort was made to disempower and marginalize them. In the course of absolutist state building (iii) bureaucracy of high castes, the extension of traditional 'Tharghar[159] was consolidated and entrenched, excluding Indigenous peoplesand other dominated castes and ethnies and minority groups from participation in state organs with exception in the lower ranks or serviceable categories with the assumption that Nepal was the possession (Muluk) of the conquerors. With every measure of reforms and consolidation of centralized patriarchal administration (iv), ancestral territories/homelands of Indigenous peoples were decomposed

158 For documented details, see Regmi 1978 (Volumes I-IV). Anthropological and sociological studies conducted by foreign scholars abound on this subject.

159 Tharghar included six families/clan houses of Pande, Panta, Aryal, Rana, Khanal, and Bohora who had helped Drabya Shah (in 1559) to capture Gorkha, and Ram Shah (1606-1636), the influential king who introduced the first legal code in the hill region, popularly known as 'Ram Shah's Edict' that made tremendous impact upon surrounding areas to expand the influence of Gorkha, had constituted the Council of Gorkha of these Tharghar, including Chautariyas (royal brothers), which was retained till the active rule of Shah monarchs (by mid-nineteenth century). Prithvinarayan Shah (1743–1775), the founder of modern Nepal, had fully utilized it and had strengthened it further, including Basnet, Thapa, Baniya, Rokaya, Pathak, Khadka, Karki, Khawas, Kunwar, Bhandari, and some other Chhetri (Khatri) and Khasa groups apart from Bahun, Thakuri (Shah, Shahi), and Jaisi, later known as Bhardars (Chautariyas, Kajis, and Sardars), that laid the foundation for high caste rule or Brahmanocracy in Nepal (for details see Pradhan 1991, Stiller 1989/1968: 38-46; Regmi 1995 with Appendix II).

through new administrative divisions of the country to destroy primordial/historical ethno-territorial identity and primordial/historical toponyms were changed with a view to erase Indigenous love for homelands from the hearts and minds of the related peoples, kill their patriotic feelings, and obliterate their collective memories, and the administrative divisions of the country were carried out primarily to subdue Indigenous peoples and extract revenues from them. A new settlement policy was introduced (v) to encourage settlers to develop homesteads in the heavily populated areas of Indigenous peoples to minoritize them or decrease their demographic strength and cultural influence. Their (vi) traditional justice system was crushed and eliminated extensively, which made justice inaccessible, unaffordable, incomprehensive, culturally inappropriate, and perplexing to them, and they had to tolerate injustice without recourse. Indigenous peoples (vii) were dispossessed of their lands, particularly high crop yielding fields, and converted into tenants without occupancy rights, deprived of their ownership, use, and control of natural resources such as copper mining, iron mining, precious stone mining, salt extracting, fishing, hunting, herb collecting, etc. of their ancestral territories as Gorkhali rulers employed the doctrine of conquest to legitimate state usurpation of people's lands and resources therein against the long-established traditional principles of landholding.

The state structure has been developed in such a way in the last two hundred and fifty years that (viii) entrench the interests of high castes (caste core) and debase the rightful claims of the subordinated peoples, including Indigenous peoples, Dalits, Madhesis, and other subjugated groups (religious minorities, linguistic minorities, etc.), and the recent political changes (1951, 1990, 2006) claimed as democratic have failed to correct basic features of this well-entrenched exclusionary state structure. Because of the legacy of privileged access of caste core (dominant castes/higher castes) to power, valued resources and opportunities, and prestigious social status, they were privileged to label Indigenous peoples as disruptive, unpatriotic, disintegrationist, rebellious, and terrorist when their authority was challenged and rightful claims were made[160]. Because of the (ix) historical legacy of sovereign status of Indigenous peoples, the state has always treated Indigenous peoples as obstacles to national unity, territorial integrity, cultural homogeneity, and national sovereignty, and their relations with the state have remained strained, which have resulted in their perpetual political exclusion and subordination and social marginalization. Even in the so-called democratic era, democracy has become an illusion or empty dream for them; only their rulers frequently change, and they remain always subjects, not citizens.

4.2.2.5 Land dispossession and economic marginalization

Indigenous peoples were exercising customary rights on their lands and territories since they first settled down there permanently and started to cultivate the land and domesticate animals. Land was the primary source of securing necessities of life, shelters, means of domestication of animals and fowl, and space to spend leisure time with them. Natural resources like fruits, roots, vegetables, wild animals and birds, fish, etc. supplemented their various needs. Land as water, air, fire, ether, or space, according to Indigenous philosophical concepts, is a natural endowment for all living and non-living entities, and so Indigenous peoples considered it common property for the common use of the whole community, and none of the community members should be disadvantaged in the distribution of the benefits from this common resource. Communities usually allow households to use or cultivate, take care of, and control certain plots of land, and cultivators with mutual consent would provide a small share of the produce to community leaders to manage community affairs. As the societies became more politicized and kingdoms appeared

160 For the insightful discussion on the oppressive and predatory measures of the state, see Bhattachan 2000, 2008; Gurung 1985; Kramer 2003; Lawoti 2000; Neupane 2000; Gurung 2006/2007.

with their armies and other governing apparatuses and became capable of controlling certain territories, land became kings' property, and kings started to assign certain parcels of land to individuals as they pleased, appropriating communal and community land and displacing original cultivators at any time to generate income for their kingdoms to maintain royal families, palaces, armies, and other administrative staffs. Thus, land became personal property like commodities, buyable, sellable, and mortgageable.

Most of the established hill kings of the Southerly Himalayas had imitated the basic elements of the Hindu economy of the Ganges Plain since the middle of the first millennium AD, and by the beginning of the second millennium AD, they had accommodated some of the agrarian rules of the Mogul Empire, displacing gradually the tribal/Indigenous economy, and the introduction of a new land tenure system was part of that economy. An expert on the land tenure system of Nepal opines that 'State ownership of the land is an ancient Hindu institution sanctified both by law and by tradition' (Regmi 1978:18). One of the earliest records of land sale and mortgage in the Kathmandu Valley dates back to the tenth century, and transfers of land were normally from the lower castes to the higher ones (Whelpton 2005:26), which indicates that the transfer of lands from powerless Indigenous peoples and occupational menial castes to powerful, wealthy higher castes had already started in those days. Most powerful kings had distributed lands (parcels of land) of their kingdoms without much resistance to satisfy the priestly class (Brahmans) and ascetics (Sanyasis/Dasnamis) as Birta (lands granted to individuals by the state on a on a generally tax-free and inheritable basis[161]), or had sold them to propertied purchasers, mostly Brahmans (called Suna Birta) to meet their needs, and also had assigned large portions of land as Raikar (land under state landlordism, on which the state collects tax generally through intermediaries) for the return of a certain tribute or regular amount of allocated revenue. Earliest records reveal that Lichhavi rulers had provided land grants to Pasupatas and Saivite sects (priestly class to take care of temple of Pasupatinath temple) during the best period of their rule (fifth to seventh century) (Whelpton 2005: 26–27) that led to the emergence of granting lands to the temples and Brahmans by the states/kingdoms, known as Guthi land. Guthi is one of the oldest institutions of land tenure organized, established, or managed by the government, communities, or individuals for the maintenance and preservation of temples or monasteries, the performance of religious functions or rituals, the maintenance and renovation of paths and tracks, water taps and spouts, wells, inns, resting platforms, bridges, irrigation canals, cremation grounds, river- banks, etc., and the performance of community functions and other philanthropic works. Guthi lands are under government control today.

Land in the form of private property first appeared as Birta assigned to Brahmans, Chhetris, and Ascetics (mostly Kanphatta Jogis in Baisi and Chaubisi states) (Ibid. 27), and since the last fifteenth century on, Birta Grants have become pervasive in Khasa kingdoms, Sena kingdoms, Gorkha kingdoms, and Malla reigns in Kathmandu Valley[162]. Birta lands granted to Brahmans were usually covered in large areas, even in the old days. King Jaya Prakash Malla had granted Birta land to a Brahman in Kathmandu in 1764, amounting to 96 ropanis (12. 5 acres) of paddy fields (Regmi 1999/1972). Birta grants to dominant caste courtiers in later centuries were much larger in size and scale. Such large-scale assignment of land was possible only through the appropriation of cultivated lands by peasants, particularly local Indigenous peoples. Apart from state grants of land to individuals, the sale and mortgage of land, money lending and exorbitant interest rates, tenancy and sharecropping, rents on lands, practices of tax farming, compulsory and unpaid labor services and bonded labor, slavery, taxes and levies on trade and commerce, state monopolies on

161 For the explanation of Birta, Suna Birta, and Raikar, see Regmi 1978.

162 For illustrations, see Pradhan 1991: 17–20.

certain produce, and so on, were already in vogue by the seventeenth century in some kingdoms of Baisi and Chaubisi[163]. Feudal practices were borrowed from the Southern Plain. Ubiquitous practices of state land grant as Birta (often large in size of the holdings), state selling of lands, and mortgaging lands to individuals against cash payment have invariably benefited Brahmans, members of the nobility, and traders (Regmi 1999/1972: 21–22).

Brahmans and Bahuns were the primary beneficiaries of the system of buying and selling land, as they were the only monetized class because of the monopolized opportunity of accumulating ritual gifts in cash and other forms. In course of building kingdom of Nepal, Prithvinarayan Shah invigorated the same principles of kings of the pre-Gorkha period more rigorously and applied pervasively in his newly conquered territories that (i) all lands are the property of the king (kingdom), and king is the ultimate owner of the land, (ii) land is the prerogative of the crown, he can confiscate or appropriate land cultivated, controlled and owned by any person for any time and assign or distribute such land to any person at any time as he pleases, (iii) land, being main source of maintaining army and principle source of wealth and prestige, should not be remained fallow or non-productive, if local cultivators are not available settlers should be encouraged (Stiller 1995: 10, 40) and (iv) the king or kingdom is entitled to claim a share of the crop, around fifty percent, from the cultivator (Whelpton 2005:26). It was clear to him that land is economic power and security, and the more land he could control, the greater would be his income (Ibid., 40–41). During his reign, he classified land tenure into six categories following the past tradition: Raikar, Birta, Guthi, Sera (land assigned for the supply of agricultural produce for the palace), Rakam (land assigned as remuneration for the performance of functions of manual nature/load carrying), and Kipat (communal land/community-owned land)[164]. He had (i) confiscated lands under various types of tenure with the exception of some temples and of those who clandestinely provided various kinds of support to his war campaign and exerted every efforts for 'maximizing the area of state control over agricultural lands to provide land grants and assignments' for maintaining large army, (ii) rescinded ownership of Birta lands provided by previous regime and confiscated properties of Birta owners, except of those who provided money, material support and secret information as needed to him, (iii) assigned extensive lands so appropriated as Birta and Jagir (lands assigned to government officials/ functionaries as emolument) to military commanders[165], senior government employees, particularly belonging to Brahman, Thakuri and Chhetri, causing 'elimination of small free-hold cultivators' (see Box 6)[166], (iv) re distributed Raikar land and holders or cultivators of Raikar land were regulated as tenants, not as owners at the pleasure of the authority and raised the rents (tax or sharecrop) compared to past on such lands, (v) strengthened feudal institutions like rent receiving classes of Birta owners and Jagirdars, landlords, tax collectors and contractors, on whom local administrative and judicial powers rested and cultivators and hard-working, self-reliant people were degraded to serfs; and thus, close relationship between state and custodians of lands or cultivators ended forever, (vi) made homestead tax pervasive and various measures were introduced for revenue collection, including new ways of tax farming, (vii) abolished to a large extent Kipat land tenure system (customary communal land tenure/ownership, inalienable and non-transferable land to outside community members, collective ownership encompassing territory with surface and sub-surface resources, divisible only among clans or sub-tribes, entailing political, social, cultural,

163 King Ram Shah (1606-16360) of Gorkha had prescribed a rate on cash loans of 10 percent per year, indicating that the monetized economy had already begun and money lending was becoming pervasive.

164 For detailed information on Birta, Jagir, Raikar, Sera, Rakam, and Kipat lands, see Regmi 1978.

165 The number of soldiers in the Gorkha army was 1200 in 1769, which had risen to 2600–3400 by 1775 (Pradhan 1991:112), and the army consisted of mainly 'four clans of warriors: Brahman, Khas, Magar, and Thakuri' (from *Dibya Upadesh,* Stiller 1989/1968:40).

166 See Regmi 1999/1972: 54.

economic and religious autonomy[167]) enjoyed through ages, even recognized by Sena kings and Malla kings, by Majhis, Darai, Kumhales (Kumal), Ghale, Tamangs (Murmis), Bhotes, Newars, Paharis, Sunuwars, Thami (Thangmi), Chepang, Danuwars, Sherpa, and Rai Kirantis[168] (restored in 1793 to bring back absconded Rai Kirantis to save Majh-Kirant from being deserted and reclaim waste land) and retained Kipat system of Limbus, Yakkas, Lohorungs, Mewahang, Atpahariya, Bhote, Lapchas under an agreement with Limbus[169] for gaining support for newly established kingdom, and (viii) encouraged Gorkhali settlers, particularly Bahuns, Chhetris/Khasas and others from the west Nepal to occupy and reclaim waste lands as much as they can in newly conquered territories where Indigenous peoples were heavily concentrated.

Box 6: Gorkhali land grant and assignment policy

Mahesh C. Regmi (1999/1972) has succinctly presented the land grant and assignment policy of the state in this way: "The land grant and assignment policy followed by the Gorkhali rulers favored particular classes and communities in the society to the exclusion of others. They tended to be concentrated for the most part among Brahmans (Bahuns), Chhetris, and Thakuris, particularly from the western hill areas, who sustained the political authority of the new rulers. Gurungs, Magars, Tamangs, and Newars generally did not receive such favors. On the contrary, they suffered a gradual depletion of and/or encroachment on the lands they had obtained during previous regimes as a result of Birta grants and Jagir assignments. Large areas of lands held by Newars in Kathmandu and other towns were thus acquired for the construction of temples and other purposes, and they were given lands in exchange for less attractively located areas (p. 40). Birta and Jagir land grants entitled the beneficiaries to collect revenue from all sources in the area by them. In addition, they included the right to dispense justice and exact unpaid labor. Where the Jagir land assignments covered entire villages or divisions, they exacted payments in the form of not only agricultural commodities but also forest, mineral, and cottage industry products, animals, etc. A royal prince who had been assigned lands as Jagir in the Chharkabhot area of Dolpa district in 1799 obtained falcons, partridges, horses, sheep, blankets, and miscellaneous commodities produced in the Himalayan region. Birta incomes too were essentially of the same nature (pp. 40-41)."

Successors of Prithvinarayan Shah followed the same traditional principles relating to land and continued to abrogate the traditional system of community/collective ownership of land and conventionally accepted principle of first entitlement (title of the land to cultivator who first cultivated or to owner who first acquired without doing injustice to others) extensively and assigned huge areas of lands gained through conquest to dominant castes with the purpose

167 The Kipat system seems to be the remnant of an ancient Indigenous customary land tenure and management system, which Hindu rulers called it by this name. Kipat is neither a Nepali word nor an Indigenous word but must be a perverted word from an Indigenous language. For an illuminating discussion on the Kipat land tenure system, see Chemjong 2003/1966, Caplan 2000/1970, Regmi 1978: 29–31, 534–87, Forbes 1996, Shrestha 1985 (2042BS), Sangraula 2010 (2067BS), and Ingnam and Ingnam 2013 (2070BS).

168 There are also references to the Kipat lands of Magars and Gurungs that were most probably converted into Raikar, Birta, Jagir, and Guthi lands by the early eighteenth century as they forfeited their kingdoms, principalities, or republics.

169 Prithvinarayan Shah had decreed, "Enjoy your land from generation to generation, as long as it remains in existence... In case we confiscate your land, may our ancestral gods destroy our kingdom" (Source: Regmi 1999/1972: 50; see also Sangraula, 2010 (2067 BS), Annex 1:4 (Nepali version).

of supporting a large number of army and civil servants and sustaining capability to launch a war offensive. Huge areas of cultivated lands of Bhotyas (Tamangs) of Tamang territories, now known as Nuwakot, Kabhre, Dhading, Sindhupalchok, and Dolakha districts, were distributed to the families of Thapa, Pande, Pant, Kunwar, Basnet, Khadka, and Karki were designated Birta (tax-exempted land) soon after the Gorkha army took over the Tamang kingdoms (republics) by the mid-eighteenth century, and Indigenous peasants were automatically converted to tenants who had to pay half of their harvest to new landlords (Regmi 1978/1963, Tamang 2008:134–136). Prime Minister Bhimsen Thapa alone had received the Birta land grant of 3500 bigha (5600 acres/2345 hectares) in Mahottari, and Mathvar Singh Thapa had received the Birta grant of 9944 bigha (15,910.4 acres/6662.5 hectares) in Morang (Ingnam and Ingnam 2013/2070 BS:36). The Birta land granted to Rana ruling families alone covered 363,369 bighas (5,813.9 acres/2,434.7 hectares) of fertile land areas in Bara, Parsa, Saptari, Mahottari, Sunsari, and Jhapa districts by the time of Birta abolition in 1958 (Sangaula 2010/1957 BS:58). Abolition of Birta ownership of land was not confiscation of lands of Birta owners but was limited to abolition of land tax exemption and abolition of privileges of land owners or landlords of tax collection and local judicial rights, compulsory labor exaction from tenants, and arbitrary imposition of rent on tenant farmers by landlords. Documentary evidence abounds that land became a valuable commodity by the early nineteenth century to be appropriated, reclaimed, and redistributed selectively by the state to satisfy Bahun elites, members of nobility and army commanders (mainly from Rajput/Thakuri, Chhetri, Khasa, upgraded into Chhetri castes), other members of ruling families, and a few local elites like former princes, land tax collectors, and other forms of revenue collectors or contractors. Settlers were encouraged to settle down in conquered areas of the hills who had promised to pay or paid a small amount of tax or shown readiness to reclaim waste lands or clear forested lands for cultivation, pleased or served Jimmawals, Talukdars, or Amalis (revenue collection functionaries of hills, local authorities, or heads of the village councils) to allow cultivating certain plots of land, bought or mortgaged lands, paid certain money to landholders, or provided support to the government in various ways, and several settlers had received orders from the palace or central government directly to occupy and own certain areas of land[170] despite local resistance.

The government was sensitive and responsive to the complaints of the settlers, and the response naturally led to land alienation and ownership transfer, natural resource deprivation, and eventual disempowerment (Box 7). Immigrants, particularly from India, were also encouraged to settle in Tarai by providing various incentives like tax exemption, exemption from compulsory unpaid labor, etc. for certain years who cleared the forests and reclaimed waste lands in Tarai in the early nineteenth century, agrarian policies of tax farming to overcome labor shortages and attract famine-affected people of India, particularly from Bihar and Uttar Pradesh, and commercial policies of timber export that needed laborers capable of working in hot climates in the late nineteenth century also encouraged Indian migrants in large numbers to settle down in Tarai (Regmi 1978, 1999/1972; Gunaratne 2002: 27–31). Land tenure and agrarian policies remained always favorable to high-caste people until recent decades and produced landlords or feudals mostly from among them. Government attempts to make the land tenure system uniform in the past half century and complicated laws easily manipulated and unchecked fraud practices further caused alienation and erosion in customary land holdings. Indigenous peoples have always been the first victims of such historical processes of institutionalizing land tenure or ownership policies.

170 For analytical details, see Regmi 1978, 1999/1972, Caplan 2000/1970, Shrestha 1085 (2042 BS), Sangraula 2010 (2067 BS), and Ingnam and Ingnam 2013 (2070 BS).

The arable lands of the most Indigenous peoples, which they had inherited from their ancestors who had made them cultivable for the first time, establishing strong spiritual and cultural relationships with those lands, were usurped not only at the time of defeat of their states/mini-states or confederacies but also time and again, when the despotic rulers wanted to distribute lands to their courtiers, high-ranking employees, Bahuns, and other cronies[171] and implement the development projects of their interests and benefits.

Box 7: State promotion of settlers at the cost of Indigenous land holders

Some passages from the work of eminent historian and land tenure expert Mahesh C. Regmi (1999/1972: 52) are worth noting in this regard, which read: "Naturally, the Limbus protested against this encroachment on their customary rights over waste lands contained in their Kipat holdings. (Footnote: Disputes between Limbus and non-Limbu settlers occurred frequently as a result. In 1804, a dispute between a Limbu and a Brahman settler in Chainpur was decided in favor of the latter, and the judgment issued in this connection stated: 'Limbus do not tolerate Brahmans, but they shall not be allowed to displace any Brahman'.) But since their Kipat rights as a whole had been confirmed through royal guarantees, their protestations seem to have lacked vehemence. Kathmandu therefore felt itself strong enough to tell them in September 1811: "We have received reports that you refuse to let Khas, Magar, Brahman (and other) people from the hill regions settle on your lands. We have sent them to reclaim lands, which can be converted into paddy fields. In case any (Kipat owner) whose holdings contain irrigable lands that can be reclaimed as paddy fields... does not let hill people... he shall be awarded severe punishment." 'Hill people', later 'Parbate' referred to people of former Baisi states and Chaubisi states migrating eastward, and the nature and extent of punishment depended on the whims of the despotic rulers in those days.

Indigenous peoples who resisted land dispossession were executed, mutilated, or heavily fined, and their family members were made slaves and bonded laborers or forced to exile. Abolition of collective entitlement to lands and natural resources, dispossession of lands of original landholders or cultivators, and introduction of individual titling of plots of usurped lands to power holders, assuming the newly geographically unified country as a possession (Muluk) of the king[172] was the primary cause of land alienation and landlessness of Indigenous peoples. By the time of the last Kipat abolition in Pallo Kirant Limbuwn, east of the Arun_Koshi river and west of the Mechi river, in 1964 Kipat land covered only one-third of the total land areas (total areas under the Kipat system covered 11,655 sq. kilometers) of that region (Sangrula 2010/2067 BS: 257), and according to some conservative estimates, 80 percent of the Kipat lands were heavily mortgaged in almost unredeemable condition by that time. On the other hand, by 1958, Birta land granted mainly to Brahmans (Bahuns), Thakuris, Chhetris, and a few others at least covered 28.2 percent (conservative estimate) of the total cultivated areas of 5.9 million acres, and about half of the cultivated areas were Raikar land[173], which demonstrate the patterns of land alienation/transfer

171 For detailed discussion, see Regmi 1978, 1999/1972.

172 For the penetrating discussion on the newly acquired realm (*Desh*) as a possession (*Muluk*), see Burghart 1996: 68-87, 226-277.

173 Regmi 1978: 248. According to the statistics of Birta land areas by the end of the Rana regime (1951) referred to by Ingnam and Ingnam (2013:36), they covered 2103805 bigha (3,366,088 acres/ 1,409,549.5 hectares) and 1,945,665 ropani (252,936.5 acres/102,349.3 hectares), which is far higher than the figure presented by Regmi (1978:248). The total land area of Banke, Bardiya, Kailai, and Kanchanpur districts, restored back after 1857 as a reward for the support of Jang Bahdur to the British Government of India to suppress the Sepoy Mutiny, was

from Indigenous peoples and powerless peasants to powerful ruling caste cores.

Apart from land usurpation, the economic marginalization of Indigenous peoples since the formation of the Nepal Kingdom has been equally painful. The toll of state control over mineral resources was heavy on Indigenous peoples, as they were extracting minerals like copper, lead, iron, gold, cinnabar, and other minerals to some extent for meager cash income. They were forced to work in the mines for the government despite heavy levies. Restriction, regulation, and taxation of natural resources such as timber and other forest products like catechu, firewood, etc., wax, honey, musk, medicinal herbs, fisheries and fishing, birds (falcon, partridge, etc.), elephants, bison, rhinoceros, skins, and other body parts of wild (hunted) animals had adversely impacted the quality and way of life of Indigenous peoples of mountains, hills, and Tarai, which they were enjoying for ages. Several types of taxes and levies such as Saune Fagu Walak (bi-annual regular homestead levies), Harsha Bismat Walak (celebration or mourning homestead levies), Kaj Kalyan Walak (levies collected on festive or ceremonial occasions), Gadimubarak (levy imposed on the occasion of coronation), Chumawan (levy imposed for the performance of holy cord investiture ceremony in palace), Goddhuwa (levy imposed on the occasion of wedding ceremony of princess), fuel- wood levy, Darshan-Bhet levy (levy collected at the time of appointment and confirmation of civil and military employees), Salami levy (levies annually collected from local revenue collection functionaries and varied levies on occupations and use of communal facilities such as forests and sources of water[174] had further pushed them to misery as their sources of income had already been captured by the state officials and their favorites and government employment was beyond their access. Several Indigenous groups like Majhi, Kumal, Darai, Danuwar, Newar, Kushle, Tharu, Hayu, Sunuwar, Chepang, and others had to pay a levy every year to mendicants belonging to different sects (Jogi Mandali levy, Mahantamandali levy, Fakirnama levy, and other local levies) (Regmi 1999/1972:66), which placed additional burden on them. Indigenous peoples, who did not fully comply with Hindu religious practices, had to pay Nitikar (a levy imposed in consideration of the right to customary expiation for caste and sexual offenses) annually, whether or not they violated Hindu norms and practices. Compulsory, unpaid labor, known as Jhara Labor, had also further marginalized Indigenous peoples as they had to render mandatory, unpaid labor services for several days while constructing forts, constructing palaces, supplying commodities like charcoal in the palaces, working inside mines and doing stone, earth, and wood works outside the mines, constructing bridges, and carrying loads for government officials (see Box 8). Local tax functionaries and landlords could also acquire free labor from the tenants of their allocated areas.

Box 8: Jhara system: a system of free compulsory labor service

According to Mahesh C. Regmi (1999/1972:103–104), several orders were issued since the formation of modern Nepal for Jhara labor, which was continued till the early 1960s. In 1799, an order was issued to the officials of Tanahu for the construction of a royal palace at Gorkha, which stated: 'Every Kumhale (Kumal) family shall supply 10 earthen pitchers each. Majhis, Darais and other castes, who customarily carry loads, shall come along with spades, axes, knives, etc. All other castes shall... perform such work as is assigned to them by the officials deputed for the construction of the palace'. Another order issued

distributed to Rana families as Birta grants (Ingnam and Ingnam 2013:36) that substantiate later figures.

174 See Regmi 1999/1972: 60–68 for the discussion on various types of taxes and levies.

in 1806 at Kalleri in Dhading stipulated: 'Brahmans have traditionally been employed in check posts; Newars and others whose caste status permits them to work inside mines shall do so. Other castes shall be employed in stone, earth, and woodwork outside mines. Brahmans were granted full exemption from Jhara labor services (free compulsory labor services) on a general basis in 1813 (Regmi, ibid.). Load-carrying castes were later classified as 'Praja' (subjects) who belonged to Mongoloid communities such as Bhote (Tamang/Murmi), Chepang, Darai, Majhi, Hayu, Thangmi, Danuwar, Kumal, Sunuwar, Khambu (Rai), and Limbu and had to carry loads (doko boko), construct roads or tracks, and supply foods to mobile armed forces and various necessities like fodder, firewood, butter, paper, fruit, and other items to the palaces without remuneration under the Jhara system (Tamang 2008: 138–139).

The imposition of Jhara labor in Tamang territory could amount to up to six months in a year (Holmberg, March, and Tamang 1999, cited in Tamang 2008:140), and such labor was converted into a system of annual cash payment along with land tax per homestead since the mid-nineteenth century in far eastern Nepal, where labor exaction was not practical, which remained in practice till the last quarter of the twentieth century. Brahmans, military personnel, and government officials were exempted from such labor. Tharu served as bonded labor until 2001. Homestead tax and various kinds of taxes and levies, such as land tax, various types of royal levies, local levies, and judicial fines, without arable land and tangible income, created a lot of trouble for Indigenous peoples to sustain life. Various sources reveal that about one-third of the crops in the western hills and Tarai and one-half of the crops produced by Indigenous tenants went to the state treasury or to the purses of Jagirdars (Jagir land holders) in the form of levy or rent. Many Indigenous peoples had to flee to India, leaving their ancestral territories due to excessive taxation, rent, land alienation, pressures from moneylenders and slave owners, and unbearable caste rules and norms, which culminated in a large-scale mass exodus after the First World War.' The economic hardship and social discrimination as a result of the political, social, and economic domination and exploitation of the high caste Tagadhari (holy cord wearers/caste core) compelled a large section of Matawali of Mongoloid origin (Indigenous peoples/nationalities) with no option other than to emigrate to India or join the British Gurkha army (Pradhan 1991:20, Tamang 2008: 137–150).

The large majority of the custodians and owners of the lands became (i) marginal landholders within a few decades as they were colonized by new rulers and left most of them without traditional means of survival. With the strengthening of Nepal as a patrimonial authoritarian state, they were (ii) further deprived of their critical resources such as hunting and gathering, fishing, mining, shifting cultivation/horticulture, agro-pastoralism, pastoralism, handicrafts making, etc., and (iii) heavy compulsory unpaid labor and other forms of coerced labor (Jhara) to transport military equipment/arsenal, carry official mail, food and essential goods, and build materials for palaces and barracks, and heavy taxes of various forms were imposed on them. As the absolutist state building became more rigorous and feudal system was made pervasive (iv) tribal/Indigenous economy (collective title to land, communal labor maintaining reciprocity, that is, production relation based on symbiotic complementarity, lineage or communal mode of production, reciprocation of harvest presentations, caring/compassionate barter system, exchange of produce between ecological zones such as high lands, mid-hills and low lands, equitable distribution, inter-community and inter-ecological region cooperation, transhumance, and so on) completely

destroyed that marginalized Indigenous peoples further and self-sustaining non-state society turned into a helpless, poor, resource deprived society instantaneously. The process of (v) land alienation continued until recent decades because of the of the land tenure and settlement policies of the government. The (vi) consequences of this historical injustice went beyond being healed by reparation. Despite the initiation of development activities and the introduction of the capitalist system in the twentieth century, (vii) economic opportunity and development benefits have remained almost restricted for Indigenous peoples. Economic exclusion that began with land dispossession became the norms of the state to subjugate Indigenous peoples through centuries. As a result of the caste-based, revenue-focused, patronage-promoting land tenure system and agrarian policies of more than two hundred years (viii), 90 percent of Indigenous peoples are now marginal land holders (holding the least productive land in fragile eco-zones), and 78 percent of Indigenous households are living in extreme poverty today.

4.2.2.6 Hinduization and institutionalization of hierarchical caste systems

The Himalayan region has been a sacred land of cross-cultural contacts and hostile forces' confrontations through the ages. Both types of alien forces—organized marauders, religious zealots, and cultural invaders—frequently disrupted its pristine cultures and Indigenous ways of life. The first evidence of the introduction of the process of Aryanization/Brahmanization has been found during the period of Lichchhavi rulers, and the inscription of Manadeva, dating back to 464 A.D., refers to a hierarchical caste system describing 'eighteen castes' with glorified positions of Brahman and Chhetri, which in effect was not fully operational due to the bulk population of Mongoloids and non-Aryans and the impact of Buddhism preceding the Brahminical norms (Pradhan 1991: 29). Hinduization process with attendant caste system based on classical four-fold Varna hierarchy became more strong with the influx of Hindu[175] immigrants (princes, Brahmans and their families and attendants/servants) in the west Nepal, particularly in Khasan (Khasa /Malla empire, later known as Baisi kingdoms/principalities) that was disintegrating and Magarat (later known as Sena kingdom, Chaubisi principalities and Gorkha after the fall of Magarat confederacy/ Eighteen and Twelve Magarat) that too was shattering with the rise and fall of Khasa empire, who took refuge there to escape from Muslim aggression, domination and occupation of north Indian plains in thirteenth to fourteenth century. Within a century, Buddhist Khasa/Malla kings and their subjects were converted to Hinduism, and Hindu social, political, and economic order began to come into force with the rapid expansion of the roles, privileges, and power of Brahmans as priests, advisors, administrators, courtiers, judges, or religious authorities, and the takeover

by Chhetris/Thakuris or Rajputs as kings or princes, courtiers, military officers or commanders, administrators, and ultimate justice dispensers. Rajputization of genealogies of kings, chiefs, and community heads and Brahmanic modification and concoction of Indigenous myths, narratives, and ethno-histories were two of the most effective tools of Hinduization and socialization of caste hierarchy. Indigenous Khasas (Pawai Khasa) who resisted the Hinduization process and denied Chhetri status were relegated to Sudra status, popularly known as Matawali Khasa/Chhetri in the past nineteenth century.

175 The term 'Hindu' was used by Arabian traders to denote the 'Sindhu' river before the Vedic Aryans' occupation of north-western India, particularly the Sindhu River valley, and they called the inhabitants of this region simply Hindu, which was followed by European white people to identify the people of the South Asian sub-continent. Hinduism as a religion was named during the first half of the 19th century, after years of deliberation on several alternative options like Vedic Dharma and Sanatan (traditional, so-called eternal) Dharma by the intellectual opponents of British Imperialism at the initiation of Raja Ram Mohan Roy, which were accepted by the majority of people in this region (Flood 1990: 6, 16; Doniger 2014:5; Parpola 2015:1).

The conversion of Chaubisi kings (kings of the Magarat confederacy) into Hindu Chhetri monarchs became rapid in the sixteenth century, slowly following the trend of Baisi kings that made the caste system ubiquitous in the region. Ram Shah (1606-1636) was the first king of Gorkha, who appointed Brahman as royal priest[176] and promulgated an edict[177] (code or regulations) introducing a caste system (four Varna and 36 castes) in his kingdom in its rudimentary form, imitating the caste system of Kathmandu Valley and primarily following the caste scheme of the classical hierarchical Hindu Varna system of the Gangetic Plain of India. This indicates that Shah kings were not fully familiar with Hinduism or were not Hindu by tradition, but later they adopted it. Thus, the experiences of various intensities of caste society among the egalitarian Khasa and Jadan people (Bhot people/Bhotyas) and Magar and Gurung (Tamu) are more than six hundred years and five hundred years, respectively. The indigenous society of Kathmandu Valley has a different story. After the centuries of Lichchhavi rule that remained almost unsuccessful in enforcing the caste system in the Valley in its true form, Jayasthiti Malla (1385–1395) 'organized the caste system with the help of five Brahmans, Kirtinath Upadhyaya Kanyakubja, Raghunath Jha Maithili, Srinath Bhatta, Mainath Bhatta, and Ramnath Jha from India' and 'divided Newar society into four Varnas and sixty-four castes' based on their 'hereditary occupations and genealogies' during his reign, establishing the pre-dominance of Brahman and Chhetri (Nepali 1965: 146). It had a longstanding impact in Newar society, with stark hierarchical division affecting the later caste categorization of 1854[178], but made negligible impressions in societies outside of Kathmandu Valley, particularly in Indigenous societies.

After the formation of the kingdom of Nepal in the late eighteenth century, a caste system based on the classical Hindu doctrine of Varna hierarchy borrowed from India[179], which was a completely alien system of social stratification, was enforced rigorously throughout the country, and respect for Brahman, prohibition of cow slaughter, and non-execution of women became primary concerns of the kingdom. The Hindu social system was primarily based on caste hierarchy built on the doctrine of ritual opposition of purity and pollution that attempted to validate and regulate the social relationships and legitimate 'differential control of productive resources'. Since the time of imposition of Hindu laws through royal orders in the late eighteenth century, emphasis has always been on Hindu/Brahmanic norms like ritual and social superiority of Brahman and tenurial superiority of the king (lord of the land) and observation of caste rules, including untouchability and female subjugation. By the time of promulgation of the first Country Code of 1854, it was already established throughout the country that ritual purity accompanied power, privilege, dignity, wealth, and opportunities, and ritual impurity ensued indignity, deprivation, subjection, destitution, incapacitation, and dehumanization.

Rules regarding commensal and connubial (relating to sex or marriage) relations for maintaining caste boundaries, an alien culture and practices for people of annexed territories into Gorkha empire, were began to enforce under the guidance of Brahman (Bahun) priests and their

176 Traditional clan priests of Gorkhali kings for generations were from Rana Magars (still they are), and thus Rana Magars was the constituent of the House of Gorkha.

177 The Edict contained 27 clauses relating to the regulation of Brahman land grants, protection of Brahman and cows, roles of nobilities of six 'thar ghar' (Pande, Panth, Arjyal, Khanal, Rana, and Bohora), measurements, land transactions, irrigation, and others. For a detailed discussion, see Riccardi 1997.

178 For analytical details, see Gellner and Quigley 1995.

179 Burghart (1996: 37-38) puts his concluding remark on traditional Hindu social system in this way: "The Hindu social system, as we know it today, is the product of four millennia of interaction between aboriginal populations and various alien peoples who invaded the (Indian) subcontinent from the west. It is doubtful that there ever was an original historical period in which there existed a 'pure' Hindu social system. There were, of course, historical periods during which Brahman pundits, by virtue of their ritual authority, were entitled by the king to ordain the proper order of social relations within the kingdom. Such Sanskritic models, however, were more auspicious than accurate in their representation of Hindu society."

interpretations of Hindu scriptures since the days of geographical unification of modern Nepal[180] and Kings used their sovereign powers like 'execution (capital punishment), and bodily mutilation, banishment, expropriation (confiscation of property), enslavement and degradation of caste to regulate such rules and punish criminals/offenders of some crime/offenses that state deemed serious (Burghart 1996:217, Pradhan 1991:165), which were codified in more elaborate way in 1854 Country Code[181]. Rebellion against the state, resistance to government orders or policies, cow slaughter, caste rules violations, particularly relating to commensality (acceptability/unacceptability of water, cooked rice and other foods, differentiation of touchability (see Box 9) and untouchability, etc.) and sexual relations (sexual intercourse between higher castes and lower castes, between pure castes and impure castes, extra-marital sex, endogamy/exogamy, hypergamy/hypogamy, etc.), non-payment of levies, taxes, duties, rents, and other revenue of the state, robbery, murder, and non-payment of debts were considered serious crimes. Institutionalization of caste system was the main vehicle of Hinduization of society, which would lead to rigid birth-ascribed stratification system for regulating power, status, and wealth distribution and legitimating super status and subordinate status and structures of dominance and social inequality. It was a means to subjugate people of different cultures, races, ethnicities, and regions. The upgradation of Khasa as Chhetri by Jang Bahadur (in 1863) and divestiture and degradation of caste status of those who resisted or rebelled against the laws and authorities of the kingdom from time to time divulge this motive.

Box 9: Symbolic significance of touch and touchability

Touch and touchability carry symbolic meanings. Eminent anthropologist Helen Fisher (1993:2) notes: 'Touch has been called the mother of the senses. No doubt this is true, for many human cultures have codes that indicate who may touch whom and when, where, and how. Imaginative and resourceful in their variety, these touching games are basic to human courting too. So, if our pair continue to talk and touch—bobbing, tilting, gazing, smiling, swaying, flirting—they usually achieve the last stage of the courtship ritual: total body synchrony.' Thus, touchability represents the preliminary stage of intimacy, affection, and love, which may lead to marriage or sexual union, then to giving birth to progeny to retain continuity of lineage. On the other hand, untouchability is a behavioral boundary based on the Bramanic value system to retain purity of descent.

180 Section 4 of the Administrative Regulations of the Government of Nepal, 1793 (Falgun Badi 4 1849 BS) states: "Current customs lead to injustice, while it will not be possible to follow the tenets of the *Dharmashastras* (Hindu religious scriptures). So, in consultation with the Guru (religious preceptor), Purohit (priest), Dharmadhikar (chief religious authority of the kingdom), and a few other Pundits (Brahman scholars), Bhardars (high-ranking officials/courtiers), Tharghars (royal council of selected dominant castes), respectable persons, and merchants, punishment for different crimes shall be prescribed on a copper plate. A good person shall be given (judicial) authority. Bicharis (judges) shall be appointed in the numbers recommended by this person. Four Pundits and 16 Tharghars shall be placed under him. Summonses of Adalat (a court of law) shall be honored by all. Fines shall be imposed for ignoring these summonses. A company (of troops) shall be assigned to the Adalat. Cases shall be referred to us, and punishment as prescribed in the copper-plate inscription shall be awarded. Justice shall be ensured." Section 14 of the same regulation affirms: "Brahmans shall be allotted as priests for different classes. Only Brahmans thus authorized shall perform priestly duties at the allotted household. No person shall perform such functions at households other than those allotted to him." Source: Regmi 1999/1972 Appendix C. (Translations of technical administrative terms in parenthesis are added in the text.)

181 For an elaborate description of caste hierarchy in the Civil Code of 1854, see Hofer 2004 (1979).

Contrasts and clashes between Gorkhali Hindu jurisprudence and emerging legal practices and Indigenous cultures, customs, traditions, and native jurisprudence have resulted in the criminalization of certain commensal and connubial relations under Gorkhali rule of law[182]. Beef eating was prohibited fervently, and elaborate commensal rules relating to edible foods and inedible foods based on caste hierarchy (level of purity and impurity)[183] were enforced pervasively. Violations of rules resulted in capital punishment, mutilation to caste degradation, enslavement, fines (in monetary terms), and other inhuman treatment, and a writ for expatiation (Patiya) to be issued by Dharmadhikari (chief Brahman religious authority to punish crimes involving caste, sex, and untouchability and grant expiation) or his local representative was mandatory for maintaining justice. Administrative apparatuses were fully kept alert to pursue people for fully observing untouchability, maintaining systems of ritual purity and impurity, and raising respect for cows and Brahmans as part of making Nepal a 'true Hindustan[184], a country where Hindu 'Dharma figures at the ordering principle... but it requires a ruler who is entitled to enforce the socio-cosmic order—the four Varna and the thirty-six jats—by means of the "five punishments[185].

Prevalent Indigenous customary laws and norms, or rituals that governed and managed Indigenous societies, and Gorkhali laws (royal orders, instructions) were highly contrasting or inconsistent regarding the caste rules, particularly rules regarding the commensal, connubial, and other social relationships, and the then government had to issue orders repeatedly to local Indigenous leaders to follow caste rules. As Indigenous societies were ruled by 'rule of ritual' (social order achieved or maintained by moral cultivation), not by 'rule of law' (laws enforced by political or state power[186], Hindu or Khas-Arya practices of social order were alien, incompatible,

and unjust to them. In 1805, King Ran Bahadur had issued a charter in the name of the Gurung and Lama communities to abjure the beef eating habit and to perform ritual functions through Brahman priests (Regmi 2002: 17). As they largely ignored or did not comply fully, his successor King Girban had imposed fines in 1810 on the recalcitrant Gurungs and Lamas at the rate of Rs. 1.5 to Rs. 5 per household depending upon the grade (quality or productivity) of land they occupy[187]. In the same way, fines were imposed on Tamangs and Bhotes who did not utilize the services of Brahman priests during birth, funeral, and other ceremonies in 1810 at the rate of Rs. 1 to Rs. 3 for every household depending upon the grade of land they occupy[188]. The amount of the fine was heavy, as money was rarely available in those days because of a lack of paid work and a lack of market for agricultural produce, and so the offended had to sell themselves or their family members as slaves to pay the fines.

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182 Regular Adalats (courts) were established only during the 1830s (Regmi 2002: 14).

183 For elaborate discussion on this subject, see Hofer 2004/1979.

184 For the concept of 'true Hindustan (Asal Hindustan) of Prithvinarayan Shah, founder of modern Nepal, see Stiller 1989/1968:44.

185 Burghart 1996: 268 (five punishments, 'panchakhat', exclusive right of the king not to be delegated to the lower-level authorities, already referred).

186 For the discussion on 'Rule of Ritual vs. Rule of Law', see Chan 2012: 195-205. Jonathan Chan claims that the 'rule of ritual' (rule of virtue) plays a significant role in avoiding anomalies created by the deficiencies and flaws of the 'rule of law' even today. Solomon and colleagues (2012:10) have concluded that informal order sustained through Confucian ritual has 'allowed China at the end of the 20th century to transform itself quickly into a successful capitalist, market economy', despite inadequacies of rule of law by reducing 'amount of misconduct'.

187 Regmi 2002: 17-18: The cultivated land was divided into four types for the purpose of tax assessment: Abal (first grade of agricultural land with the capacity of high yielding), Doyam (second grade of agricultural land), Sim (third grade of agricultural land), and Chahar (fourth grade of agricultural land).

188 Ibid. 18.

Regulations of sexual relations were highly contrasting between Hindu laws and norms and Indigenous customary laws and norms. As a result, people had to suffer immensely. Sexual infidelity by the standards of Gorkhali jurisprudence was a serious crime and a regular source of revenue for the kingdom. If a Brahman/Bahun committed adultery with a woman of a lower caste, such as a Matwali (alcohol-drinking people), the punishment was less severe, and if with a woman of an untouchable caste, the punishment was to be degraded to the caste of the woman and property confiscated. But if low-caste men 'committed illicit sexual intercourse with women of higher castes', the punishments included 'enslavement, amputation of the genitals, or death depending on the degree of discrepancy in caste status'[189]. Matwalis (Indigenous groups) like Khasa, Magar, Gurung, Sunuwar, Tamang, Bhote, Chepang, Darai, Majhi, Hayu, Danuwar, Kumal, Pahari, and untouchable castes such as Sarki, Kami, Sunar, Chunar, Hurke, Damai, Gaine, Badi, Bhat, Pode (Indigenous untouchable group), and Chyamkhalak (Indigenous untouchable group) were regular sources of revenue for committing sexual infidelity, particularly adultery (Chak Chakui) as defined by Brahminical norms, and fines ranged from Rs. 15 to Rs. 20, which was beyond the capacity of most people (Ibid. 16-17). This was also one of the major factors of slavery and mutilation for Indigenous peoples and Dalits. On the offense of adultery (Chak Chakui), the noses of women belonging to low castes and Matawali tribes (Indigenous peoples) were slit, and then they were slaved[190]. 'Adultery with a woman of higher caste was generally punished with death' (Regmi 1999/1972:119).

The variance in penalty on the basis of caste status discrepancy for the same crime is a legacy in the country's legal history. The documents of 1834 show: 'For a Mongoloid Magar woman who killed her newborn infant by a slave, the penal measure was to cut her nose and make her an outcaste. But an Upadhyaya Brahman widow, who committed the same crime with a Magar, was to be taken round the camp with a blackened face and expelled after being degraded. More interesting reads: the punishment for suppressing information about sexual contact between an Upadhyaya widow and a slave—a Brahman woman who knew it but suppressed the information—was to undergo repentance; the slave who did the same was to be killed. If there were cases of marital infidelity between a Brahman man and Brahman woman, the man was to be exiled after having his head shaved. No confiscation of property or punishment to the woman (as in the case of Magar and other Matwali) was ordered. If it was between a Magar woman and an outcaste (untouchable), the woman was punished with a mutilation of the nose and forced to exile, and the man's share of property was taken. For a crime of polluting other Magars by distributing wine to them, posing as a Magar, an outcaste woman was ordered to be killed' (Pradhan 1991: 167).

Several Indigenous peoples, including Limbus, Rai Kirantis, some sections of Magars (Athara Magars), and some groups of Tharus, resisted such legal impositions and denied to comply and wanted to maintain their societies according to their customary laws and norms. The government came to agreements with these peoples and divided their societies into two broad categories: Niti, who follow customary laws of Indigenous peoples, and Sammriti, who adopt the injunctions of Hindu scriptures, that is, comply with the Hindu laws and deal accordingly. Sammriti were more favored groups by the state, and Niti were suspicious groups for the state, to be pursued more closely. The distinction between two groups, however, was blurred in their societies. Limbus had opposed to comply with the Hindu rules of sexual relationships but was compelled in 1810 to pay the fines of Rs. 5 who had committed sexual intercourse with untouchable women, and each household that shared water with him from the same water source (fountain, well) had to pay the fine of Rs. 0.50 and had to obtain expiation in accordance with the traditional customs

189 Regmi 2002: 15-17
190 Pradhan 1991:177-178

(Sangroula 2010/2067 BS: 250-252). As such a fine was not the regular source of revenue, a Niti tax of Rs. 0.50 per homestead per year was imposed on Limbus during the revenue settlement of 1820–27 (Regmi 1978: 557–558) whether or not such a sex offense was committed and customary ritual for purification or expiation was needed.

In 1843, when Tharus of Dang-Deukhuri, being unaware of the Hindu rules of untouchability, frequently shared water and food with untouchable castes, and some of them even married girls from these castes, a royal order was issued prohibiting such activities, and the decree forced the married couples either to separate or accept outcaste status, and those who partook food and water with untouchable castes had to undergo purification ceremonies as per their customs (Yogi 1957/2013 BS). The Royal Order issued in 1843 to Sunuwars, Mahatos, and Tharus compelled them to follow the caste rules of commensal purity and fined those who accepted water from Tharu women having connections with Kami, Damai, Sarki, Musalman, and Musahar and expiate for committing sin and make outcaste such women (Pradhan 1991: 188). In this way, formal laws and Indigenous customary laws were compromised to some extent in some cases. One of the most humiliating punishments of Gorkhali rulers was caste degradation, even in the form of retaliation, which is evidenced in several cases; one among them is the execution of the chiefs of Palpa in 1762 for their stiff resistance to Gorkha, and their children divested of their caste status and degraded to the then vilest and abominable caste—Sarki (tanner/cobbler by traditional occupation)—and taught them their abhorrent traditional occupation as outcaste (Ibid., 182). Gorkha rulers promoted status usurpation by higher caste immigrants by enforcing caste rules at the barrel of the gun, a method, according to some scholars, rarely practiced in the Gangetic Plain of India.

Caste authorities had tried their best to exploit scriptures (both oral and written), oral literature, myths, and folklore of the Indigenous peoples of different regions and tried to divide them hierarchically to conform to the hierarchical doctrine of the caste system. Rigorous attempts were made to divide Gurungs into 'Char Jat' (four castes) as superior and "Sora Jat' (sixteen castes) as commoner, Magar into 'Bara Magar' (twelve Magars) as superior (due to more Hinduized) and 'Athara Magar' (eighteen Magars) as inferior or commoner (more indigenized and mainly due to beef favoring propensity), Tamang into 'Bara Tamang' (twelve Tamangs) as superior and 'Athara Tamang' (eighteen Tamangs) as commoner and Kirant Rais and Limbus into 'Kasi Gotre' (descent of Kashyap sage) as superior (more assimilated) or cultured and Lhasa Gotre (lineage linked to Tibetan/Mongolian ancestor) as commoner (follower of own tradition, refusing to conform fully to Hindu laws, values and norms). Attempts were made to find chasms in each Indigenous group, but the imposition of hierarchical division was not much effective due to various factors. Thus, the caste system attempted to sow the seeds of division to destroy traditional communal solidarity so that emancipation from subordination would become impossible.

Institutionalization of Varna-based occupational division and state-assigned caste-specific rights, powers, privileges, roles, and obligations have created a distinct system of exploitation and 'graded inequality' in perpetuity as a result of 'hierarchical unequal entitlement of rights to various castes; the higher the caste in a fixed hierarchical order, the greater are the rights and privileges, and the lower in the hierarchy, rights and privileges get reduced or denied[191].

191 The concept of 'graded inequality' is borrowed from Thorat and Kumar 2008. For the illuminating discussion on 'graded inequality','system of graded entitlement of rights', and 'forced exclusion', see Thorat and Kumar 2008: 1-26.

With the introduction of the caste system in Nepal, the aggressive process of authoritative vertical division in a horizontally divided egalitarian society became pervasive. This process reached its culmination with the rigorous enforcement of the Country Code of 1854[192], which was primarily

based on classic Hindu jurisprudence. By such a formal introduction of the caste system, identity-based discrimination, deprivation, and exclusion were institutionalized and entrenched by the pervasive state power (a state monopoly to use force or violent means), making each member of the newly built Nepali society unable to escape. As a result, caste became the primary unit of Nepali society, and social, cultural, educational, economic, civil, and political rights of each caste were assigned and institutionalized unequally and differently depending upon the hierarchical ladder in the caste system. With the enforcement of the new law, (i) Brahman caste (Bahun) became the highest caste, purest of all castes, only caste eligible to study Hindu scriptures, carry out religious functions and to legitimate monarch as sovereign and qualified for highest level state positions and Brahmans (Bahuns) became supreme human beings to be revered by all with first entitlement to rights, positions, privileges, lands, goods, services, wealth and opportunities and among Brahmans hill Brahman or Bahun ranked highest followed by Newar Brahman and Indian Brahman in descending order and (ii) Thakuri and Chhetri were dignified as rulers, warriors/ military personnel, administrators and defenders of Brahmans/ Bahuns. The law allowed Khasas to don holy cord and to call themselves Chhetri, but is silent about the status of Matwala Khasa (Pawai Khasa) who do not don holy cord and drink alcohol (Hofer 2004/1979: 90). Bahun and Thakuri-Chhetri together, Tagadharis (holy cord wearers) became (iii) 'caste core', the center of the socio-political system and state structure on which the sovereign power of the kingdom rested. Social structure or social system was designed and developed in such a way that (iv) 'concurrence of ritual rank of the caste and politico-economic power' was ordered institutionally, and (v) fixed social, economic, political, religious, cultural, and educational rights for each caste/group restricted social mobility, particularly upward mobility; entrenched 'identity-based forced exclusion' systematically consolidating rigid boundaries of the castes/ethnicities. In the hierarchical caste order (vi), Indigenous peoples or stateless nations, non-caste peoples, were placed in a degrading and humiliating status of Sudra Varna, below Brahman, Chhetri, and Baishya Varnas, and were classified as pure, water-acceptable Matwali castes (alcohol drinking castes) integral to the caste system. It was a scheme of expanding the constituency of clients of Bahuns who can offer honoraria (Dakshina) for ritual performances, gifts of alms (Dan), sacrificial fees (Dakshina), and other occasional payments for ritual/religious services. Matwali were further divided into enslavable castes and non-enslavable castes, all except Magar[193], Gurung, and Sunuwar (which abandoned the claim of Kipat land in recognition of the status of the non-enslavable caste), and some groups of Newar fell into the former category, with the largest pool

192 For an elaborate discussion of the caste hierarchy of Nepal, see Hofer 2004 (1979).

193 With the intensification of practices of the Hindu feudal system in Baisi-Chaubisi states, Magar became an enslavable caste (ethnic/Indigenous group), and bondage or slavery became rampant among Magars. In this regard, a passage from Regmi (1999/1972: 121) is worth noting: "The problem of bondage (slavery) appears to have been acute, particularly among the Magar community in the western hill areas. It appears to have been a common practice for moneylenders to take up Magar boys and girls on bondage in lieu of interest due on loans supplied to their parents. The practice was banned in 1837 but revived in 1846, a few weeks after the beginning of Rana rule, when the affected moneylenders complained that they were getting neither work nor their money back from their Magar debtors *(Ban On Enslavement And Bondage of Magars, Marga Badi 14, 1893/ November 1836; Order Regarding Restoration of Pre-1836 Customs of Magars, Aswin Badi 1, 1903/September 1846)*. But the Country Code of 1854 promulgated by Rana Prime Minister Jang Bahadur has categorized Magar as a non-enslavable caste, as they were the integral part of the army and played a major role in the building of modern Nepal.

of slaves, and a few into the later category[194]. History reveals that 'enslavement and killing of Matwalis by the state was a regular feature' (Pradhan 1991: 166).

Impure castes were further divided into two categories: touchable, that is, whose touch is not defiling, such as Mlechchas, religious others (foreigners, i.e., Christians and Muslims, the Bidharmi[195]), and untouchable castes, whose touch is defiling and needs sprinkling of pure water for purification to retain one's pure caste status. They were placed at the lowest rung of the caste hierarchy below the Matwali castes and were called 'Achut' (untouchable), recently known as Dalits today (some argue to call'silpi' castes). But in practice, Matawali castes were also partially untouchable for higher castes as the cooked rice touched by them was defiling for holy cord-wearer castes (Brahman, Thakuri, Chhetri, and other high castes) and were not allowed to enter into kitchen areas (usually elevated floors), though allowed to enter into houses, because their entrance into the kitchen area polluted all the cooked or prepared meals.

The Country Code of 1854 formally enforced the laws of Hindu religious scriptures and displaced customary laws almost completely. Some of the customary laws of different communities, however, retained or recognized were due to accommodation of Khasa customary laws. Customs of Khasa such as slaying the adulterer/seducer and cutting off the adulterous wife's nose by the husband of the adulterous wife, a way of seeking personal vengeance, became the integral component of regulating sexual relations of the 1854 Country Code (Burghart 1996: 240, Hofer 2004/1979: 47-49). Customary laws relating to levirate, polyandry, and other marital practices were tolerated in the case of some Indigenous peoples. Formal (state) laws prevailed when conflicts arose between formal laws and customary laws.

The hierarchical caste system successfully institutionalized (i) state-ascribed status with new caste-oriented identity within a few decades, eroded egalitarian customary status with Indigenous identity, and destroyed ethnic solidarity of each Indigenous group to a great extent. It also (ii) entrenched the system of hierarchical unequal entitlements to positions, opportunities, privileges, rewards, remuneration, and services based on caste hierarchy. State-imposed caste system (iii) established that only the Brahman/Bahun had rights to life, liberty, property, and human dignity (Brahmans/Bahun were exempted from the death penalty, forced physical labor, enslavement, certain types of taxes, levies and fines, etc.). The justice system was (iv) highly favorable to higher castes and most repressive to lower castes and Indigenous peoples because of cultural, linguistic, and religious differences, thus utterly discriminatory against them, and Brahmans were exempted from capital punishment as in the past, which was beyond imagination for Matwalis, Dalits, and other groups. Chhetris' position (v) as rulers or political elites was made uncontestable, irrefutable, and religiously sanctioned. Indigenous peoples, on the other hand, categorized in derogatory genera, Sudra, labor and service offering class/caste and legally called alcohol-drinking castes (Hofer 2004 /1979: 97), were (vi) denied basic/human rights such as rights to life, liberty, dignity, security and justice; practice self-determination; enjoy their cultures; profess and practice their religions; espouse customs and traditions; get education, have vocational and other technical training, access to information, establish contact and communication; own, control and protect land, ancestral territories and natural resources and other property; enjoy freedom of expression (particularly write books in mother languages); enjoy freedom of association with others; pursue new vocation; grow valuable cash crops; adopt innovative measures/ technologies,

194 For detailed discussion, see Hofer 2004/. Prime Minister Jang Bahadur had elevated Limbu and Rai Kiranti to non-enslavable status and forbade their killing in 1861 as recognition of their services in the Nepal-Tibet War, who also had upgraded Khas to the equal status of Chhetri in 1863 (Pradhan 1991: 166).

195 For analytical discussion on the status and issues of Nepalese Muslims, see Mollica Dastider 2013:13-189, Megan Adamson Sijapati 2013: 102-120.

rights exclusively enjoyed by caste core members and were recruited at lower-ranking posts very rarely and occasionally at the mercy of senior officials. They (vii) were just above the untouchable castes in structural position and were subjected to comply with the alien Hindu doctrine of homo hierarchicus[196] and follow hierarchy, separation (maintaining caste boundaries), and asymmetrical interdependence as against their egalitarian values. Many of them became (viii) slaves because of the non-observance of or resistance to caste rules, particularly Hindu norms of sexual relations or sexual morality, caste-specific commensal rules, non-fulfillment of caste-based ritual obligations, lack of ability to pay heavy taxes and fines, landlessness, indebtedness, and non-compliance with state orders or rebellion against the state[197]. Thus, this system (ix) institutionalized oppression, exploitation, discrimination, marginalization and exclusion of subordinated people on the basis of caste, social origin, religion and creed, culture and language and enforced the processes of cultural assimilation indiscriminately that led to cultural destruction (specially destruction of customs, traditions, festivals, ceremonies, arts and artifacts, oral traditions, ethno-histories, myths, legends, folklore, traditional/ Indigenous knowledge, heritage, etc.), linguistic annihilation, written/ inscribed or oral literature destruction, religious suppression, spiritual embarrassment, moral harassment, intellectual stagnation and loss of dignity of Indigenous peoples, (x) perpetuated arbitrary, unfair and appalling social disadvantages and exclusion by inducting and socializing Brahman ontology among the populace through state patronage. Higher castes or (xiii) caste cores (Brahmin and Thakuri/Chhetri) became the beneficiaries, and Sudra (in fact, Indigenous peoples/nationalities, sat shudra) and other lowest castes (untouchables/outcastes, asat shudra) became the victims of this system. This system was ended a few decades ago, but the (xiv) structural positions it created have taken a permanent form, and the victims of this system have been left far behind and crippled to compete with the beneficiaries of this system today.

As a result of long practice of hierarchical caste system (xv) institutionalized binarism of self/other and segregation close to the system of apartheid, produced difference and salience of different identities, perpetuated identity-based discrimination and intolerance, undermined the material, social, and spiritual contributions of non-caste peoples, fostered laws and practices of caste (race) development perpetually condemning heterogeneity and diversity, and (xv) generated graded inequalities or caste hierarchy-based and identity-based various degrees of inequalities. In sum, state-consolidated Brahmanic mode of domination having long-lasting impacts—caste system for retaining superiority of Brahman and ensuring exclusive access to higher knowledge and higher power and privileges, untouchability for ensuring purity of descent, female heteronomy for maintaining subjugation of women and girls, and construction and propagation of myths/ narratives (Ramayana, Mahabharat, Puranas, and so on) to influence rulers and general people to follow them[198]. Today, Bramanhood/Bahunness in Nepal represents the culmination of political, economic, social, and cultural power almost unchallengeable.

The impact of Hinduization[199] was uneven among the people of Nepal. Animism, Shamanism/ Bonism, or folk religion, and Buddhism were the major religions or spiritual faiths in the whole

196 For classical discussion on this subject, see Dumont 1981.

197 For illustrations, see Regmi 1999/1972: passim, Pradhan 1991: passim, Hofer 2004/1979: passim.

198 For scholarly interpretation on how Brahmans established their dominance, see Bronkhorst, 2016: 319-325.

199 Hinduization is the process of imposing Brahmanic doctrines/ideas, values, norms, and rituals of Hindu religion. Arabian traders called Hindu to the Sindhu River in Persian and also called Hindu to the inhabitants of the Sindhu valley region in ancient times, a practice that was later followed by European White travelers (Flood 1996:6). In some texts of the mid-thirteenth century, the word Hindu is used to distinguish inhabitants of Bharavarsha/Aryavarta from Yavana (Muslims) and Mlechha (uncivilized/non-Arya), and Hindu Dharma is mentioned only in some texts of the 16th century. Hindu Dharma as an Indian religion was named formally in the first half of the 19th century by the Indian intellectuals/scholars opposing British colonialism after years of deliberation on names including Vedic Dharma, Sanatan (traditional/eternal) Dharma, and so on

southerly Himalayan region. It is assumed that the Tharus of Tarai were the first Indigenous group who came in touch with Hindus of the Gangetic Plain, and cultural exchanges with them were most frequent because of geographical proximity.

As already discussed, the processes of Hinduization, accompanied by Sanskritization or Brahmanization, began by mid-first millennium AD in the Kathmandu Valley and became extensive by the fourteenth century. In the Khasa country (Karnali region), initially dominant Khasas, mainly kings, chiefs, elites, and well-to-do among the animist and Buddhist Khasas, were Hinduized, and this process became extensive in the thirteenth century; however, the majority population remained animists, worshipping Masta as the main deity (Bista 1996: 70-78). Lately, revival of Masta faith has begun, and search for the 'root' has become an essential aspect of true identity. Significant populations of Magars were Hinduized much later, by the seventeenth century only, though they had better contacts with Khasas since centuries. Newars came into contact with Hindu ideology by the latter half of the first millennium AD, but a substantial population of them adopted Hindu religion only after the fourteenth century. The Kirat population (eastern Indigenous peoples) was least influenced by Hindu religion till the eighteenth century, despite their close connections with Hindu Sen kings in the south and few contacts with other kings of the Gangetic plains. In fact, Indigenous peoples came under the influence of Hinduism only after the geographical unification of Nepal by the late eighteenth century.

As Hinduism became a state-enforced and patronized religion in the late eighteenth century, the sufferings of the peoples of defeated kingdoms, chiefdoms, or republics multiplied due to material dispossession accompanied by spiritual deprivation. They had to conceal their religions or belief systems that they were adhering to from time immemorial. Brahmanic rituals were no less rigorous to displace Indigenous religious and cultural rituals. Ramlihang and Ridamahang, community leaders of Atpahariya Rai of Dhankutta, were hanged in 1810 when they refused to observe the Hindu festival of Dasain (Yakkha-Rai, 1997/2053 BS). Ritual occupation of Brahmans led to lowering of Indigenous dignity and transferring of their lands gradually. Indigenous peoples had to tolerate the restrictions on their religious activities to avoid physical extinction. Literature abounds these days that describes how Indigenous peoples like Magar, Gurung, Himalayan peoples, Raute, Limbu, Byasi, Thakali, Tharu, Tamang, Thulung Rai, Kulung Rai, and Yakkha, to mention a few, were Hinduized to a great extent with some exceptions[200]. More studies have been carried out on Newar and Sherpa, but limited studies have been conducted on other groups due to the lack of interests of historians, anthropologists, sociologists, and other social scientists and academic/research institutions and universities and the denial of permissions of the government to enter study areas.

(Flood 1996:6,16; Doniger 2014:5; Parpola 2015:1). We don't enter into this discourse, as it is beyond the deliberation of our subject. Hinduism and Brahminism are interchangeably used since the past two centuries to denote the same religious ideas or belief system, and in the same vein, Hinduization and Brahmanization are interchangeably used to denote the same process of forced religious conversion and socio-cultural assimilation.

200 See for examples, Hitchcock 1966, Lecomte-Tilouine 2009 on Magar; Pignede 1966, Macfarlane 1976, Messerschmidt 1976 on Gurung; von Furer-Haimendorf on Himalayan peoples; Reinhard 1974 on Raute; Jones 1976, Sagant 1996 on Linbu; Manzardo et al. 1976, Vinding 1998, Fisher 2001 on Thakali; Hofer 1981, Holmberg 1989 on Tamang; McDougal 1979 on Kulung Rai; Allen 1980, 1997 on Thulung Rai; Russell 1992, 1997 on Yakkha; Gaenszle 2000 on Mewahang Rai; Guneratne 2002 on Tharu, Gellner 1991, 1997 on Newar and several other foreign scholars on various groups/peoples, impossible to list all of them. Equally illuminating works are available from Indigenous scholars on this subject, which cannot be dealt with here.

The cost of Hinduization was heavy for Indigenous peoples and other subordinated castes. As most Indigenous peoples were beefeaters[201], they were ordered to forbid the practice of beef eating and stop cow slaughter. After 1793, Limbus, while re-conforming their rights to Kipat lands and autonomous jurisdictions and competencies, were frequently advised to stop cow slaughter and beef eating, let to settle outsiders in their lands, and pay respect for Brahmans, and the central authority warned them severe punishment for cow slaughtering. Such warnings were given to all local authorities and heads of Indigenous communities in central and eastern Nepal. Prohibition of cow slaughter was rigorously enforced to assert sovereignty over Indigenous peoples and establish ritual supremacy of Brahman as the Gorkha kingdom became more secured by the early nineteenth century. A royal order was issued in September 1803 to ban cow slaughter in Solukhumbu with the exemption of killing Yaks and crossbreeds of Yak and cow, and heavy fines were imposed on the violations of the provisions of the order. A similar order was released in October 1805 for the imposition of fines on cow slaughter in Bhadgaun that would bring in revenue of Rs. 12,000 or Rs. 15,000 (Regmi 2002:17), a huge amount from one annexed small kingdom, now a district, at the time when the total revenue of emerging Nepal was around half a million rupees only[202]. After 1853, fines were imposed on Yak killings also, and by 1871 the fine amounted to Rs. 40, though a big amount, was less severe than killing cows with life imprisonment and enslavement of family members (Michael 1997:88). The sum of fines collected reveals that most Indigenous peoples and caste groups were beefeaters, and cow slaughtering was ubiquitous practice in all parts of this kingdom. King Ran Bahadur Shah had issued an order in April/May 1805, which reads:

"From today killing of cows is prohibited, inform (everybody) that, if somebody does (cow slaughter), capital punishment will take place and his property will be confiscated. From now on killer of a cow shall be killed by Ambali (district officer)"(see, Michael 1997: 86).

In the same year, officials deputed in Solukhumbu were directed thus to enforce the ban on cow-slaughter:

'In case persons guilty of this crime are punished with death or enslavement, most of the inhabitants of that area will have to be so punished. Accordingly, the heaviest possible fines should be imposed on persons who committed cow-slaughter after that area came under our rules, as long as they have wives, sons, daughters, and bondsmen available for sale (to pay such fines). However, those who committed this crime after March 2004 should be either beheaded or enslaved' (Regmi 1999/1972: 119/ Regulations on Cow-Slaughter in Solukhumbu, Marga Badi 9, 1862/November 1805).

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201 In the hoary past, Hindu castes, including Brahmans, were beefeaters and used to sacrifice cows in various rituals, a practice that was prevalent till the tenth century, and they believed that the meat of anustarani (the sacrificed cow during the death ritual) was the food of the dead person during his/her journey to another world. Only during the Middle Ages was the cow left free instead of sacrificing, and the leather of the anustarani was used to cover the dead body, which was later replaced by the leather of deer (see Raj 2013: 92-93). Anthropologist Marvin Harris (1985) observes that dominant Vedic Aryas such as Brahmans (priests) and Kshatriyas (warrior chiefs) had a long practice of sacrificing animals, including slaughtering of thick-legged cows, barren cows, oxen/bulls, heifers and organizing meat-eating feasts and distributing 'meat to their followers as a material rewards for loyalty and as a symbol of wealth and power'; 'lavish cattle slaughter in sacrificial rituals came under attack when Buddhism and Jainism came in prominence as an doctrine of non-violence by the middle of the first millennium BC, however, 'the privileged Brahmans and Kshatriyas (Chhetris) continued to slaughter cattle and gorge themselves on beef long after it was impossible to invite ordinary people to share in their good fortune'. He concludes that human population increase and decrease in the population of cattle (cows, oxen) and scarcity of traction power for field cultivation made cow slaughtering and beef eating a taboo by the turn of the second millennium AD.

202 For discussion on estimation, Regmi 1999/1972: 56-57.

Probably the first case of severe punishment is evidenced from the Royal Order to Bichari Hiranda Tiwari dated March 1806, when the rumor spread in Kathmandu that a Damai from west Nepal had killed a cow. The order given was:

"Cut off flesh from his back and put salt and condensed citrus juice on the wounds. Make him eat the flesh himself and kill him" (Michael 1997:87, Source: RRS XII.11:169).

Punishment was almost similar for killing oxen. The royal order issued in 1810 to the administrator of the Salyan area reveals that punishment for killing oxen is no less severe, which states:

"Persons who commit the heinous crime of slaughtering oxen in Hindu land flayed alive, impaled, or hang(ed) upside down until they are dead. Their property shall be confiscated and members of their families enslaved" (Michael 1997:87, Source: RRS XII.11:170).

Not only slaughtering cows and eating beef was a heinous crime, but to sell cows to neighboring countries where beef eating practices are normal or conventional was also an equally serious crime. The royal order had forbidden Limbus to sell cows to Sikkim and had warned them severe punishment if they violated the order. Balahang Limbu of Ilam had to suffer the mutilation of his nose and degradation from the status of 'pani chalne' (water acceptable) and had to migrate to Sikkim. Later in 1816, his appeal for restitution (pani phoi) of his caste status on the condition of leading life as a landless tenant renouncing customary land title was accepted and allowed to return his country (Pradhan 1991:168).

Eating beef of slaughtered cows or oxen was fully prohibited, and annual fees, a kind of fine, had to be paid even to eat flesh of the dead cattle (mainly cows or oxen). The severe legal provisions relating to cow slaughter and related activities (eating meat of slaughtered cows or dead cattle) were slightly relaxed by the promulgation of the 1854 Country Code, and capital punishment was changed into a life sentence and other fines. Several members of Indigenous communities, particularly Tamang and Himalayan communities, had to suffer from life sentences and pay heavy fines just for failing to understand complicated legal procedures and court language (Khas Nepali language) relating to cow killing and beef eating (of dead cattle) till recent years. Injustices of various sorts (fake charges, manipulation of incidences, etc.) perpetrated against beef-eating Indigenous peoples in the name of protection of cows, a symbol of the Hindu kingdom. This way, cow became a symbol of Hindu chauvinism and sovereign power, a weapon of cultural domination and ethnic oppression, and cow slaughter was regarded as parallel to the killing of Brahman/Bahun. As a result of the ban on cow slaughter, the most arduous process of Hinduization, the plights of Indigenous peoples multiplied immensely, ranging from physical extinction to deformation to mass enslavement, life sentences, stark indignity, landlessness, penury, and exile.

Another painful aspect of Hinduization was the suppression of non-Hindus and destruction of ancient handwritten manuscripts, religious texts, documents, and other materials of Buddhist and other religions. According to Bhashabansavali, Shankaracharya (788-830) of India had carried out catastrophic activities for the first time in Kathmandu while staying here with his about 3000 followers (naked Sadhus) that included burning of 84,000 Buddhist texts and forcing Buddhist nuns to give up monastic life and take to married life (Sharma 1966/2022 BS). After takeover of Kathmandu Valley, king Prithvinarayan Shah banished Newar Christians from the country. First Rana Prime Minister Jang Bahadur's priest, Bijayaraj Pande, one of the architects of the 1854 Country Code, had ordered to throw away Buddhist and other religious manuscripts, documents, and books. The British Resident Representative Brain H. Hodgson and Amritananda Shakya had found 400 books kept hidden during those days and had succeeded in preserving

them by taking them to libraries in Culcutta, Canbridge, and France (Manandhar-Gurung 2001). Institutionalized suppression of Buddhists, Muslims, and other non-Hindus has been pervasive since the enforcement of the Country Code with its amendments from time to time. The law also banned propaganda or preaching non-Hindu religions and made those who were involved in such activities liable to the punishment of three to six years imprisonment, depending upon the first attempt or repeated attempts. Change of religious faith, particularly from Hinduism to other religious faiths, was a serious crime that cost some years of imprisonment, substantial amounts of fines, and forfeiture of the share of ancestral property. Even Shaiva, Vaishnava, and other adherents of the Sanatan (Hindu) religion were not allowed to convert themselves into Buddhism, and if converted, were imprisoned for a term of one year (Regmi 2002: 121-122). Prime Minister Chandra Samsher in 1925 had exiled Chhiring Norbu Lama and five other persons on the charge of making people followers of Buddhism, and similarly, Prime Minister Juddha Samsher in 1937 had banished the eminent Buddhist monk Pragyaratna Mahasthavir and eight other monks (Manandhar-Gurung 2001). Even the Josmani Sect, which was advocating classical Hinduism without a caste system, was suppressed inhumanely[203]. Limbu religious/spiritual luminary Phalgunanda Lingden was arrested in 1947 on the charge of teaching the themes of Limbu oral scriptures and transcribing them and at the same time launching social reforms. He was released later on from the tremendous pressures of Limbu leaders but died soon after due to intense feelings of humiliation.

The local deities and shrines or sacred places of Indigenous peoples were gradually Hinduized, and traditional religious practices and sacred activities were obstructed. Hindu myths and rituals were infused into traditional Indigenous myths and sacred rituals. Several Buddhist or Bon shrines were converted into Hindu temples. Today, 'Chumegayja' of Mustang has become 'Muktinath,' and nuns take care of and carry out worship in the shrine while Bahun priests outside the temple perform various rituals for Hindus. Indigenous shrines of Manakamana, Lasargha, Khilung, Bhirkot, Nuwakot (Pallo), Garhausur, Dhor Rajasthal, Sataunkot, Sataunkot Chandisthan, Kaskikot, and Tripura Sundari at Dhading Salyankot have been Hinduized, and the goddesses have been given Hindu names to whom sacrificial offerings are made by Magar priests even today, and Bahun priests perform peripheral functions only (Regmi 2001/2057 BS). 'Ajima' of Kathmandu Valley has become 'Astamatrika' (eight mother goddesses), and 'Pachimaha' and 'Kuchhivyaya' have been converted into 'Panchami' and 'Astami' of the Dasain festival (Shakya 2003/2059 BS). 'Kusayak-Kummayak' of Yasok, Panchthar, the sacred place/shrine of Goddess Yuma of Limbus, has been renamed as Sinhadevi, and 'Mukumlung'/'Muktukok of Taplejung, the ritual place (laso) of the omnipotent goddess of Limbus, has become Pathibhara Bhagawati as a result of deep Hinduization/Brahmanization. Similarly, 'Miyanglung' of Terathum, sacred site of Limbus, has been given the Hindu goddess name Singhabahini. One of the fatal consequences of Hinduization was the forfeiture of native toponyms in favor of Hinduized toponyms throughout the country through the notorious use of state power for the obliteration of spatial histories and cultures, ethnographies, and other ethno-spatial references. Change of the native or ancient names of places, regions, rivers, and mountains was a pervasive process throughout the history of Nepal that most likely began with giving names like Kathmandu or Kantipur to Yambu, Patan or Laitpur to Yerang, Bhaktapur to Khopring, and Banepa or Bandikapur to Bhonta.

Hinduization processes have systematically distorted and even destroyed intangible cultural heritage of Indigenous peoples like languages, mythologies, cultural narratives, traditional knowledge and ways of knowledge transmission, oral/aural tradition, religious beliefs and ritual performances, and ethno-histories were thoroughly perverted by subtly linking them with Hindu

203 For detailed discussion, see Sharma 1964/2020 BS.

mythology and histories of the Indian Rajput dynasties. Destruction of old manuscripts, copper plate inscriptions, stone inscriptions, old printed literature, sculptures, images, stone pillars and monuments, and other documents of historical values; suppression of traditional institutions of oral/aural tradition and inter-generational knowledge transmission; distortion of the themes and contents of Indigenous cultural narratives; and promotion of Hinduized versions of cultural construction have led to the perversion and termination of pristine ethno-histories and made Indigenous peoples forget their distinct identities to a considerable extent. Indigenous religious rituals and narratives were thoroughly replaced by Brahmanic/Vedic rituals and narratives. As a result of such processes, Gurungs today narrate the myth of Hindu heroes and heroines instead of Gurung mythical heroes and heroines in Sorathi and Ghatu ritual dances, and Tharu sing the song of Mahabharat heroes instead of their own mythical or proto-historical heroes and heroines. Chepangs describe themselves as the descendants of Lava, son of Ramachandra, hero of the Hindu epic Ramayana, who was born in the forest. Some Indigenous groups have concocted their genealogies, linking themselves with Rajput (famous Chhetri rulers) of northern India. These are just some examples. Such processes have created chasms within Indigenous peoples and identity confusions. Thus, Brahmanic 'ritual occupation' gradually led to Hindu political-cultural hegemony.

4.2.2.7 Nation building and multiple oppressions

After the stabilization of the borders of Nepal (after the treaty of Sugauli of 1814-16), Nepalese rulers intensified the processes of state consolidation and building patrimonial bureaucracy. A historical period of almost three quarters of a century after Nepal's formation (1768–1846) under direct royal rule was marked by a series of intra-ruling caste groups' bloody fighting, and none of the Mukhtiyar (head of administration) or regents died a natural death, either assassinated by power contenders or killed by themselves. Even the King Ran Bahadur Shah was forced to abdicate in 1799, later was assassinated (1806) by his stepbrother Sher Bahadur Shah, and the king Rajendra Bikram Shah was forced to abandon the throne (1847) in favor of his son Surendra. The bloodiest coup mounted by Jang Bahadur Rana in 1846 brought an era of Rana oligarchy (1846–1951), bringing to an end the rule of traditional powerful families[204], though they still had some influence on new rulers. The politics of these periods primarily developed in an absolutist direction. Absolutist state and polity was sustained by patrimonial rulership with ever

expanding patrimonial infrastructure (bureaucracy) and predatory practices (monopoly rights to office, proprietary office holding, Pajani system, that is, system of annual arbitrary review of appointments and promotions, cronyism- allocation of rights and offices of key state functions and economic activities to relatives and clients, tax farming, application of every measures of (financial) resource extraction, diversion of public funds into private purses of close relatives and followers), monopolization of force, theocratic legitimacy (doctrine of divine right of ruler and Hindu kingdom) and coercive assimilation[205] of subjugated nationalities/Indigenous peoples. Autocracy accompanied by Hindu theocracy and a hierarchical caste system gradually segmented,

204 State power, apart from the king and royal families (as regents and Chautariyas, the key advisors), was confined within the circle of Basnyat, Bhandari, Karki, Khadka, Khawas, Kunwar (later became Rana Chhetri, who were power holders among them), Pande, Pantha, Rana, Thapa, Baniya, Khatri, Rokaya, Shahi (as Kaji, Sardar) during the period of 1768–1814, and Narsing Gurung was only Kaji (top-ranking civil post) among Gurungs who was killed after the assassination of king Ran Bahadur Shah in 1806 (Regmi 1995). These caste groups were major political players till 1846. Kunwar family, converted to Rana, Rajput clan, became the sole authority of state power after the bloody coup of a small army under the command of Jang Bahadur Kunwar and his brothers in 1846 for more than a hundred years.

205 It was primarily cultural assimilation, with strongly restricted ethnic or biological assimilation through the imposition of highly stratified caste systems.

fragmented, and degenerated newly created Nepali society, and nations that had recently forfeited their sovereign states were forcibly made to accept humiliated status of alien identities under the caste system. Caste core (Brahman/Bahun-Chhetri), built through the amalgamation of migrant higher castes and local Khasas, recently called Khas-Arya[206], began to portray itself as inherently ruling caste when Gorkha and its expanded zones became its politico-geographic reference, and this minority group (caste core social unit, less than 32% of the total population) became dominant when subjugation of majority nations and nationalities (sovereign peoples without states) became successful through military conquest by late eighteenth century and their monopoly over state power became well entrenched by mid-nineteenth century.

The pervasive brutal actions of the state since the late eighteenth century crippled the peoples of defeated states and the members of subjugated nations/peoples even to make claims for justice, non-discrimination, and livelihood resources, and no efforts were spared to kill the inherent spirit of nationalism and sense or feeling of 'blood and soil' of these peoples or nations. Hundreds were assassinated or murdered, amputated, and imprisoned in the course of crushing public opposition, resistance, or rebellions. State terror represented the presence of the state ruler or rule and order. Rulers of Nepal began to call the processes of absolutist state building and consolidation of arbitrary powers as the processes of 'nation building' or 'nation-state building' by the latter half of the nineteenth century. Rana dictators, being aware of the Western concept of 'nation state', had made attempts to make Nepal a Hindu (theocratic) nation-state, primarily to legitimate absolutist states and their autocratic regimes. Hinduism (Hindu state, promotion of Hindu or Brahminic culture, norms, values, and practices), monolingualism (official use and promotion of ruling groups' language, Khas Kura/Gorkha Bhasha, christened as Nepali language in the second decade of the twentieth century, as the only official language, and suppression of other languages in different ways), and Hindu monarchy and self-designated high castes dominated state structure, aspirations, and key concerns of ruling castes, were depicted as basic tenets of Nepali 'nationalism' since the early years of the Rana regime.

Only the fall of the Rana oligarchy in 1951 brought about by the first democratic revolution of 1950-51 paved the way for the development of polity towards constitutional direction[207]. However, the post-Rana period was marred by a power struggle between monarchy and democratic elites (belonging to rebellious high castes) that steered towards the rise of autocratic monarchy

(1961–1990). During this period of active monarchical rule, nationalism became the main ideological weapon to suppress the oppositions, advocating the restoration of multiparty democracy, and anti-Indianism and anti-Indianization, nativeness of political system and ideology, Hinduism, Nepalization, and negation of political parties became the core ideas of Nepali nationalism.

During this period (1961–1990), the kingdom ardently aspired to be a 'nation state' and the traditional ruling caste core (Brahman-Chhetri) officially projected itself as a 'nation', which assumed the state as their 'possession' and 'used the state to privilege their identity, history, culture, values, norms, language, literature, myths, religion, and so on' more rigorously that defined the state as the expression of its nationhood' that compelled Indigenous peoples 'either

206 The term 'Khas-Arya' has been used in the recently promulgated (20 September 2015) Constitution of Nepal, which provides the explanation that the term 'Khas-Arya' should be understood by groups such as Chhetri, Brahman, Thakuri, and Sanyasi (Dasnami/ten sects of ascetic) (Article 84, Art. 176.6). But the terms such as Dalit (oppressed collectivities/former untouchable), Janajati (tribal people/nationalities), and Adivasi Janajati (Indigenous nationalities/peoples) used in the Constitution have not been explained.

207 For analytical discussion on the evolution of authoritarian state building that sowed the seed of nation-building to democratic state building, manifested in strengthening state institutions that are accountable and responsive to the poor, see Hachhethu 2009.

to the assimilation or exclusion[208] as elsewhere in the modern world, which are elaborated in the subsequent paragraphs. 'Nation' and 'nationalism' have been frequently used by politicians since then for political gains. "Nation" as a term is connected with "native." 'We are born into relationships that are typically settled in a place. This form of primary and "placeable" bonding is of quite fundamental human and natural importance. Yet the jump from that to anything like the modern nation-state is entirely artificial[209].

Indeed, this is an essential part of the nation-building process in which the nation-state actively encourages the cultivation and elaboration of the ethnic core, or ethnic core having historical territory or homeland, a group that can command a person's loyalty because of felt kinship ties[210]. In this sense, the creation of a national community is invented, but it is not invented out of nothing. Anthony Smith emphasizes the need for a common repository of myths, heroes, events, landscapes, and memories that are organized and made to assume a primordial quality[211]. This is not the case for Nepal; instead, the core group of dominant castes became 'nation', whereas 'caste' and 'nation' are two different, distinct concepts. Since the founding of the League of Nations after the First World War, now the United Nations after the Second World War, sovereign states began to be called 'nations', which the Nepali government has followed.

Evidence from the three decades of 1960-1990 reveals that the authoritarian regime used 'nation building' and promotion of 'nationalism' as a tool of entrenching political power of caste cores (the so-called superior breed of castes or Arya who became dominant), subjugating Indigenous peoples and other peoples carrying different genetic characteristics other than those of caste cores, eliminating Indigenous and non-Aryan cultures[212], and suppressing political opponents operating from Indian soil. During this period, this type of 'official nationalism' was propagated extensively to defend absolutist monarchy and the doctrine of polity without opposition and contest. Official nationalism deviates from the scholarly definition of nationalism as 'an ideological movement for attaining and maintaining identity, unity, and autonomy of a social group, some of whose members deem it to constitute an actual or potential nation'[213]. Hegemony of Hindu nationalist symbols and narratives was established through physical and 'epistemic violence' (infliction of harms through dominant discourses). It was a'state-centric nationalism' aimed at the mobilization of the of the political community for the strengthening of the control of state power

by dominant groups (caste core) in a multi-national state and creating homogenizing narratives for suppressing ethnic, cultural, linguistic, and religious diversity and building Hindu cultural hegemony as against the 'people-centric nationalism', which is a 'counter-state nationalism', for the better management of diversity and multinational states (Hangen and Lawoti 2013: 7-8).

The people's movement of 1990 restored multi-party democracy after 30 years. The post-1990 constitutional politics is, however, tainted by political instability, abuse of power, corruption, and patronage system, clientelism, casteism (Tagadhari hegemonism), electoral malpractices, and institutionalization of political exclusion of traditionally subordinated groups/peoples (Baral et al. 2001, Lawoti 2005, Hachhethu 2009).

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208 The basic concepts, contents, and propositions are borrowed from insightful analyses of Burghart 1996: 226-260, Gellner 1997: 3-31, Pffaf-Czarnecka 1997: 419-470, 1999, Fisher 2002: 113-132, Hachhethu 2009, Mabuhang 2012: 35-83, Kymlicka 2008: 54, and Oommen 2004, 2012.

209 Williams 1983:180, 346.

210 Smith 1990:342., 1999:147

211 Ibid., 1990: 346

212 For incisive critique on Nepali nation-state and nationalism, see Mabuhang 2012: 35-83, Bhattachan 2000, Fisher 2002: 113-132, Hangen and Lawoti 2013: 5-34, and Gellner 1997.

213 Smith: 2009: 6.

Politicians are using democracy and nationalism to defend and justify their actions. The very notions of 'nationalism' and 'nation building' advanced during autocratic monarchical rule are still overwhelming today and misleading the people to the benefits of ruling high-caste elites. A country becomes a nation-state where nation[214] and state perfectly coincide, but where segments of population identify with other nations or nationalities than the dominant (official) nation, the country becomes a multinational state[215]. Nepal's experiences demonstrate that building a nation-state in a country where multiple nations or nationalities and peoples with immense diversity (cultural, linguistic, religious, and regional) exist would not be an easily realizable project as envisioned by ruling elites despite multiple forms of national oppression. Nation building mission in Nepal has produced state nationalism, which is basically collectivistic-ethnic nationalism[216], in endogenous conceptual framework, casteist nationalism that has institutionalized caste criteria (genealogical resource) of national membership, nationality as an inborn trait (genetic characteristics) and nationalism inheritable only by blood (superior breed of castes), language (Nepali), religion (Hindu) and culture (Vedic Arya) and created a mentality and disposition of caste core members that blood of non-caste groups, non- Nepali speakers and non-Hindus carries inferiority, subordination, dependence, disloyalty, disintegration, anarchy, unruliness, rebellion

and all the social, economic, political and cultural ills. In fact, state or official nationalism was covertly intended to squash 'rainbow nationalism', that is, multicultural, plural civic nationalism likely to evolve and flourish in the future in a multicultural, multilinguistic, multiethnic, and multireligious Nepal.

The inflictions caused by 'nation building' on Indigenous peoples are immense. The process of 'nation building' began with Nepalization, a process of forced imposition of Nepali language, Hindu norms and values, and traditions and customs of Hill Brahman-Chhetris[217] on all peoples

214 Literatures abound on nationalism and are most illuminating, specifically produced in the latter half of the twentieth century. Most influential theorists on this subject include Carl W. Deutsch (1966/1994), Earnest Gellner (1983), Benedict Anderson (1983), Eric Hobsbawm (1992), Anthony D. Smith (1995, 1998), W. Connor (1994), J. Hutchinson (1994), David Brown (2000), M. Guibernau (1996), and T.K. Oommen (1997), to mention a few. The purpose of this paper is to refer to all these scholars; however, some definitions of nation have been cited for the clarity of the concept. Joseph Stalin describes the nation as a stable historically constituted community that has a common language, a common territory, a common economic life, and a common psychological make-up (1994/1973). Carl W. Deutsch (1966/1994:26-29) maintains that 'nationalities', groups that are able to communicate more easily within their communities than with outsiders, 'become nations when they have the power to back up their aspirations'. Anthony Smith defines a nation as a 'named unit of population with common ancestry myths and historical memories, elements of shared culture, some link with a historic territory, and some measures of solidarity, at least among their elites' (Smith 1995:56-57). T. K. Oommen (1997) argues that two elements are needed to be a nation: common territory and common language. Liah Greenfeld and Jonathan Eastwood (2005:251) posit that the modern nation is a community where its members (the people) are fundamentally equal and sovereign. Eric Kaufmann (2009:45) argues that there are three basic elements to national identity (nation): referents (politico-geographical framework), lenses (viewing this referent by individual from his/her own geographic, social, ideological, instrumental, international, ethnic, and psychological locational perspectives), and resources (individual operating with a fund of symbolic resources such as linguistic, institutional, genealogical, and historical resources). These are just a few concepts that might be helpful to develop understanding of how the term 'nation' is used/abused in Nepal.

215 Beland and Lecours 2009:133.

216 Greenfeld and Eastwood (2005:255-264) have classified nationalism into three types: (i) individualistic and civic type, such as of the U.K., U.S.A., and Australia; (ii) collectivistic and civic type, as seen in France and Israel; and (iii) collectivistic and ethnic type, which combines a unitary definition of nation with genetic criteria of membership. Nepal's 'official nationalism', which can be termed'state nationalism', fits into the third type.

217 Hill Brahman is known as Bahun, and only the Tarai Brahman is called Brahman in common parlance. In this report, Brahman is used to denote both hill Brahman (Bahun) and Tarai Brahman.

within the boundaries of the Nepalese state[218]. The language (Gorkha Bhasha, also known as Khas or Parbate Bhasha, now Nepali) of the ruling caste core (emerged as a dominant nation), confined in small areas and with a with a small population, was imposed as an official language on all parts of the kingdom since the early years of conquest of small states or principalities, and decrees were issued from time to time to enforce conquerors' Gorkha language in all newly conquered territories prohibiting the use of Indigenous or local/regional languages in public

affairs and writing and publishing literature on those languages; thus the use of Indigenous or local/regional languages in public spheres was criminalized. Phakosek Limbu of Phedap of Limbuwan had become a victim of enforced disappearance in the 1780s when he challenged the government order and continued to educate local people in the Limbu language and script[219].

The suppression of non-Nepali (non-Khas language) speakers became more severe when the state became stronger in terms of regulative powers because of increased force (police, army) and firearms. In 1854, Prime Minister Jang Bahadur Rana had issued a proclamation barring the use of languages other than Gorkha (now Nepali) in government services[220], which divulges the fact that multilingual use in government offices was very common for the conveniences of the service recipients till those days. Various measures were adopted, and efforts were intensified to develop and popularize the Gorkha language and literature and to displace Indigenous and regional languages in the latter half of the nineteenth century. Rammani Acharya Dixit, chief of the 'Gorkha Language Publication Committee' formed by the Rana Government, had carried out a campaign to destroy the languages, scripts, documents, manuscripts, scrolls, preserved books, and other literature relating to religions, philosophies, cultures, histories, arts, and sciences and objects of cultural heritage of Indigenous peoples in 1913, and some 30,000 rare items of archaeological, historical, cultural, and spiritual values were burned and destroyed[221]. Suppression of writers, poets, artistes, and scholars of non-Gorkha (non-Nepali) languages became pervasive and brutal by that time.

A group of Limbu literati (24 members) led by Lalsor Sedang of Taplejung had to flee to Sikkim to escape executions on the charge of teaching and preaching Limbu language, script, literature, religious texts, philosophy, history, and traditional institutions violating state orders in late 1914[222], just to cite an example. During those days, Brahman elites put tremendous pressure on the government for the elimination of non-Gorkha languages of the kingdom, arguing that without their elimination, development of the Gorkha language would not be possible[223]. In 1921, Prime Minister Chandra Samsher issued a decree declaring that documents written in non-Gorkha

218 Gaige 1975: 22-2.

219 A royal order of King Ran Bahadur Shah issued to Limbu leaders in 1787 states, 'From now on, don't write us in your own language as in the past; write in royal (Gorkha) language in Devnagari script all the letters you sent to us'. Phakosek became a victim of defying this order of mandatory use of the Gorkha language and Devnagari script (Virahi Kainla 1993 [2049 BS]: 22–2).

220 Malla 2002.

221 Gurung 1985:47; Yakkha-Rai 1992 (2048 BS):16.

222 Menyangbo 2005, Subba et al. 2002.

223 One passage of 'Gorkha Bhasha' written by Krishnachandra Aryal and Vaidyanath Joshi (Sendai) and published by the Gorkha Agency Office in 1917 reads: 'Till now, the Gorkha Bhasha has not been able to acquire universality, and the wild languages like Newar, Bhote, Magar, Gurung, Limbu, Sunuwar, Danuwar, and Tharu have not been able to leave their native places. As long as the one 'Gorkha Bhasha' cannot kick out all the other wild languages in the country, it is just wishful thinking to say that the 'Gorkha Bhasha' can develop and that 'Gorkha Bhasha' is capable of calling itself the primary language' (Yakkha-Rai 1997: 274-275). This reflects the version of the Brahman elites on the language issue, and Brahman's advice or suggestions were unavoidable to the rulers during those days as they were religious authorities to provide legitimacy to the regime and worldly affairs.

languages could not be submitted as proof in court. During his rule, Gorkha was named Nepal, and Gorkha is in Nepali. Oppression of Indigenous language literati became more brutal when their works became instrumental for raising awareness against autocratic regimes in the last decades of Rana rule. Great poets of Newari language (Nepal Bhasha) like Chittadhar 'Hridaya', Siddhicharan Shrestha, and writer Phatte Bahadur Sigh were imprisoned for life terms, and their properties were confiscated in 1940 for their literary works in Newari language.

After the advent of democracy in 1951, non-Nepali speakers experienced some level of relief for some time when the government declared that nobody would be discriminated against on the grounds of caste or ethnicity, language, or religion while recruiting soldiers in the Nepal army. But soon after, non-discrimination on the basis of language was not taken seriously. The National Education Planning Commission, formed under the chairmanship of Sardar Rudraraj Pande in 1954, recommended Nepali as the sole medium of instruction in education from the very beginning, arguing that Nepali as a national language should be promoted for national integration and use of local non-Nepali languages should be completely discouraged in the school precincts for wider acceptance of Nepali, despite a lot of demands for mother tongue as a medium of instruction at the primary school level[224]. Medium of instruction in education became hot debate, particularly in Tarai, throughout the 1950s. The Ministry of Education had issued directives in 1957, which included the provision that classes could be conducted in local languages in the case of special circumstances and special needs after receiving the letter of permission from the Department of Education, but only Nepali and English languages could be the languages of medium for SLC (Grade 10) examinations, among others. The then government also tried to woo non-Nepali language activists with the assurance that the government would adopt the policy of encouraging and supporting regional and ethnic languages and dialects, giving proportionate weight and importance to the respective languages[225].

After the seizure of power from the first popularly elected government through a military coup in December 1960, King Mahendra launched ideological war, apart from a brief period of tangible war while confronting the armed revolution of the Nepali Congress (NC) in several fronts. Nation building and nationalism, Hinduism and Hindu kingdom, restructuring of the state for national integration, territorial division (administrative units) for enhancing regulative capability of the state, monarchy as symbol of national unity, guided democracy (Party less Panchayat system), setting up grassroots units (Village/Town Panchayats, District Panchayats) to counter political party organizations and cadres at grassroots levels and control traditional/customary Indigenous political, social, cultural, religious and economic institutions, political cooptation in state institutions, socio-economic reforms were some of the ideological strategic weapons used by king Mahendra to crush and weaken political opposition and homogenize heterogeneous cultures. The more invigorated mission of nation-building was instituted in early 1961. Nationalism, tinted with fervent patriotism, became a weapon against liberal democracy, and much vaunted theocracy (Hindu state and divine rights of monarch, incarnation of God Bishnu, and sovereignty of the crown) became a doctrine of legitimizing autocratic governance to subdue growing powerful ideologies of human rights, representative systems, and popular sovereignty. In 1961, the newly formed Integrated National Education Commission (Sarbangin Rastriya Siksha Samiti) had recommended only the Nepali language as the medium of instruction in education and Sanskrit to be taught as an optional subject from the primary level, along with the waiving of fees for Brahman students

224 For details, see Education in Nepal: Report of the Nepal National Education Commission, 1956; for discussion, see Subba et al. 2002.

225 Subba et al. 2000.

studying Sanskrit, despite opposition from some members[226]. Since then, education became the main vehicle for suppressing non-Nepali languages, and the policy of '

one language, one dress, one culture' was forcefully employed. Glorification of Nepali language and illegalization and stigmatization of non-Nepali languages touched a new height with several incidences of linguistic suppression within the period of autocratic rule (1960-1990). Language, being a basic marker of identity and repository of collective memory, became the main target of the homogenizing mission of nation-building. In 1965, for organizing and participating in a literary conference on Nepal Bhasha (Newari language) and literature, Mangalman Shakya, Kajiman Jawa, Mahasthavir Sudarshan Bikshu, Laxman Rajbansi, Surya Bahadur Piwa, and Hitkarbir Kansakar were imprisoned for nine months.

In 1988, Durgalal Shrestha, Malla K. Sundar, and more than 100 persons were arrested for taking part in a procession to mark the birth anniversary of the epic poet of Nepal, Bhasa Siddhidhar Amatya, and a dozen poets arrested from the gathering of the Nepal Bhasha Literary Conference the same year, and a statue erected in Khauma Tole, Bhaktpur Darbar Square, to commemorate the 100th anniversary of the doyen of Nepal Bhasha Master Jagat Sundar Malla was dismantled by the local administration[227]. Similarly, Gangaram Lngkhim, Prithvi Bahadur Maden, and Bir Nemang were jailed for working for the development of Limbu language and literature in 1988 and were set free after the declaration of a referendum in 1990. Randhoj Shreng Chongbang was also arrested on the charge of propagating and teaching the Sirijanga script and the Yakthung (Limbu) primary textbook published from Sikkim and was put in police custody for three months. There are several such incidences of suppressions for the elimination of non-Nepali languages, particularly Indigenous peoples' languages like Tamang language, Sherpa language, Rai Kirati languages, Gurung (Tamu) language, Maagar language, Santhal language, etc. The continuous oppressive measures of the state perpetrated against Indigenous languages and their speakers not only stymied their intellectual and literary development but also led to the death of several Indigenous languages and rendered most of them (about 90 languages) susceptible to endangerment of eventual extinction[228].

The state perpetrated cultural genocide in the pretext of nation-building for the elimination of Indigenous cultures, customs, traditions, ways of life, institutions, arts and artifacts, knowledge, philosophies, norms, values, and identities. The authoritarian state has also constrained and stigmatized traditional institutions of knowledge production and diffusion, and an Indigenous

system of knowledge transmission and wisdom sharing, including several practices of oral/aural tradition, was prohibited. The Hinduization process, as discussed already, became more rigorous as the state became more and more authoritarian as a crucial element of nation-building, though Gorkhali rulers, as Malla rulers of Kathmandu, were not much aware of Hinduism and so had to call Hindu Pandits from India, especially from Banaras and Tirupati, from time to time in the course of codifying and enforcing Hindu rules, norms, and values. When the Hindu religion was declared a state religion, state bureaucracy gradually became hostile to non-Hindu religions

226 Balchandra Sharma, member of the Committee, had argued that education should be provided in one's own language in the initial classes, at least four to five years of learning, and the language of the nation (Nepali) should be gradually taught in the later period (interim period of education). Another member, Vedananda Jha, had expressed the opinion that education should be imparted in three languages: mother tongue (tongue), regional language, and national language (Nepali), and the government should provide equal opportunity for the development of all languages of the country along with the Nepali language (*Report of the Integrated National Education Committee* 1961:97).

227 Subba et al. 2000.

228 See Yonjan-Tamang 2006; Yadav and Turin 2000 for detailed discussion.

and religious practices (discussed in preceding paragraphs), and Indigenous religions and spirituality were condemned, disparaged, and discouraged widely, depicting them as barbarous, uncultured, and rude.

As a result, Indigenous peoples/nationalities had to conceal their faith system, and many were forcefully converted to Hinduism. Buddhists, Muslims, and animists/bonists were always targets of the Hindu administrators, and they had to become victims in times of conflict situations. The Hindu kingdom, under the banner of nation-state building, succeeded in the spiritual annihilation of Indigenous peoples/nationalities to a large extent. The absolutist state adopted all sorts of ruthless measures to destroy Indigenous nations, cultures, customs, ways of life, and institutions for cultural homogenization, building a common public culture closely associated with the dominant caste core. Under the banner of 'nation building' the 'caste core' entrenched themselves as 'nation' and as 'authentic representative of indivisible nation', whose religion (Hinduism), culture (Arya), language (Khas/Parbate/Gorkha), and cultural symbols (flag, cow, dress, etc.) were made official and non-state nations/nationalities, who were Indigenous peoples, were brought under perennial subjugation through cultural hegemony accompanied by military supremacy.

Nation-building was also associated with the destruction of ethno-histories and systematic decomposition of ancestral/historic territories of separate antecedents of Indigenous peoples by drawing up new boundaries of administrative units[229]. Indigenous patterns of habitation and homestead clusters were decomposed gradually through settlement policies favoring new settlers, particularly those belonging to Hindu high castes. Local units of the state were created rejecting the notion of pre-existing 'natural' ethnic units or clusters with the aim of'remoulding' or'melding' an existing set of ethnic/Indigenous identities. Such phenomena led to the dissolution of traditional Indigenous areas, disrupted Indigenous ways of life, autonomy, cultural, political, and economic institutions, and community solidarity, and facilitated the creation of multi-ethnic society at the cost of Indigenous peoples. State structure and institutions were remodeled not only for the centralization of state power and exclusive control of state power by caste core (dominant minority) but to exterminate ethno-territorial identities also. Linguistic, cultural, religious, and ethnic/national diversity and plurality were portrayed as hurdles of national integration, social cohesion, and solidarity, and opposition to such tyranny of ideas was depicted as unpatriotic, betrayal to the country and its sovereignty, and anti-national through government institutions and public media. Development plans and projects also became a part of nation-building, and lands, forests, fisheries, and other natural resources of Indigenous peoples were seized and nationalized without compensation and alternative means of livelihoods. One of the main features of nation-building was the destruction and oppression of Indigenous nations (national identities) and the negation of ethno-national diversity.

Processes of nation-building have made the caste core one oppressor nation on the one hand and created a host of oppressed nations, nationalities, and peoples on the other, and multiple forms (national, ethnic, cultural, social, religious, and economic) of oppression perpetrated resembled the features of colonization/internal colonization. Colonial suffering was intense in Tamang territory since the early territorial expansion of the Gorkha Empire (1743–1813), similar to the awful experiences of the Kumaun region[230] that became pervasive when the primary target

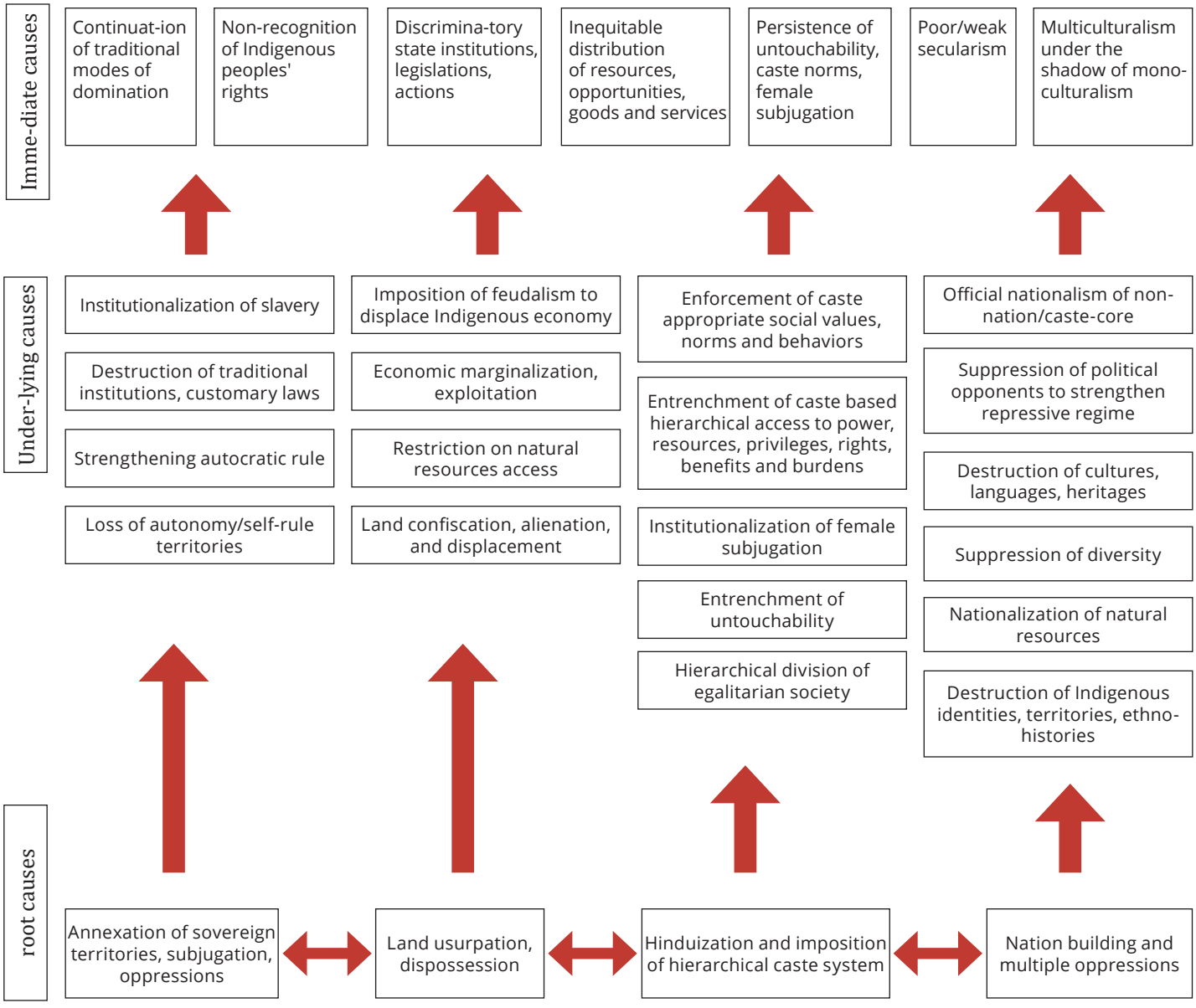
229 For succinct, illuminating discussion, see Kramer 2003: 227-24.

230 For the evidential details of the brutal actions of the Gorkhali army and administration like torture, abduction, executions; forced exaction of tax, foods, and other supplies; collection of unwarranted payments, fines, and penalties; forcible appropriation of property; rape of the wives, daughters, and daughters-in-law of the people; forced unpaid labor (beggar/jhara); and enslavement of poor people in the newly conquered state of Kumao, now in India during 1791-1815 Gorkha imperial rule that paralleled inhuman colonial aggression, see Regmi 1999.

of the Nepal kingdom became resource extraction within its territories. The irony of the Nepalese history is that descendants of conquerors (caste core) became nations, connoting a category of advantaged entitlement and conquered people reduced to serfs, subjects, ryots, and tenants alienated from their ancestral lands. The justifications of nation-building, such as territorial integration, unity in diversity, homogenization for social harmony, centralization of power to deal with external threats, and so on, were actually buttressed by Hindu caste-centric ideologies, a localized form of racism.

Indigenous peoples struggled against such injustices and atrocities many times in the history of two and a half hundred years but were failed each time as the state force brutally crushed them ruthlessly. Thousands were dead in such defiant actions; several were mutilated, and thousands left the country fearing death sentences, and properties (lands, cattle, fowl, gold, silver, and other precious metals, cash, etc.) of thousands of families were confiscated. Oppression on them multiplied each time they revolted against or resisted the actions of the government.

Figure 1: The Causes of Indigenous peoples' plights/predicaments in summary



Conclusions and Recommendations

5. Conclusions and recommendations

5.1 Conclusions

Now time has changed, and Indigenous peoples are becoming aware of their rights, including the right to development, participation, education, health, shelter or house, food security, employment, cultural integrity, etc. But their disbelief in state institutions and actions is still firm. Some indigenous activists have some idea about the SDGs, but Indigenous peoples in general are unaware of them. It is interesting to note that many Indigenous peoples differ in their explanations of basic concepts of development. They define poverty, hunger, land and property, cultural heritage, fate control/self-determination, participation, education, health, well-being, employment/occupation, equality, non-discrimination, customary laws, and access to justice in their own ways that sometimes deviate considerably from the authoritative conceptual definition. This warrants the introduction of new tools to revisit the definition of key concepts like poverty, hunger, land ownership, natural resources, health and well-being, education, employment, power, and equality and get insights into the nature and composition of those concepts.

Vast differences are found in the interpretations and understandings of the development process, outputs, and outcomes between Indigenous peoples and development practitioners. In the course of interactive and iterative interviews and group discussions, available data were shared, and their reliability and validity were questioned. They believe that national statistics always disseminate fabricated data to defend the government and justify the consequences of state actions. They doubt that the data produced by government agencies can really represent their life situations. They believe that facts or data need to be authenticated or legitimated by those to whom the data represent and need to be verified by their neighbors or close observers. They also suppose that data needs to pass through the phases of maturation. Indigenous activists, intellectuals, and key informants infer that quantitative data are least trustworthy due to various reasons, and so qualitative data should be used to complement, substantiate, and verify them. Real knowers are those who have lived experiences of their realities, and so facts and relevant narratives about them should be validated by themselves. These assumptions about study subjects are at the center of this study.

The population and housing census of 2011 has enumerated more than 125 caste, ethnic, or social groups; some 63 groups have been identified as indigenous groups, of which 11 government-recognized indigenous groups are missing and 16 unrecognized indigenous groups have been included[231]. The Nepal Federation of Indigenous Nationalities (NEFIN) has classified Indigenous peoples into five categories: (i) endangered groups, (ii) highly marginalized groups, (iii) marginalized groups, (iv) disadvantaged groups, and (v) advanced groups. Such categories were based primarily on the 2001 census data. It has already been 20 years, so a new classification or categorization is needed for practically appropriate data disaggregation. Probably we have to wait until the data from Census 2021 and the data from the fourth NLSS and the latest Demographic and Health Survey are made available to properly categorize Indigenous peoples.

231 See CBS 2012 (National Population and Housing Census 2011: 144–147). The Ordinance issued in 1997 to form the National Committee for Development of Nationalities (NCDN) recognized 61 groups for the first time as nationalities (Ukyab and Adhikari 2000), and later the National Foundation for the Development of Indigenous Nationalities Act of 2002 listed 59 groups as indigenous nationalities, merging some already recognized groups into one and adding some new ones (NFDIN 2003). Indigenous peoples and indigenous nationalities were simultaneously used to denote the same groups.

Indigenous peoples in the fields claim that a large population of Indigenous peoples (about 80% of the of the population of 90% indigenous groups) are extremely poor and are living in miserable conditions. Because of the unaffordability of education, their children hardly complete secondary education. Unemployment among indigenous youths is very high due to discriminatory practices within the country and a lack of essential skills. Still, the causes that push them into poverty—poor health, poor education, low capability, lack of productive employment, non-access to state resources and opportunities, various forms of discrimination and deprivation, and powerlessness—have not been properly addressed. Only a handful of Indigenous peoples have succeeded in overcoming the traditional structural barriers to their advancement by somehow utilizing international opportunities.

Targets and indicators of the Sustainable Development Goals are extensively worked out to eliminate poverty, hunger, diseases, ignorance, and discrimination, reduce inequality, exclusion, and injustices around the globe, and save the earth through an accelerated pace of sustainable development. Achievement of 169 global targets (10 targets relating to Goal 14 irrelevant for Nepal) of 17 goals measured on the basis of 237 global indicators by 2030 is the sole commitment of all governments in the world. The National Planning Commission of the Government of Nepal has added 257 complementary national indicators to global indicators; as a result, the indicators reached the number of 494. Goals of no poverty (Goal 1), zero hunger (Goal 2), good health and well-being (Goal 3), quality education (Goal 4), gender equality (Goal 5), clean water and sanitation (Goal 6), affordable and clean energy (Goal 7), decent work and economic growth (Goal 8), reduced inequalities (Goal 10), life on land (Goal 15), and peace, justice, and strong institutions are the primary concerns of Indigenous peoples, though other goals are not less significant to them.

The targets and indicators were discussed thoroughly, but indigenous participants could not see any goal in the SDGs particularly addressed to them despite a huge number of global targets, claiming that there is no overt target to meet the developmental needs of Indigenous peoples. The NPC has developed a large number of national indicators, but they are hardly relevant to tracking down the progress of Indigenous peoples' anticipated achievements. Most indicators do not generate data to reflect culturally sensitive and socially just development outcomes and often camouflage disparities in outcomes across social groups and geographical locations. The question now arises: how is it possible to measure the progress of Indigenous peoples' development without any goal or target overtly mentioning them? Existing indicators don't reflect any road map towards Indigenous peoples' sustainable development overtly. Indigenous peoples' cultural aspect is missing in goals, targets, and indicators, and existing indicators do not reflect any caste/ethnicity equality index or caste/ethnicity disparity ratio.

In many cases, pertinent data on poverty reduction, hunger elimination, good health and well-being, quality education, gender equality, sustainable management of water and sanitation, accessing affordable clean energy, economic growth and productive employment, resilient infrastructure and sustainable industrialization, inequality reduction, safe and inclusive cities and human settlements, combating climate change, restoration and sustainable use of terrestrial ecosystems, maintaining peace, accessing justice, and building inclusive, effective institutions may not capture the lived realities of Indigenous peoples because of underlying concepts and differing meanings of indicators. Though the number of national indicators has already reached 494, there still remain some gaps from the perspectives of Indigenous peoples, human rights, justice delivery, social diversity, equality, and differential treatment to meaningfully achieve global (thereby national) targets and track the periodic progress by all sections of society. It was a challenging task to identify issues, problems, and gaps, adapt or modify national indicators, and develop new indicators for their incorporation into the national indicator framework. Structural

and process indicators were designed to address root causes and underlying causes of deprivation, disempowerment, discrimination, injustices, and human rights violations.

Outcome indicators were devised to measure the existing state-of-life situations of diverse groups of people. Apart from adapting or modifying government indicators, an additional 150 new indicators have been prepared (Annex 2). It has been accomplished through wider consultations, information and opinion sharing, verifying suggestions and propositions, and scrutinizing field recommendations and proposals covering 20 districts out of 77 districts in Nepal. A total of 100 indigenous experts (anthropologists, sociologists, demographers, linguists, development consultants, lawyers, and political scientists), indigenous rights activists and advocates, representatives of indigenous people's organizations (NEFIN, NIWF, NIDA, and others), indigenous writers, and a few indigenous mayors and vice mayors were involved in this process.

Of the total 494 national indicators developed and customized by the NPC, 78 indicators have been further customized or adapted to ensure data disaggregation and identify those social groups who are left behind. About 147 new indicators have been proposed to capture the SDG progress of all segments of society, including Indigenous peoples, accurately and appropriately. About 185 indicators are left untouched.

5.2 Recommendations

1. A revised or updated SDG national indicators framework has been prepared or proposed, adapting or modifying existing indicators and adding some new indicators to capture or represent the levels of socio-economic and cultural progress and rights enjoyment of diverse groups of people in meaningful ways. Though the focus is on devising appropriate indicators to measure the progress of Indigenous peoples towards achieving the SDGs, other social groups, particularly traditionally disadvantaged groups, have also been taken into consideration equally in this regard. Newly adapted and added indicators should be integrated into the National SDG Indicators Framework of the government. The National Human Rights Commission (NHRC), NEFIN, and LAHURNIP should take joint initiative to integrate or incorporate the revised framework of complementary national indicators (Table 1) into the national framework of SDG indicators of the National Planning Commission, taking advantage of the NPC's current initiation of SDG indicator revision.

2. NEFIN and LAHURNIP should form a team to lobby and persuade the NPC to integrate newly revised or updated SDG national indicators into the National SDG Indicators Framework, wherever appropriate, with the consent and approval of the National Human Rights Commission. NHRC should pursue NPC with the cooperation of the Indigenous peoples' Commission, Tharu Commission, National Dalit Commission, and National Women Commission for the necessary actions.

3. NEFIN and LAHURNIP should take initiative to create a favorable environment with the support of NHRIs for the integration of proposed indicators in the National SDGs Indicators Framework and urge NPC and other concerned government agencies to produce and publish disaggregate data by sex, marital status, caste/ethnicity, religion, age, wealth/employment status, location (rural/urban), ecological belt (mountain, hill, Tarai/Madhes), and province.

4. NEFIN, along with other IPOs and LAHURNIP, with the cooperation of NHRIs, should launch an advocacy campaign for the integration of newly developed indicators in the provincial SDGs

indicator framework as part of their actions in the context of localization (provincial and local levels) of SDGs.

5. LAHURNIP should update the Indigenous Navigator data of Nepal with a wider coverage of the study area with the cooperation of IWGIA and AIPP and adapt them to make them compatible, consistent, and relevant with the national statistical and data systems. They should be given appropriate tools to monitor Indigenous peoples' development and the enjoyment and exercise of their collective rights.

6. LAHURNIP should take initiative to form a consortium of researchers with the cooperation of NHRC and other relevant commissions and NFDIN for the statistical analysis of Nepali demographic composition/ social structure with their social, cultural, linguistic, religious, economic, political and other development dimensions based on 2021 census micro data. Such analysis will help considerably to track the progress in achieving the SDGs, identify the gaps and limitations of SDG interventions, and detect those who are left behind. This analysis will also be helpful to reorient the direction of development so that most targets will be achievable within 8–9 years. Both national and international resources should be mobilized for this undertaking or project.

NEFIN along with other IPOs and LAHURNIP pursue NPC, government's line ministries, provincial governments and local governments for the implementation of Indigenous peoples' development plans and programs and create environment for the enjoyment of their individual and collective rights to development and non-discrimination, get rid of poverty and hunger, own and access to land and vital natural resources, food security and sovereignty, education in their own language culture, access to training, cultural integrity, good health and well-being, productive employment, freedom from development aggression and access to justice that present Constitution of Nepal and international human rights instruments envisage. They also should draw the attention of the NHRC along with other NHRIs for monitoring and supervising development projects and activities, whether or not they comply with human rights-based approaches and the Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights, and urge them to take the necessary actions.

NPC should focus on corporate social responsibilities while emphasizing hydroelectricity development, employment generation, infrastructure development, industrialization, and speedy economic growth.

Identifying appropriate indicators for measuring Indigenous peoples' SDGs achievements

6. Table 1: Identifying appropriate indicators for measuring Indigenous peoples' SDGs achievements

- Revised list of Global Sustainable Development Goal indicators

The global indicator framework was developed by the Inter-Agency and Expert Group on SDG Indicators (IAEG-SDGs) and was agreed upon, including refinements on several indicators, at the 48th session of the United Nations Statistical Commission held in March 2017. The list of indicators included **232** indicators on which general agreement has been reached. In fact, the total number of indicators listed in the revised global list of SDG indicators is 244. However, since nine indicators repeat under two or three different targets (see below), the actual total number of individual indicators in the list is 232. The repeated indicators are as follows: (1) 8.4.1/12.2.1., (2) 8.4.2/12.2.2, (3) 10.3.1/16.b.1, (4) 10.6.1/16.8.1, (5) 15.7.1/15.c.1, (6) 15.a.1/15.b.1, (7) 1.5.1/11.5.1/13.1.1, (8) 1.5.3/11.b.1/13.1.2, and (9) 1.5.4/11.b.2/13.1.3.

- It is suggested that Sustainable Development Goal indicators should be disaggregated, where relevant, by income, sex, age, race, ethnicity, migratory status, disability, geographic location, or other characteristics, in accordance with the Fundamental Principles of Official Statistics (UN General Assembly resolution 68/261).
- The goals, targets, global indicators, and complementary national indicators have been presented in the following pages.

  Recommendations: Some proposed indicators for measuring Indigenous peoples' progress in achieving SDG targets (developed by the Inter-Agency and Expert Group on SDG Indicators/ IAEG-SDGs of the UN Statistical Commission/UNSC and the latest changes made by the UN Statistical Commission in March 2021).
- Of the total of about 410 of the of the government's national indicators, 78 have been refined or modified to ensure data disaggregation and identify those who are left behind.
- About 147 new indicators have been proposed to capture the SDG progress of all segments of society, including Indigenous peoples, accurately and appropriately.
- About 185 indicators are left untouched.
- The numbering of newly proposed indicators is in Roman numerals such as i, ii, iii, etc.
- Figures in parenthesis at the end of each indicator denote achievement status by base year 2015 and that of the final year of SDGs 2030.
- The full forms of acronyms used in the in the proposed indicators are as follows: AIPP: Asian Indigenous peoples Pact; ILO: International Labor Organization; NHRC: National Human Rights Commission; NHRIs: National Human Rights Institutions; ISEI: Indicators of Social Exclusion and Inclusion, Labonte et al., University of Ottawa; NSIS: Nepal Social Inclusion Survey, T.U.; TEBTEBBA: Indigenous peoples' International Center for Policy Research and Education; UNDP: United Nations Development Programs; UNDRIP: United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous peoples; WCIP: World Conference on Indigenous peoples, Indicator Table, Indigenous Navigator; WHO: World Health Organization.

The Goals, Targets and Global Indicatiors and Complementary national indicators

7.Table 1: The Goals, Targets and Global Indicators and complementary national indicators

Goal 1. End poverty in all its forms everywhere		
Goals and targets (from the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development)	Global Indicators	National Indicators
1.1 By 2030, eradicate extreme poverty for all people everywhere, currently measured as people living on less than $1.25 a day.	1.1.1 Proportion of the population living below the international poverty line by sex, age, employment status, and geographic location (urban or rural)	1. Population below US$ 1.25 per day (PPP value) (23.7 to 4.9) by sex, caste/ethnicity, age, disability, employment status, location, ecological belt, province 2. Population below US$ 1.9 per day (PPP value) (36 to 8) by sex, caste/ethnicity, age, disability, employment status, location, ecological belt, province i. Proportion of children in severe and persistent poverty by sex, caste/ethnicity, disability, location, ecological belt, and province (ESEI) ii. Proportion of senior citizens (above the age of 65 years) in severe and persistent poverty by sex, age, caste/ethnicity, disability, location, ecological belt, and province (SII) iii. Number of special measures and percent of the national budget allocated to reduce poverty among Indigenous peoples in national poverty reduction strategies and programs (WCIP) 3. Per capita Gross National Income (GNI) (766 to 2500 US$)
1.2 By 2030, reduce at least by half the proportion of men, women, and children of all ages living in poverty in all its dimensions according to national definitions.	1.2.1 Proportion of the population living below the national poverty line, by sex and age	1.2.1. Proportion of population living below national poverty line by sex, age (23.7 to 4.9) by sex, caste/ethnicity, age, disability, employment status, location, ecological belt, province1 woman of all ages below the national poverty line (5%) by caste or ethnicity, age, disability, employment status, location, ecological belt, province 1. Children of all ages below the national poverty line (5%) by caste or ethnicity, age, disability, employment status, location, ecological belt, province 2. Proportion of Indigenous peoples below the national poverty line (WCIP), by location (rural or urban) 3. Proportion of persons with disabilities below the national poverty line, by sex, caste or ethnicity, age, and location (rural or urban)

		4. Proportion of population deprived of traditional access to livelihood natural resources
	1.2.2 The proportion of men, women, and children of all ages living in poverty in all its dimensions according to national definitions	1. Multidimensional Poverty Index (MPI) Headcount ratio (H, 28.6 to 6.48%) by sex, caste/ethnicity, age, disability, employment status, location, ecological belt, province 2. A proportion of the indigenous population is experiencing deficiencies in food, home, and clothes, and no one is taking care of them. 3. Proportion of employed population in households identified as poor in all its dimensions belonging to different social groups 4. Proportion of population at the bottom two quintiles of income distribution by sex, caste/ethnicity, age cohort, religion, location (rural/urban, province, ecological belts, religion) 5. Proportion of population below the national median income (at-risk-of-poverty rate) by sex, caste/ethnicity, age, disability, location, ecological belt, province 6. Proportion of population without emergency savings (ISEI) by sex, caste/ethnicity, age, disability, marital status, location, ecological belt, province
1.3 Implement nationally appropriate social protection systems and measures for all, including floors, and by 2030 achieve substantial coverage of the poor and the vulnerable.	1.3.1 Proportion of population covered by social protection floors and systems, by sex, distinguishing children, unemployed persons, older persons, persons with disabilities, pregnant women, newborns, work-injury victims, and the poor and vulnerable.	1.3.1. Proportion of population covered by social protection floors or systems, by sex, caste or ethnicity, age, persons with disabilities belonging to diverse groups, unemployed persons, pregnant women, newborns, work-injury victims, the poor and the vulnerable, and location (rural or urban) 1.3.a. Social protection expenditure in the total budget (11 to 15%) 1. Percent of the total social protection budget disbursed on targeted social protection programs for Indigenous peoples (WCIP) 2. Special support (% of the total budget) provided to unemployed, untrained indigenous youths (number) for subsistence and capacity enhancement 3. Number of beneficiaries receiving benefits belonging to different social groups by types of social protection measures (UNDP 2017) 4. Proportion of recipients belonging to different social groups of training and skills development services integrated as part of the social protection system (UNDP 2017)

		5. Proportion of marginalized women receiving benefits and supports under the revised social security system by caste/ethnicity, age, disability, marital status, location, ecological belt, and province (NHRIs) 6. The number of victims of child marriage provided protection measures, interim relief, services for physical and psych-social well-being, access to comprehensive sexual and reproductive health services, rehabilitation, and adequate compensation and reparations under the revised social security system (NHRIs) by age, caste/ethnicity, disability, ecological belt, and province 7. Proportion of marginalized Indigenous peoples, Dalits, Muslims, and Madhesis to whom financial and other supports provided for the improvement of their economic and social conditions (UNDRIP, AIPP) 1.3.b. Employed people living below US$1.25 per day (22 to 1%) by sex, caste/ethnicity, age, disability, marital status, location, ecological belt, province
1.4 By 2030, ensure that all men and women, in particular the poor and the vulnerable, have equal rights to economic resources, as well as access to basic services, ownership and control over land and other forms of property, inheritance, natural resources, appropriate new technology, and financial services, including microfinance.	1.4.1 Proportion of the population living in households with access to basic services.	1. Households having access to a market center within a 30-minute walk (45 to 90% of total) by sex, caste or ethnicity, age, disability, employment status, marital status, location, ecological belt, province 2. Households covered by formal financial services (40 to 80% of total) by sex, caste/ethnicity, age, disability, employment status, marital status, location, ecological belt, province 3. Proportion of households having at least one household member having a bank account (NSIS 2018) ii Households receiving a maximum half a million and more than half a million rupees in grants or loans to establish enterprises by sex, caste or ethnicity, age, persons with disabilities belonging to diverse social groups, marital status, location, ecological belt, and province (%) 1. Households having access to secondary school within a 30-minute walk (%) 2. Households having access to the hospital within a 30-minute walk (%) Households having access to government offices, including municipalities within a 30-minute walk (%)
	1.4.2 Proportion of total adult population with secure tenure rights to land, (a) with legally recognized	1. Share of the bottom quintile in national consumption (7.6 to 12%), by sex, caste/ethnicity, age, disability, employment status, location, ecological belt, province

	documentation, and (b) who perceive their rights to land as secure, by sex and type of tenure (rephrased)	1.4.2. Land rights: 1. Number of legislations for the recognition of Indigenous peoples' rights (prior ownership rights) to land, territories, and resources (WCIP) and redress of land injustices 2. Number of policies and legal instruments that guarantee the access, control, management, and administration of natural resources in ancestral areas to Indigenous peoples (TEBTEBBA) 3. Number of indigenous communities controlled by and benefiting from the natural resources and landscape of their traditional regions (TEBTEBBA) 4. Number of legislations that recognize Indigenous peoples' rights to collective ownership of land and collective land use and management 5. Number of beneficiaries from the effective implementation of laws relating to the fair and equal distribution of benefits generated from natural resources without distinction of identity, origin, or political affiliation 6. Hectares or acres of land under the individual ownership of Indigenous peoples (ha. or ac. per household) 7. Hectares or acres of land under the collective ownership of Indigenous peoples (ha. or ac. per household) 8. Areas (ha./ac.) pasture lands owned by the government, collectivities, indigenous groups, and individuals 9. Redistribution of land to end the landlessness of the people 10. Proportion of Indigenous peoples enjoying the right to their own means of subsistence and development and engaging freely in all their traditional and other economic activities (UNDRIP, AIPP) 11. Households having property or tangible assets in women's name (19.7 to 40% of total) by sex, caste or ethnicity, age, disability, employment status, location, ecological belt, province [NSIS 2018: Composite index of women's ownership of animals, birds, ornaments, houses, land, and savings.]
1.5 By 2030, build the resilience of the poor and those in vulnerable situations and reduce their exposure and vulnerability to climate-related extreme events and other economic,	1.5.1 Number of deaths, missing persons, and directly affected persons attributed to disasters per 100,000 population	1. Loss of lives from disaster (415 to 100 in number) by sex, caste/ethnicity, age, disability, employment status, location, ecological belt, province 2. Missing persons and persons affected by disaster per 100,000 (415 to 50) by sex, caste/ethnicity, age, disability, employment status, location, ecological

social, and environmental shocks and disasters.		belt, province
	1.5.2 Direct economic loss attributed to disasters in relation to global gross domestic product (GDP)	1. Direct economic loss attributed to disasters in relation to national gross domestic product (GDP)
	1.5.3 Number of countries that adopt and implement national disaster risk reduction strategies in line with the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015-2030	1. Nepal formulated disaster risk reduction strategies in line with the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015–2030 and are under implementation.
	1.5.4 Proportion of local governments that adopt and implement local disaster risk reduction strategies in line with national disaster risk reduction strategies	1. Adoption and implementation of disaster risk reduction strategies in all provinces (7) and local levels (553), in line with national disaster risk reduction strategies
1.a Ensure significant mobilization of resources from a variety of sources, including through enhanced development cooperation, in order to provide adequate and predictable means for developing countries, in particular the least developed countries, to implement programs and policies to end poverty in all its dimensions.	1.a.1 Total official development assistance grants from all donors that focus on poverty reduction as a share of the recipient country's gross national income (changed version)	1.a.1 …… a. Proportion of domestically generated resources allocated by the government directly to poverty reduction programs (55.2) i. Proportion of beneficiaries of poverty reduction programs by sex, caste/ethnicity, age, disability, employment status, location, ecological belt, province
	1.a.2 Proportion of total government spending on essential services (education,	1.a.2 Proportion of total government spending on essential services (education, health and social protection) (25.2) 1.a.3 Sum total of grants and non-debt-creating inflows directly allocated to poverty reduction program as a proportion of GDP (4.1)

1.b Create sound policy frameworks at the national, regional, and international levels, based on pro-poor and gender-sensitive development strategies, to support accelerated investment in poverty eradication actions.	1.b.1 Pro-poor public social spending (The proportion of government current and capital spending to sectors that disproportionately benefit women, the poor, and vulnerable groups changed.)	1. Proportion of the national budget directly contributing to gender equality (22.3) 2. A proportion of the national budget directly contributes to poverty alleviation for poor Indigenous peoples, Dalits, Muslims, Madhesis, persons with disabilities belonging to diverse groups, women and girls, and children. 3. A proportion of the national budget directly contributes to a suitably managed transition from a traditional subsistence economy to a modern or neo-liberal economy. iii. Number of policy frameworks formulated at national, provincial, and local levels and total amount of budget allocated to accelerate gender-sensitive, culturally appropriate, rights-based poverty eradication actions focused on those 'left behind most'

Goal 2. End hunger, achieve food security and improved nutrition and promote sustainable agriculture

Goals and targets (from the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development)	Indicators	National Indicators
2.1 By 2030, end hunger and ensure access for all people, in particular the poor and people in vulnerable situations, including infants, to safe, nutritious, and sufficient food all year round.	2.1.1 Prevalence of undernourishment	2.1.1 Prevalence of undernourishment (36.1 to 3) by sex, caste/ethnicity, age, disability, employment status, location, ecological belt, province a. Regulation and Plan of Action for the Implementation of the Right to Food and Food Sovereignty Act formulated and duly enforced (NHRC Nepal)
	2.1.2 Prevalence of moderate or severe food insecurity in the population, based on the Food Insecurity Experience Scale (FIES)	1. Population spending more than two-thirds of total consumption on food (20 to 3%) by sex, caste/ethnicity, age, disability, employment status, location, ecological belt, province 2. Per capita food grain production (320 to 530 kg) by sex, caste/ethnicity, age, disability, employment status, location, ecological belt, province
		3. Global Food Security Index (44.3 to 90 score) i. Proportion of population experiencing food insecurity (unaffordable, unavailable, poor quality and safety, and non-access to natural resources), by sex, caste/ethnicity, age, disability, employment status, location, ecological belt, province

		ii. The number of endangered cultural food items of Indigenous peoples iii. Number of laws and regulations enacted and enforced to protect citizens rights to enjoy their rights to eat and prepare foods, including meat varieties, traditionally eaten alone or together with family members or friends without obstacles
2.2 By 2030, end all forms of malnutrition, including achieving, by 2025, the internationally agreed targets on stunting and wasting in children under 5 years of age, and address the nutritional needs of adolescent girls, pregnant and lactating women, and older persons.	2.2.1 Prevalence of stunting (height for age <-2 standard deviation from the median of the World Health Organization's (WHO) Child Growth Standards) among children under 5 years of age	2.2.1 Prevalence of stunting (height for age <-2 standard deviation from the median of the World Health Organization (WHO) Child Growth Standards) among children under 5 years of age (36 to 15), by sex, caste/ethnicity, disability, location, ecological belt, province
	2.2.2 Prevalence of malnutrition (weight for height >+2 or <-2 standard deviation from the median of the WHO Child Growth Standards) among children under 5 years of age, by type (wasting and overweight)	1. Percentage of children under age 5 years who are underweight (-2SD) (30.1 to 9), by sex, caste/ethnicity, disability, location, ecological belt, province
		2. Prevalence of anemia among women of reproductive age (%) (35 to 10), by caste/ethnicity, disability, employment status, location, ecological belt, province
		3. Prevalence of anemia among children under 5 years (%) (46 to 10) by sex, caste/ethnicity, disability, location, ecological belt, province
	2.2.3 Prevalence of anemia in women aged 15 to 49 years, by pregnancy status (percentage)	i. Prevalence of anemia among women aged 15 to 49 years belonging to different caste or ethnicity, employment status, location, ecological belt, province, and pregnancy status (WHO) (%)
2.3 By 2030, double the agricultural productivity and incomes of small-scale food producers, in particular women, Indigenous peoples, family farmers, pastoralists, and fishers, including through secure and equal access to land, other productive resources and inputs, knowledge, financial services, markets, and opportunities for value addition and non-farm employment.	2.3.1 Volume of production per labor unit by class of farming, pastoral, or forestry enterprise size	2.3.1. Volume of production per labor unit by classes of farming, pastoral, or forestry enterprises 1. Land productivity (AGPA/ha) USD (3278 to 7018) by sex, caste/ethnicity, location, ecological belt, province 2. Area (hectares) of lands under the ownership, control, and use of Indigenous peoples for agricultural production 3. Volume of agricultural production per labor unit, by sex, caste/ethnicity, ecological belt 4. Volume of pastoral production per labor unit, by sex, caste/ethnicity, ecological belt 5. Volume of forestry enterprise production per labor unit, by sex, caste/ethnicity, ecological belt

		6. The number of institutions and budget allocated to indigenous small-scale farmers, pastoralists, and fishers that provide productive resources and inputs, disseminate knowledge and information in different languages, and provide technical services for value-added opportunities and non-farm employment
	2.3.2 Average income of small-scale food producers, by sex and indigenous status	2.3.2. Average income of small-scale food producers, by sex and indigenous status... 1. Areas (ha./ac.) of land covered by appropriate or integrated agricultural programs to increase land productivity with the free, prior, informed consent (FPIC) of the households of concerned indigenous and other marginalized communities 2. Average income of small-scale food producers per day (US$), by sex and indigenous status
2.4 By 2030, ensure sustainable food production systems and implement resilient agricultural practices that increase productivity and production, help maintain ecosystems, strengthen capacity for adaptation to climate change, extreme weather, drought, flooding, and other disasters, and progressively improve land and soil quality.	2.4.1 Proportion of agricultural area under productive and sustainable agriculture	1. Agricultural land at the present level (000 hectares) (2641 hectares) i. Agricultural land (ha.) presently owned, by sex, caste/ethnicity, age, disability, employment status, location, ecological belt, province
		2. Degraded land, including forest (1,000 hectares) i. Degraded land owned, occupied, or used by sex, caste or ethnicity, age, disability, employment status, location, ecological belt, province (ha.)
		3. Round-the-year irrigated land in total arable land (25.2 to 80%) i. Round the year irrigated land in total arable land owned or occupied by sex, caste/ethnicity, age, disability, employment status, location, ecological belt, province (ha./ac.)
		4. Soil organic matter (SOM in crop land) (1.96 to 4)
2.5 By 2020, maintain the genetic diversity of seeds, cultivated plants, and farmed and domesticated animals and their related wild species, including through soundly managed and diversified seed and plant banks at the national, regional, and international levels, and promote access to and fair and equitable sharing of benefits arising from the utilization of genetic resources and associated traditional knowledge, as	2.5.1 Number of (a) plant and (b) animal genetic resources for food and agriculture secured in either medium- or long-term conservation facilities (rephrased)	2.5.1 Number of (a) plant and (b) animal genetic resources for food and agriculture secured in either medium- or long-term conservation facilities... i. Number of laws amended and number of policies and programs formulated to protect and promote indigenous traditional knowledge, technologies, and sciences, including, inter alia, human and genetic resources, seeds, medicines, properties of fauna and flora, nature, and the and the environment (UNDRIP, AIPP)

internationally agreed.		
	2.5.2 Proportion of local breeds classified as being at risk of extinction (rephrased)	1. Number of DNA banks for variety of seeds (1-
		2. Number of DNA banks for a variety of plants
		3. Number of DNA banks for endangered animal species
		4. Number of Community Seed Banks (number) (115)
		5. Number of arboretas and breeding centers for indigenous species
2.a Increase investment, including through enhanced international cooperation, in rural infrastructure, agricultural research and extension services, technology development, and plant and livestock gene banks in order to enhance agricultural productive capacity in developing countries, in particular the least developed countries.	2.a.1 The agriculture orientation index for government expenditures	2.a.1 The agriculture orientation index for government expenditures (0.14 to 0.38)
		2.a.1 Government expenditure in agriculture (% of total budget) (3.3c)
	2.a.2 Total official flows (official development assistance plus other official flows) to the agriculture sector	2.a.2 Total official flows (official development assistance plus other official flows) to the agriculture sector (0.8b)
2.b Correct and prevent trade restrictions and distortions in world agricultural markets, including through the parallel elimination of all forms of agricultural export subsidies and all export measures with equivalent effect, in accordance with the mandate of the Doha Development Round.	2.b.1 Agricultural export subsidies	
2.c Adopt measures to ensure the proper functioning of food commodity markets and their derivatives and facilitate timely access to market information, including food reserves, in order to help limit extreme food price volatility.	2.c.1 Indicator of food price anomalies	2.c.1 Indicator of food price anomalies
		2.c.1 Food Consumer Price Index
		2.c.2 Number of food reserve depots

Goal 3. Ensure healthy lives and promote well-being for all at all ages		
Goals and targets (from the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development)	Indicators	National Indicators
3.1 By 2030, reduce the global maternal mortality	3.1.1 Maternal mortality ratio	3.1.1 Maternal mortality ratio (258 to 70)
ratio to less than 70 per 100,000 live births.	3.1.2 Proportion of births attended by skilled health personnel	3.1.2 Proportion of births attended by skilled health personnel (55.6 to 90), by caste/ethnicity, location, ecological belt, province
3.2 By 2030, end preventable deaths of newborns and children under 5 years of age, with all countries aiming to reduce neonatal mortality to at least as low as 12 per 1,000 live births and under-5 mortalities to at least as low as 25 per 1,000 live births.	3.2.1 Under-5 mortality rate	3.2.1 Under-5 mortality rate (38 to 20), by sex, caste/ethnicity, disability, location, ecological belt, province
	3.2.2 Neonatal mortality rate	3.2.2 Neonatal mortality rate (23 to 12): sex, caste/ethnicity, disability, location, ecological belt, province
3.3 By 2030, end the epidemics of AIDS, tuberculosis, malaria, and neglected tropical diseases, and combat hepatitis, waterborne diseases, and other communicable diseases.	3.3.1 Number of new HIV infections per 1,000 uninfected people, by sex, age, and key populations	a. Number of new HIV infections among adults 15–49 years old (per 1000 uninfected population) (0.03 to 0.014)
	3.3.2 Tuberculosis incidence per 100,000 population	3.3.2 Tuberculosis incidence per 100,000 population (158 to 20)
	3.3.3 Malaria incidence per 1,000 population	3.3.3 Malaria incidence per 1,000 population (0.1 to 0.01)
	3.3.4 Hepatitis B incidence per 100,000 population	3.3.4 Hepatitis B incidence per 100,000 population (2654 to 2566)
	3.3.5 Number of people requiring interventions against neglected tropical diseases	a. Leprosy cases (2271 to 0)
		b. Kala-azar (Leishmaniasis) cases* (325 to 0)
		c. Lymphatic Filariasis cases (30000 to 14000)
		d. Dengue cases (728 to 0)
		e. Active Trachoma cases (136 to 49)
		a. % of children under age 5 with Diarrhea in the last 2 weeks (12 to 1)
		b. Number of laboratories confirmed cases of Influenza(H1N1) (204 to 83)
		i. COVID-19 incidences (cases of death and infection) per 100,000 population

3.4 By 2030, reduce by one third premature mortality from non-communicable diseases through prevention and treatment and promote mental health and well-being	3.4.1 Mortality rate attributed to cardiovascular disease, cancer, diabetes or chronic respiratory disease	a. Mortality between 30 and 70 years of age from Cardio vascular disease, Cancer, Diabetes or Chronic respiratory disease (per1000 population) (2.8 to 1.96)
		a. cardiovascular disease (1.44 to 1.01)
		b. Cancer (0.67 to 0.47)
		c. Diabetes (0.27 to 0.19)
		d. Chronic respiratory disease (16.5 to 4.7)
	3.4.2 Suicide mortality rate	3.4.2 Suicide mortality rate (per 100,000 population) (16.5 to 4.7)
3.5 Strengthen the prevention and treatment of substance abuse, including narcotic drug abuse and harmful use of alcohol	3.5.1 Coverage of treatment interventions (pharmacological, psychosocial and rehabilitation and aftercare services) for substance use disorders	3.5.1 % of hard /chronic drug users/ drug dependents who ever visited Rehabilitation Centers for comprehensive services (40 to 75)
	3.5.2 Alcohol per capita consumption (aged 15 years and older) within a calendar year in litres of pure alcohol	3.5.2 % of people aged 15 years and older having harmful use of alcohol (defined according to the national context) (2 to 1.8) a. Percent of people aged 15 years and older having harmful use of alcohol (defined according to the national context), by sex, caste/ethnicity, disability, employment status, location, ecological belt, province
3.6 By 2020, halve the number of global deaths and injuries from road traffic accidents	3.6.1 Death rate due to road traffic injuries	3.6.1 Death rate due to road traffic injuries (19.86 to 4.96)
3.7 By 2030, ensure universal access to sexual and reproductive health-care services, including for family planning, information and education, and the integration of reproductive health into national strategies and programmes	3.7.1 Proportion of women of reproductive age (aged 15–49 years) who have their need for family planning satisfied with modern methods	3.7.1 Proportion of women of reproductive age (aged 15–49 years) who have their need for family planning satisfied with modern methods (66 to 80)
		a. Contraceptive prevalence rate (modern methods) (%) (47.1 to 60)
		b. Total Fertility Rate (TFR) (births per women aged 15-49 years) (2.3 to 2.1), by caste/ethnicity, disability, employment status, location, ecological belt, province
	3.7.2 Adolescent birth rate (aged 10–14 years; aged 15–19 years) per 1,000 women in that age group	3.7.2 Adolescent birth rate (aged 10–14 years; aged 15–19 years) per 1,000 women in that age group (71 to 30)

3.8 Achieve universal health coverage, including financial risk protection, access to quality essential health-care services and access to safe, effective, quality and affordable essential medicines and vaccines for all	3.8.1 Coverage of essential health services (definition deleted))	a. % of women having 4 antenatal care visits as per protocol (among live births) (59.5 to 90)
		b. institutional delivery (55.2 to 90)
		c. % of women attending three PNC as per protocol (20 to 90)
		d. % of infants receiving 3 doses of Hepatitis B vaccine (88 to 95)
		e. % of women aged 30-49 years screened for cervical cancer (16.6 to 90)
		f. % of people living with HIV receiving Antiretroviral combination therapy (39.9 to 95)
		g. % of population aged 15 years and above with raised blood pressure who are currently taking medication (11.7 to 60)
		h. % of population aged 15 years and above with raised blood glucose who are currently taking medication (25 to 60)
		i. % of households within 30 minutes travel time to health facility (61.8 to 90)
		j. % of poor people enrolled in health insurance (0 to 100)
		1. Coverage of essential health services like flu, pediatric care, infectious diseases, and non-communicable diseases among the most disadvantaged population (disadvantaged Indigenous peoples, Dalits, Muslims, and Madhesis) 2. Number of indigenous persons with critical health conditions who have received safe, effective, quality health care (WCIP). 3. Proportion of population with mental health problems by sex, caste/ethnicity, age, disability, employment status, location, ecological belt, province 4. At least one geriatric ward in all public hospitals established and old age homes and daycare centers increased by 10 percent annually and are regularly monitored (NHRC). 5. All birthing centers made disabled friendly (NHRIs) 6. Sanitary kits made available in time of need freely to all girls and women of rural areas (NHRIs) 7. Proportion of population having access to traditional medicines, health care, and psycho-somatic, emotional, and spiritual healing (UNDRIP/AIPP)
	3.8.2 Proportion of population with large household	3.8.2 Proportion of population with large household expenditures on health as a share of total household expenditure or income (10.7 to 2)

	expenditures on health as a share of total household expenditure or income	% of out of pocket expenditure in total health expenditure (53 to 35) a. Proportion of households that could not afford medication (UNDP 2011, ISEI) by sex, caste/ethnicity, age, disability, employment status, location, ecological belt, province b. Proportion of households whose medical needs were not met by the existing health care system ((UNDP 2011, ISEI) by sex, caste/ethnicity, age, disability, employment status, location, ecological belt, province
3.9 By 2030, substantially reduce the number of deaths and illnesses from hazardous chemicals and air, water and soil pollution and contamination	3.9.1 Mortality rate attributed to household and ambient air pollution	3.9.1 Mortality rate attributed to household and ambient air pollution (111 to 77.7)
		a. Mortality rate attributed to ambient air pollution (64.2 to 44.94)
		b. Mortality rate attributed to household air pollution (64.3 to 45.01)
	3.9.2 Mortality rate attributed to unsafe water, unsafe sanitation and lack of hygiene (exposure to unsafe Water, Sanitation and Hygiene for All (WASH) services)	3.9.2 Mortality rate attributed to unsafe water, unsafe sanitation and lack of hygiene (exposure to unsafe Water, Sanitation and Hygiene for All (WASH) services) per 100,000 population (37.7 to 26.39)
	3.9.3 Mortality rate attributed to unintentional poisoning	3.9.3 Mortality rate attributed to unintentional poisoning (0.53 to 0.37)
3.a Strengthen the implementation of the World Health Organization Framework Convention on Tobacco Control in all countries, as appropriate	3.a.1 Age-standardized prevalence of current tobacco use among persons aged 15 years and older	3.a.1 Age-standardized prevalence of current tobacco use among persons aged 15 years and older (30.08 to 15.09)
3.b Support the research and development of vaccines and medicines for the communicable and non-communicable diseases that primarily affect developing countries, provide access to affordable essential medicines and vaccines, in accordance with the Doha Declaration on the TRIPS Agreement and Public Health, which affirms the right of developing countries to use to the full	3.b.1 Proportion of the target population covered by all vaccines included in their national programme	3.b.1 Proportion of the target population covered by all vaccines included in their national programme (88 to 95)
	3.b.2 Total net official development assistance to medical research and basic health sectors	3.b.2 Total net official development assistance to medical research and basic health sectors (12.7 to 20)
		% of health sector budget for research and development (na to 3)

the provisions in the Agreement on Trade-Related Aspects of Intellectual Property Rights regarding flexibilities to protect public health, and, in particular, provide access to medicines for all	3.b.3 Proportion of health facilities that have a core set of relevant essential medicines available and affordable on a sustainable basis	3.b.3 Proportion of health facilities that have a core set of relevant essential medicines available and affordable on a sustainable basis
		% of government health facilities with no stock out of essential drugs (70 to 100)
3.c Substantially increase health financing and the recruitment, development, training and retention of the health workforce in developing countries, especially in least developed countries and small island developing States	3.c.1 Health worker density and distribution	3.c.1 Health worker density and distribution (per1000 population) (1.05 to 4.45) i. Number of health professionals and health workers by sex, caste/ethnicity, age, disability, marital status, location, ecological belt, province
		Total health expenditure as % of GDP (5 to 7.00)
3.d Strengthen the capacity of all countries, in particular developing countries, for early warning, risk reduction and management of national and global health risks	3.d.1 International Health Regulations (IHR) capacity and health emergency preparedness	3d.1 International Health Regulations (IHR) capacity and health emergency preparedness (77 to 95)
	3.d.2 Percentage of bloodstream infections due to selected antimicrobial-resistant organisms	

Goal 4. Ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all

Goals and targets (from the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development)	Indicators	National Indicators
4.1 By 2030, ensure that all girls and boys complete free, equitable, and quality primary and secondary education leading to relevant and effective learning outcomes.	4.1.1 Proportion of children and young people (a) in grades 2/3; (b) at the end of primary; and (c) at the end of lower secondary achieving at least a minimum proficiency level in (i) reading and (ii) mathematics, by sex	1. Net enrolment rate in primary education (%) (96.6 to 99.5)
		2. Primary completion rate (%) (80.6 to 99.5)
		3. Proportion of pupils enrolled in grade one who reach grade eight (%) (76.6 to 95)
		4. Ratio of girls (to boys) enrolled in grade one who reach grade eight (1.04 to 1)
		5. Ratio of girls (to boys) enrolled in grade one who reach grade twelve (1.1 to 1)
		6. Learning Achievement/Score (Math, Nepali and English) for Class 5 (%) by sex, caste/ethnicity, age, disability, location, ecological belt, province

		a) Math (53.3 to 65)
		b) Nepali (63 to 75) / Mother language/ Science?
		c) English (53.6 to 68) i. Curriculums and education materials of all levels adapted to ethnic, cultural, and religious pluralism and social and spatial diversity (number) ii. STEAM (Science, Technology, Engineering, and Math) group created from among the genius students in each school and brought up them to become future technology leaders.
		7. Gross Enrollment in Secondary Education (Grade 9 to 12) (%) (56.7 to 99) by sex, caste/ethnicity, age, disability, employment status, location, ecological belt, province i. Proportion of basic education schools (pre-primary to 8 grades) where education is imparted in local/mother languages (WCIP) ii. Number of teachers teaching mother/ local languages iii. Number of schools teaching foreign languages of foreign employment destinations (countries)
	4.1.2 Completion rate (primary education, lower secondary education, upper secondary education)	4.1.2. ..... i. Caste/ ethnic population ratio enrolled in grade one who completed grade twelve (Indigenous peoples, Dalits, Madhesis, Muslims, Hill Brahman/Chhetri/Sanyyasi)
4.2 By 2030, ensure that all girls and boys have access to quality early childhood development, care and pre-primary education so that they are ready for primary education	4.2.1 Proportion of children aged 24–59 months who are developmentally on track in health, learning and psychosocial well-being, by sex (age adapted version)	4.2.1. Proportion of children aged 24-59 months (under 5 years of age) who are developmentally on track in health, learning and psychosocial well-being, by sex, social groups
	4.2.2 Participation rate in organized learning (one year before the official primary entry age), by sex	4.2.2. Participation rate in organized learning (one year before the official primary entry age), by sex, caste/ ethnicity, disability, location, ecological belt, province
		1. Coverage of child grant for pre-primary education (number in '000) (506 to 700)
		2. Attendance to early childhood education (Gross Enrollment) (%) (81 to 99) a. Participation rate of indigenous children in organized learning (one year before the official primary entry age) (WCIP)

4.3 By 2030, ensure equal access for all women and men to affordable and quality technical, vocational and tertiary education, including university	4.3.1 Participation rate of youth and adults in formal and non-formal education and training in the previous 12 months, by sex	1. Ratio of girls' enrollment in technical and vocational education (0.53 to 1) by sex, caste/ethnicity, age, disability, employment status, location, ecological belt, province i. Ratio of Indigenous peoples' enrollment in technical and vocational education
		2. Ratio of girls' enrollment in tertiary education (graduate level) (0.88 to 1) by caste/ethnicity, age, disability, wealth status, location, ecological belt, province i. Enrollment and completion rate of Indigenous peoples in tertiary education (WCIP)
		3. Scholarship coverage (% of total students) (37 to 42), by sex, caste/ethnicity, age, disability, wealth status, location, ecological belt, province i. Indigenous peoples' right to dignity and diversity of their cultures, traditions, histories, and aspirations appropriately reflected in education and public information (ILO, UNDRIP, AIPP)
4.4 By 2030, substantially increase the number of youth and adults who have relevant skills, including technical and vocational skills, for employment, decent jobs, and entrepreneurship.	4.4.1 Proportion of youth and adults with information and communications technology (ICT) skills, by type of skill	1. Youth & adults with technical & vocational training (number in '000, annual) (50 to 480), by sex, caste/ethnicity, age, disability, employment status, location, ecological belt, province
		2. Working-age population with technical and vocational training (%) (25 to 75), by sex, caste/ethnicity, age, disability, employment status, location, ecological belt, province i. Proportion of vocationally trained Indigenous peoples taking into account of their specific needs or traditional occupations (WCIP)
		3. Internet users (percent of adult population) (46.6 to 95) [NSIS 2018: Percent of households with internet connection] by sex, caste/ethnicity, age, disability, employment status, location, ecological belt, province
4.5 By 2030, eliminate gender disparities in education and ensure equal access to all levels of education and vocational training for the vulnerable, including persons with disabilities, Indigenous peoples, and children in vulnerable situations.	4.5.1 Parity indices (female/male, rural/urban, bottom/top wealth quintile, and others such as disability status, Indigenous peoples, and conflict-affected, as data become available) for all education indicators on this list that can be disaggregated	1. Gender parity index (GPI) (primary school) (1.02 to 1)
		2. Gender Parity Index (GPI) (secondary school) (1 to 1)
		3. Gender Parity Index (GPI) based on literacy (above 15 years) (0.62 to 1) i. Social groups-based parity indices/ index (secondary and tertiary non-technical and technical education)

4.6 By 2030, ensure that all youth and a substantial proportion of adults, both men and women, achieve literacy and numeracy	4.6.1 Proportion of population in a given age group achieving at least a fixed level of proficiency in functional (a) literacy and (b) numeracy skills, by sex	1. Literacy rate of 15-24 years old (%) (88.6 to 99)
		2. Literacy rate of 15-24 years old (women) (%) (87.4 to 99) i. Literacy rate of 15-24 years old Indigenous peoples (percent)
		3. Numeracy all (reading and writing in numeric terms) of 15 years & older (%) (62.2 to 98)
		i. Numeracy of female (reading and writing numeric terms) of 15 years and older (%) (51.9 to 98)
		ii. Public spending per student (Basic education in '000) (15 to 30)
4.7 By 2030, ensure that all learners acquire the knowledge and skills needed to promote sustainable development, including, among others, through education for sustainable development and sustainable lifestyles, human rights, gender equality, promotion of a culture of peace and non-violence, global citizenship, and appreciation of cultural diversity and of culture's contribution to sustainable development.	4.7.1 Extent to which (i) global citizenship education and (ii) education for sustainable development are mainstreamed in (a) national education policies; (b) curricula; (c) teacher education; and (d) student assessment	4.7.1 Extent to which (i) global citizenship education and (ii) education for sustainable development are mainstreamed in (a) national education policies; (b) curricula; (c) teacher education; and (d) student assessment (In scale of 0 to 5: Where "0" is none) i. Number of policies adopted for culturally sensitive, equity promoting, sustainable development
		1. Human assets index (66.6 to 76), by sex, caste/ethnicity, age, disability, employment status, location, ecological belt, province i. Curriculum of human rights education included in higher education and human rights training mechanisms developed in all three tiers of governments (NHRC)
		2. Gender development index (0.53 to 0.7), by caste/ethnicity, age, disability, employment status, location, ecological belt, province i. Social groups-based development index
4.a Build and upgrade education facilities that are child, disability, and gender sensitive and provide safe, non-violent, inclusive, and effective learning environments for all.	4.a.1 Proportion of schools offering basic services, by type of service (revised version)	4.a.1 i. Proportion of schools with access to: (a) computers for pedagogical purposes; (b) basic drinking water; (c) single-sex basic sanitation facilities (WCIP), and (d) trained multilingual teachers,
		4. a.1 Schools with access to electricity (%)
		4. a.2 Schools with access to internet for pedagogical purposes (%) (3.9 to 99)
		4. a.3 Basic schools with access to "WASH" facilities (%) (80-99)
		4. a.4 Disability friendly (adapted infrastructure and materials) schools (%) (-- to 99)

4.b By 2020, substantially expand globally the number of scholarships available to developing countries, in particular least developed countries, small island developing states, and African countries, for enrolment in higher education, including vocational training and information and communications technology, technical, engineering, and scientific programs, in developed countries and other developing countries (slightly adapted).	4.b.1 Volume of official development assistance flows for scholarships by sector and type of study	4.b.1 Volume of official development assistance flows for scholarships by sector and type of study i. Number of scholarships for higher technical, scientific, vocational, and general education made available from developed countries/ neighboring countries ii. Number of recipients of scholarships for higher technical, scientific, vocational, and general education made available from developed countries or neighboring countries by sex, caste/ethnicity, age, disability, employment status, location, ecological belt, province
4.c By 2030, substantially increase the supply of qualified teachers, including through international cooperation for teacher training in developing countries, especially least developed countries and small island developing states (slightly adapted).	4.c.1 Proportion of teachers with the minimum required qualifications, by education level (rephrased)	4.c.1 Proportion of teachers in: (a) pre-primary; (b) primary; (c) lower secondary; and (d) upper secondary education who have received at least the minimum organized teacher training (e.g., pedagogical training) pre-service or in-service required for teaching at the relevant level in a given country i. Proportion of bilingual/multilingual teachers to impart education in mother languages at primary and lower secondary schools (WCIP)
		4.c1 Proportion of teachers in basic education who have received at least the minimum organized teacher training (%) (95.5 to 100) i. Proportion of teachers who teach in mother languages received at least the minimum organized teacher training (%) (WCIP)
		4.c2 Proportion of teachers in secondary education who have received at least the minimum organized teacher training (%) (95.4 to 100)

Goal 5. Achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls

Goals and targets (from the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development)	Indicators	National Indicators
5.1 End all forms of discrimination against all women and girls everywhere.	5.1.1 Whether or not legal frameworks are in place to promote, enforce, and monitor equality and non-discrimination on the basis of sex	1. Wage equality for similar work (ration of women's wage to that of men) (0.62 to 0.87) i. Percentage of respondents reporting that men get more wages than women for the same work in their community [NSIS 2018]

		1. Gender Inequality Index (0.49 to 0.2) by caste/ethnicity, disability, employment status, location, ecological belt, province
		1. Gender Empowerment Measurement (Index) (0.57 to 0.69) by sex, caste/ethnicity, disability, employment status, location, ecological belt, province a. Number of relevant laws amended to adopt comprehensive definition of discrimination encompassing both de jure and de facto discrimination, direct and indirect discrimination in line with CEDAW (NHRIs Report 2018). b. A mechanism established to monitor discrimination against women with disabilities, including discrimination within the family (NHRIs report) c. Number of relevant laws amended to acknowledge the diversity of women within the framework of special measures in order to improve the situation of women of disadvantaged groups through affirmative actions, special measures, and positive discrimination (NHRIs) d. Number of policies formulated to make the private sector sensitive to adopting inclusive and special measures for women (NHRIs) e. Electoral laws amended to ensure proportional representation of women taking into account of their diversity, including Dalit women, women with disabilities, women from religious and sexual minorities, indigenous women, and Madhesi women (NRHIs). Discriminatory provisions of the laws that prevent women from acquiring, retaining, and transferring citizenship on an equal basis with men repealed/amended and equal spousal right to transfer citizenship ensured (NHRIs)
5.2 Eliminate all forms of violence against all women and girls in the public and private spheres, including trafficking and sexual and other types of exploitation.	5.2.1 Proportion of ever-partnered women and girls aged 15 years and older subjected to physical, sexual, or psychological violence by a current or former intimate partner in the previous 12 months, by form of violence and by age	1. Lifetime Physical and/or Sexual violence (%) (28.4 to 5) 2. Children age 1-14 years who experienced psychological aggression or physical punishment during the last one month (%) (81.7 to 13.6)

	5.2.2 Proportion of women and girls aged 15 years and older subjected to sexual violence by persons other than an intimate partner in the previous 12 months, by age and place of occurrence	1. Women aged 15-49 years who experience physical/sexual violence (%) (26 to 6.5) i. Proportion of domestic violence addressed by customary law institutions (WCIP) ii. Number of cases of Chhaupadi (isolation in a separate shade during menstruation period), dowry (bridegroom price), child marriage, witchcraft allegation, sexual violence, rape, sexual harassment in the workplace registered/reported, and appropriate actions taken (NHRC Nepal)
		iii. Shelter homes for women and child victims of gender-based violence constructed at the local levels with adequate resources, including counseling (NHRIs). iv. Proportion of budget allocated in the total national/provincial/local annual budgets for rescue, rehabilitation, reparation, social integration, legal aid, and adequate compensation for the survivors of gender-based violence (NHRIs).
		2. Women and Girls Trafficking (in number) (1697 to 325)
5.3 Eliminate all harmful practices, such as child labor, early and forced marriage, and female genital mutilation.	5.3.1 Proportion of women aged 20–24 years who were married or in a union before age 15 and before age 18	1. Women aged 15-19 years who are married or in union (%) (24.5 to 4.1) a. Proportion of women aged 20-24 years who were married or in a union before age 15 by sex, caste/ethnicity, age, disability, employment status, location, ecological belt, province [NSIS 2018 Additional Indicator]
		b. Proportion of women aged 20-24 years who were married or in a union before age 18 [NSIS 2018 Additional Indicator]
	5.3.2 Proportion of girls and women aged 15–49 years who have undergone female genital mutilation/ cutting, by age	i. Number of harmful traditional practices of all forms against girls and women aged 15-49 years reported and number of victims rescued, recovered, and rehabilitated with the cooperation of concerned communities and local authorities

5.4 Recognize and value unpaid care and domestic work through the provision of public services, infrastructure, and social protection policies and the promotion of shared responsibility within the household and the family as nationally appropriate.	5.4.1 Proportion of time spent on unpaid domestic and care work, by sex, age, and location	1. Ratio of women to men participation in labor force (0.93 to 1) 2. Average hours spent in domestic work by women (14 to 6) by caste/ethnicity, age, disability, wealth status, location, ecological belt, province
5.5 Ensure women's full and effective participation and equal opportunities for leadership at all levels of decision-making in political, economic, and public life.	5.5.1 Proportion of seats held by women in (a) national parliaments and (b) local governments	1.(a) national parliament (%) (29.5 to 40) by sex, caste/ethnicity, age, disability, wealth status, location, ecological belt, province 1.(b) provincial parliament (%) (33 to 40) by sex, caste/ethnicity, age, disability, wealth status, location, ecological belt, province 1.(c) local government bodies (40.5 to 42) by sex, caste/ethnicity, age, disability, wealth status, location, ecological belt, province
	5.5.2 Proportion of women in managerial positions	1. Women's participation in decision making level in the private sector (%) (25 to 45) by sex, caste/ethnicity, age, disability, wealth status, location, ecological belt, province 2. Women's participation in cooperative sector (%) (50 to 50) by sex, caste/ethnicity, age, disability, wealth status, location, ecological belt, province 3. Women in public service decision making positions (% of total employees) (11 to 33) by sex, caste/ethnicity, age, disability, employment sector, location, ecological belt, province 4. Ratio of women to men in professional and technical workers (%) (24 to 33) by sex, caste/ethnicity, age, disability, employment status, location, ecological belt, province i. Percent of budget spent on the capacity building and leadership strengthening of women, including indigenous women (WCIP)
5.6 Ensure universal access to sexual and reproductive health and reproductive rights as agreed in accordance with the Programme of Action of the International Conference on Population and Development and the Beijing Platform for Action and the outcome	5.6.1 Proportion of women aged 15–49 who make their own informed decisions regarding sexual relations, contraceptive use, and reproductive health care	1. a. Proportion of girls and women who are aware of their reproductive rights by sex, caste/ethnicity, age, disability, employment status, location, ecological belt, province 1.b. Proportion of women aged 15-49 years who make their own informed decisions regarding sexual relations, contraceptive use, and reproductive healthcare. (59.5 to 90) by sex, caste/ethnicity, age, disability, employment status, location, ecological belt, province

documents of their review conferences.		2. Receiving specific support and service provisions related to sexual health care for the poor, discriminated against, and marginalized groups (%)
	5.6.2 Number of countries with laws and regulations that guarantee full and equal access to women and men aged 15 years and older to sexual and reproductive health care, information, and education	5.6.2 i. Number of laws and regulations that guarantee full and equal access to women and men aged 15 years and older to sexual and reproductive health care, information, and education
5.a Undertake reforms to give women equal rights to economic resources, as well as access to ownership and control over land and other forms of property, financial services, inheritance, and natural resources, in accordance with national laws.	5.a.1 (a) Proportion of total agricultural population with ownership or secure rights over agricultural land, by sex; and (b) share of women among owners or rights-bearers of agricultural land, by type of tenure	5.a.1 Number of enterprises owned by women, by sex, caste/ethnicity, age, disability, employment status, location, ecological belt, province 5.a.2 Proportion of women with ownership of property (land and house) (26 to 40) by sex, caste/ethnicity, age, disability, employment status, location, ecological belt, province [NSIS 2018: Ownership reported separately for land (L) and house (H)]
	5.a.2 Proportion of countries where the legal framework (including customary law) guarantees women's equal rights to land ownership and/or control	5.a.2 Number of legal frameworks (including customary law) to guarantee women's equal rights of ownership and/or control of land, inheritance of parental/ancestral property
5.b Enhance the use of enabling technology, in particular information and communications technology, to promote the empowerment of women	5.b.1 Proportion of individuals who own a mobile telephone, by sex	5.b.1 Proportion of individuals who own a mobile telephone, by sex, caste/ethnicity, age, disability, employment status, location, ecological belt, province i. Ownership of mobile phone by household head, at the household level. [NSIS, 2018]
		5.b.1 Use of Internet by women aged 15-24 years (%) (19.6 to 98) i. Number of internet users by sex, caste/ethnicity, age, disability, employment status, location, ecological belt, province
5.c Adopt and strengthen sound policies and enforceable legislation for the promotion of gender equality and the empowerment of all women and girls at all levels.	5.c.1 Proportion of countries with systems to track and make public allocations for gender equality and women's empowerment	

Goal 6. Ensure availability and sustainable management of water and sanitation for all

Goals and targets (from the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development)	Indicators	National Indicators
6.1 By 2030, achieve universal and equitable access to safe and affordable drinking water for all	6.1.1 Proportion of population using safely managed drinking water services	1. Population using safe drinking water (%) (10 to 90)
		2. Household with access to piped water supply (%) (49.5 to 90)
		3. Basic water supply coverage (%) (87 to 99)
		4. Households with E.coli risk level in house hold water≥1 cfu /100ml) (%) (82.2 to 1), by caste/ethnicity, location, ecological belt, province
		5. Household with E.coli risk level in source water≥1 cfu/100ml (%) (71.1 to 1)
6.2 By 2030, achieve access to adequate and equitable sanitation and hygiene for all and end open defecation, paying special attention to the needs of women and girls and those in vulnerable situations	6.2.1 Proportion of population using (a) safely managed sanitation services and (b) a hand-washing facility with soap and water	1. Households using improved sanitation facilities which are not shared (%) (60 to 95)
		2. Proportion of population using latrine (%) (67.6 to 98) [NSIS 2018: Use of latrine by family at the household level.]
		3. Sanitation coverage (%) (82 to 99)
		4. Urban households with toilets connected to sewer systems/ proper FSM (%) (30 to 90)
6.3 By 2030, improve water quality by reducing pollution, eliminating dumping and minimizing release of hazardous chemicals and materials, halving the proportion of untreated wastewater and substantially increasing recycling and safe reuse globally	6.3.1 Proportion of domestic and industrial wastewater flows safely treated (rephrased)	1. Proportion of untreated industrial waste water (%) (99 to 10)
	6.3.2 Proportion of bodies of water with good ambient water quality	
6.4 By 2030, substantially increase water-use efficiency across all sectors and ensure sustainable withdrawals and supply of freshwater to address water scarcity and substantially reduce the	6.4.1 Change in water-use efficiency over time	6.4.1 Change in water-use efficiency over time

number of people suffering from water scarcity.	6.4.2 Level of water stress: freshwater withdrawal as a proportion of available freshwater resources	1. Wastage of water – Irrigation (Field losses in %) (40 to 1)
		2. Availability of freshwater (per person per day in liters)
		3. Level of water stress: fresh water withdrawal as a proportion of available freshwater resources
		4. Non- Revenue Water (20 to 5)
6.5 By 2030, implement integrated water resources management at all levels, including through trans boundary cooperation as appropriate	6.5.1 Degree of integrated water resources management	6.5.1 Degree of integrated water resources management (0-100) (16 to 60) Laws enacted and enforced to penalize those who misbehave others considering 'water unacceptable' groups and restrict them to access water from water sources
	6.5.2 Proportion of trans boundary basin area with an operational arrangement for water cooperation	
6.6 By 2020, protect and restore water-related ecosystems, including mountains, forests, wetlands, rivers, aquifers and lakes	6.6.1 Change in the extent of water-related ecosystems over time	i. Nepal takes initiative for garnering multilateral cooperation and accelerate actions to reduce the existing rate of recession and thinning of Himalayan glaciers, save river systems and decrease the formation/ expansion of proglacial lakes.
6.a By 2030, expand international cooperation and capacity-building support to developing countries in water- and sanitation-related activities and programmes, including water harvesting, desalination, water efficiency, wastewater treatment, recycling and reuse technologies	6.a.1 Amount of water- and sanitation-related official development assistance that is part of a government-coordinated spending plan	Water harvesting Expansion of drainage system Waste water treatment and recycling Water lifting facilities
6.b Support and strengthen the participation of local communities in improving water and sanitation management	6.b.1 Proportion of local administrative units with established and operational policies and procedures for participation of local communities in water and sanitation management	Proportion of local administrative units (municipalities and wards) with established and operational policies for water and sanitation management

Goal 7. Ensure access to affordable, reliable, sustainable and modern energy for all

Goals and targets (from the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development)	Indicators	National Indicators
7.1 By 2030, ensure universal access to affordable, reliable and modern energy services	7.1.1 Proportion of population with access to electricity	7.1.1 Proportion of population with access to electricity (74 to 99), by sex, caste/ethnicity, disability, employment status, location, ecological belt, province
		1. Per capita energy (final) consumption (in gigajoules) (16 to 24) by sex, caste/ethnicity, disability, employment status, location, ecological belt, province
	7.1.2 Proportion of population with primary reliance on clean fuels and technology	1. Households using solid fuel as primary source of energy for cooking (%) (74.7 to 30), by sex, caste/ethnicity, age, disability, employment status, location, ecological belt, province
		2. People using liquid petroleum gas (LPG) for cooking and heating (%) (18 to 39), by sex, caste/ethnicity, age, disability, employment status, location, ecological belt, province
		3. Electricity consumption (kWh per capita) (80 to 1500), by sex, caste/ethnicity, age, disability, employment status, location, ecological belt, province
7.2 By 2030, increase substantially the share of renewable energy in the global energy mix	7.2.1 Renewable energy share in the total final energy consumption	7.2.1 Renewable energy share in the total final energy consumption (11.9 to 50) 1. Installed capacity of hydropower (MW) (782 to 15000)
7.3 By 2030, double the global rate of improvement in energy efficiency	7.3.1 Energy intensity measured in terms of primary energy and GDP	1. Commercial energy use per unit of GDP (ToE/mRs) (3.20 to 3.14)
		2. Energy efficiency in Industry (MJper1000 rupees of product) (47.20 to 40)
		3. Higher efficiency appliances (in residential & commercial) (%) (10 to 60)
		4. Electric vehicles in public transport systems (%) (1 to 50)

7.a By 2030, enhance international cooperation to facilitate access to clean energy research and technology, including renewable energy, energy efficiency, and advanced and cleaner fossil-fuel technology, and promote investment in energy infrastructure and clean energy technology.	7.a.1 International financial flows to developing countries in support of clean energy research and development and renewable energy production, including in hybrid systems	
7.b By 2030, expand infrastructure and upgrade technology for supplying modern and sustainable energy services for all in developing countries, in particular least developed countries, small island developing states, and landlocked developing countries, in accordance with their respective programs of support (added).	7.b.1 Installed renewable energy-generating capacity in developing countries (in watts per capita) (changed version)	

Goal 8. Promote sustained, inclusive and sustainable economic growth, full and productive employment and decent work for all

Goals and targets (from the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development)	Indicators	National Indicators
8.1 Sustain per capita economic growth in accordance with national circumstances and, in particular, at least 7 percent gross domestic product growth per annum in the least developed countries.	8.1.1 Annual growth rate of real GDP per capita	1. Per capita GDP growth (%) (2.3 to 7)
8.2 Achieve higher levels of economic productivity through diversification, technological upgrading, and innovation, including through a focus on high-value added and labor-intensive sectors.	8.2.1 Annual growth rate of real GDP per employed person	8.2.1 Annual growth rate of real GDP per employed person (1.6 to 10)

8.3 Promote development-oriented policies that support productive activities, decent job creation, entrepreneurship, creativity, and innovation, and encourage the formalization and growth of micro-, small-, and medium-sized enterprises, including through access to financial services.	8.3.1 Proportion of informal employment in total employment, by sector and sex	8.3.1 Proportion of informal employment in total employment, by sector and sex (70 to 10), caste/ethnicity, age, disability, location, ecological belt, province 1. Proportion of working-age population engaged in (1) full-time employment (right to employment realized) (2) part-time employment (right to employment partially realized) by sex, caste/ethnicity, age, disability, marital status, sector, location, ecological belt, province 2. Proportion of population engaged in causal wage works by sex, caste/ethnicity, age, disability, marital status, location, ecological belt, province 3. Proportion of population of working age unable to find a job because of ethnic/caste origin, gender, age, marital status, disability, religion, language, and geographical origin (ISEI, NSIS)
		1. Contribution of Micro-, Small-, and Medium-scale enterprises in GDP (%) i. Proportion of working age population employed in micro-, small- and medium-sized enterprises, by sex, caste/ethnicity, age, disability, marital status, sector, location, ecological belt, province
		2. Access to Financial Services 3. Access to Cooperatives (% of households within 30 min walk) (54 to 80) Access to Financial Services, Banks, Cooperatives, etc. within 30 minutes' walk [NSIS 2018]
8.4 Improve progressively, through 2030, global resource efficiency in consumption and production and endeavor to decouple economic growth from environmental degradation, in accordance with the 10-Year Framework of Programmes on Sustainable Consumption and Production, with developed countries taking the lead.	8.4.1 Material footprint, material footprint per capita, and material footprint per GDP	1. Material Intensity in total manufacturing (Rupees of material input to achieve the output value of Rs100) (66.1 to 60)
	8.4.2 Domestic material consumption, domestic material consumption per capita, and domestic material consumption per GDP	

8.5 By 2030, achieve full and productive employment and decent work for all women and men, including for young people and persons with disabilities, and equal pay for work of equal value.	8.5.1 Average hourly earnings of employees, by sex, age, occupation and persons with disabilities (rephrased)	8.5.1 Average hourly earnings of employees, by sex, age, caste/ethnicity, occupation/ types of work and persons with disabilities (32 to 100) i. Proportion of population having access to (1) government full employment, (2) private sector full employment, (3) causal wage work by sex, caste/ ethnicity, age, disability, employment status, location, ecological belt, province
	8.5.2 Unemployment rate, by sex, age and persons with disabilities	1. Underemployment rate (15-59 years) (%) (27.8 to 10) by sex, age, caste/ ethnicity, ecological belt, province, and persons with disabilities belonging to different sex, caste/ethnicity, and religion i. Unemployment rate (15-59 years), by sex, age, caste/ethnicity, ecological belt, province, and persons with disabilities belonging to different sex, caste/ethnicity, and religion
8.6 By 2020, substantially reduce the proportion of youth not in employment, education or training	8.6.1 Proportion of youth (aged 15–24 years) not in education, employment or training	1. Youth (15-24 years) underemployment rate (%) i. Proportion of youth (15-24 years) not in education, employment or training by sex, age, caste/ethnicity, ecological belt, province and persons with disabilities belonging to different sex, caste/ethnicity and religion
8.7 Take immediate and effective measures to eradicate forced labour, end modern slavery and human trafficking and secure the prohibition and elimination of the worst forms of child labour, including recruitment and use of child soldiers, and by 2025 end child labour in all its forms (rephrased)	8.7.1 Proportion and number of children aged 5–17 years engaged in child labour, by sex and age	1. Children working under hazardous conditions (%) (30 to 0) i. Proportion and number of children aged 5-17 years engaged in child labor by sex, age, caste/ ethnicity, location, ecological belts and provinces
8.8 Protect labour rights and promote safe and secure working environments for all workers, including migrant workers, in particular women migrants, and those in precarious employment	8.8.1 Fatal and non-fatal occupational injuries per 100,000 workers, by sex and migrant status (rephrased)	

	8.8.2 Level of national compliance with labour rights (freedom of association and collective bargaining) based on International Labour Organization (ILO) textual sources and national legislation, by sex and migrant status	
8.9 By 2030, devise and implement policies to promote sustainable tourism that creates jobs and promotes local culture and products	8.9.1 Tourism direct GDP as a proportion of total GDP and in growth rate	8.9.1 Tourism direct GDP as a proportion of total GDP and in growth rate (0.8 to3) 1. Tourist arrival (million) (0.8 to3) 2. Tourism revenue (us$) (million) i. Number of laws, regulations and policies promulgated and enforced to integrate cultural and natural heritage protection and promotion in tourism development
	8.9.2 Proportion of jobs in sustainable tourism industries out of total tourism jobs (deleted)	8.9.2. Total tourism jobs: 1. Annual number of jobs in tourism industries ('000) (90 to 1000)
8.10 Strengthen the capacity of domestic financial institutions to encourage and expand access to banking, insurance and financial services for all	8.10.1 (a) Number of commercial bank branches per 100,000 adults and (b) number of automated teller machines (ATMs) per 100,000 adults	8.10.1 (a) Number of commercial bank branches per 100,000 adults (18 to 36) 8.10.1 (b) number of automated teller machines (ATMs) per 100,000 adults (11 to 33) 1. Life insurance coverage (%) (5 to 25) by sex, caste/ethnicity, age, disability, employment status, location, ecological belt, province
	8.10.2 Proportion of adults (15 years and older) with an account at a bank or other financial institution or with a mobile-money-service provider	8.10.2 Proportion of adults (15 years and older) with an account at a bank or other financial institution or with a mobile-money-service provider (34 to 99)
8.a Increase Aid for Trade support for developing countries, in particular least developed countries, including through the Enhanced Integrated Framework for Trade-related Technical Assistance to Least Developed Countries	8.a.1 Aid for Trade commitments and disbursements	

8.b By 2020, develop and operationalize a global strategy for youth employment and implement the Global Jobs Pact of the International Labour Organization	8.b.1 Existence of a developed and operationalized national strategy for youth employment, as adistinct strategy or as part of a national employmentstrategy	8.b.1 Existence of a developed and operationalized national strategy for youth employment, as a distinct strategy or as part of a national employment strategy focused on youths not in education, employment, and training (NEET) and youths belonging to marginalized and vulnerable communities i. Number of countries of labor destinations with which Nepal signed a bilateral labor agreement ensuring fair recruitment, access to justice, and an effective monitoring mechanism (NHRC Nepal)

Goal 9. Build resilient infrastructure, promote inclusive and sustainable industrialization and foster innovation

Goals and targets (from the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development)	Indicators	National Indicators
9.1 Develop quality, reliable, sustainable and resilient infrastructure, including regional and transborder infrastructure, to support economic development and human well-being, with a focus on affordable and equitable access for all	9.1.1 Proportion of the rural population who live within 2 km of an all-season road	1. Road density (km/sq. km) (0.55 to 1.3) 2. Paved road density (km/sq. km) (0.01 to 0.25) 3. Passenger, by mode of transport (road) (%) i. Disable friendly transport services and facilities (NHRIs) ii. Participation of Indigenous peoples (% of the relevant population) in formulation, approval, implementation, monitoring, and evaluation of infrastructure projects believed to be of good quality, reliable, sustainable, and resilient (WCIP) iii. Number of incidences of settlements, land grabbing, land use, or resource extractions/ utilization without Indigenous peoples' free, prior, informed consent (WCIP)
	9.1.2 Passenger and freight volumes, by mode of transport	1. Passenger, by mode of transport (Air) (%)

9.2 Promote inclusive and sustainable industrialization and, by 2030, significantly raise industry's share of employment and gross domestic product, in line with national circumstances, and double its share in least developed countries	9.2.1 Manufacturing value added as a proportion of GDP and per capita	9.2.1 Manufacturing value added as a proportion of GDP and per capita (6.6 to 15) 1. Industry's share in GDP (%) (15 to 25) i. Number of environment-friendly, culturally suitable, socially acceptable, and easy-to-operate enterprises based on traditional occupations, skills, and knowledge provided financial, technical, and material support to modernize them to make their products more profitable, competitive, marketable, and value-added that significantly contribute to GDP
	9.2.2 Manufacturing employment as a proportion of total employment	9.2.2 Manufacturing employment as a proportion of total employment (6.6 to 13), by sex, caste/ethnicity, age, disability, location, ecological belt, province
9.3 Increase the access of small-scale industrial and other enterprises, in particular in developing countries, to financial services, including affordable credit, and their integration into value chains and markets	9.3.1 Proportion of small-scale industries in total industry value added	
	9.3.2 Proportion of small-scale industries with a loan or line of credit	9.3.2 Proportion of small-scale industries with a loan or line of credit (20 to 30) i. Number of legislations to promote traditional occupations such as pastoralism, fishing, shifting cultivation, hunting, and gathering (WCIP) ii. Number of culturally appropriate, environmentally suitable, socially acceptable enterprises based on traditional occupations, skills, and knowledge financially, materially, and technically supported, adapted, and upgraded iii. Volume of consumer goods produced by start-ups and small firms/ enterprises instituted by indigenous and other deprived peoples with the technical and financial support of the government of all levels iv. Number of indigenous households provided technical, material, and financial support by all three levels of governments for farming cardamon (Amomum subulatum), Swertia angustifolia, Artimisia vulgaris, and other high-value medicinal herbs.

9.4 By 2030, upgrade infrastructure and retrofit industries to make them sustainable, with increased resource-use efficiency and greater adoption of clean and environmentally sound technologies and industrial processes, with all countries acting in accordance with their respective capabilities.	9.4.1 CO_2 emission per unit of value added	1. CO_2 per capita in manufacturing and construction value added(grams) (0.04 to 0.04)
9.5 Enhance scientific research, upgrade the technological capabilities of industrial sectors in all countries, in particular developing countries, including, by 2030, encouraging innovation and substantially increasing the number of research and development workers per 1 million people and public and private research and development spending	9.5.1 Research and development expenditure as a proportion of GDP	9.5.1 Research and development expenditure as a proportion of GDP (0.3 to 1.5)
	9.5.2 Researchers (in full-time equivalent) per million inhabitants	1. Enrollment in Science and Technology in proportion to total enrollment (%) (6.8 to 15) 2. Number of patents registered (75 to 1000) i. Number of indigenous research and development workers per 100,000 people
9.a Facilitate sustainable and resilient infrastructure development in developing countries through enhanced financial, technological and technical support to African countries, least developed countries, landlocked developing countries and small island developing States	9.a.1 Total official international support (official development assistance plus other official flows) to infrastructure	
9.b Support domestic technology development, research and innovation in developing countries, including by ensuring a conducive policy environment for, inter alia, industrial diversification and value addition to commodities	9.b.1 Proportion of medium and high-tech industry value added in total value added	9.b.1..... i. Amount of financial support provided to Indigenous peoples, Dalits, Madhesis to start and operate high-tech industries whose products add value to total value.
9.c Significantly increase access to information and communications technology and strive to provide universal and affordable access to the Internet in least developed countries by 2020	9.c.1 Proportion of population covered by a mobile network, by technology	9.c.1 Proportion of population covered by a mobile network, by technology (94.5 to 100), sex, caste/ethnicity, age, disability, employment status, location, ecological belt, province

Goal 10. Reduce inequality within and among countries

Goals and targets (from the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development)	Indicators	National Indicators
10.1 By 2030, progressively achieve and sustain income growth of the bottom 40 per cent of the population at a rate higher than the national average	10.1.1 Growth rates of household expenditure or income per capita among the bottom 40 per cent of the population and the total population	1. Consumption inequality (measured by the Gini coefficient) (0.33 to 0.16)
		2. Income inequality (measured by the Gini coefficient) (0.46 to 0.23) by sex, caste/ethnicity, age, disability, employment status, location, ecological belt, province
		3. Share of bottom 40% of population in total consumption (%) (18.7 to 23.4)
		4. Share of bottom 40% of population in total income (%) (11.9 to 18) by sex, caste/ethnicity, age, disability, employment status, location, ecological belt, province
		5. PALMA ratio (1.3 to 1)
10.2 By 2030, empower and promote the social, economic and political inclusion of all, irrespective of age, sex, disability, race, ethnicity, origin, religion or economic or other status	10.2.1 Proportion of people living below 50 per cent of median income, by sex, age and persons with disabilities	1. Social Empowerment Index (0.41 to 0.7) by sex, caste/ethnicity, age, disability, employment status, location, ecological belt, province
		2. Economic Empowerment Index (0.34 to 0.7) by sex, caste/ethnicity, age, disability, employment status, location, ecological belt, province
		3. Political Empowerment Index (0.65 to 0.85) by sex, caste/ethnicity, age, disability, employment status, location, ecological belt, province i. Proportion of people living below 50 per cent of median income, by sex, age caste/ethnicity and persons with disabilities
10.3 Ensure equal opportunity and reduce inequalities of outcome, including by eliminating discriminatory laws, policies and practices and promoting appropriate legislation, policies and action in this regard	10.3.1.a Proportion of population reporting having personally felt discriminated against or harassed in the previous 12 months on the basis of a ground of discrimination prohibited under international human rights law	10.3.1. Proportion of population reporting having personally felt discriminated against or harassed in the previous 12 months on the basis of a ground of discrimination prohibited under international human rights law, by sex, caste/ethnicity, disability, religion, location—a composite index of discrimination. i. Percentage of respondents reporting discriminatory treatment in general, in government offices, and while accessing services there; no cooperation by neighbor or friend; and discrimination against eating together—composite index [NSIS 2018] ii. Finished primary school on time (ratio of richest vs. poorest quintile) (2.20 to 1)

		iii. Childhood free of stunting (ratio of richest to poorest quintile) (1.60 to 1), by sex, caste/ethnicity, age, disability, employment status, location, ecological belt, province
		10.3.1.b. Proportion of population reporting having personally felt discriminated against or harassed in the previous 12 months on the basis of a ground of discrimination prohibited under international human rights law—a composite of denial of entry or participation. i. Percentage of respondents reporting discrimination in access to/participating in local markets, water sources, milk/dairy farms, schools, public assemblies, public places, tea shops and hotels, and their own religious places—composite index [NSIS 2018] ii. Number of cases of caste discrimination in the previous 12 months iii. Number of cases of human (both individual and collective) rights violations and number of victimized people
10.4 Adopt policies, especially fiscal, wage and social protection policies, and progressively achieve greater equality	10.4.1 Labour share of GDP, comprising wages and social protection transfers	1. Ratio of wage index to consumer price index (2.94 to 3)
	10.4.2 Redistributive impact of fiscal policy	10.4.2. ....
10.5 Improve the regulation and monitoring of global financial markets and institutions and strengthen the implementation of such regulations	10.5.1 Financial Soundness Indicators	1. Proportion of farm households covered by microfinance (%) (24 to 40), by sex, caste/ethnicity, age, disability, employment status, location, ecological belt, province
		2. Financial Risk Index (27 to 1)
		3. Global Competitive Index (Score) (3.9 to 6)
		4. Doing Business Index (country ranking) (105 to 60)
10.6 Ensure enhanced representation and voice for developing countries in decision-making in global international economic and financial institutions in order to deliver more effective, credible, accountable and legitimate institutions	10.6.1 Proportion of members and voting rights of developing countries in international organizations	

10.7 Facilitate orderly, safe, regular and responsible migration and mobility of people, including through the implementation of planned and well-managed migration policies	10.7.1 Recruitment cost borne by employee as a proportion of monthly (yearly) income earned in country of destination	i. Recruitment cost borne by migrant labor (average of cost for Malayasia, South Korea and Middle East-USD) (1000 to 500)
	10.7.2 Number of countries with migration policies that facilitate orderly, safe, regular and responsiblemigration and mobility ofpeople	i. Problems of refugees from Tibet, Bhutan, Myanmar (Rohingya), Pakistan and other countries are addressed on humanitarian grounds with a concrete policy (NHRC)
	10.7.3 Number of people who died or disappeared in the process of migration towards an international destination	
	10.7.4 Proportion of the population who are refugees, by country of origin	i. Number of refugees from country of their origin
10.a Implement the principle of special and differential treatment for developing countries, in particular least developed countries, in accordance with World Trade Organization agreements	10.a.1 Proportion of tariff lines applied to imports from least developed countries and developing countries with zero-tariff	
10.b Encourage official development assistance and financial flows, including foreign direct investment, to States where the need is greatest, in particular least developed countries, African countries, small island developing states, and landlocked developing countries, in accordance with their national plans and programs.	10.b.1 Total resource flows for development, by recipient and donor countries and type of flow (e.g. official development assistance, foreign direct investment and other flows)	
10.c By 2030, reduce to less than 3 per cent the transaction costs of migrant remittances and eliminate remittance corridors with costs higher than 5 per cent	10.c.1 Remittance costs as a proportion of the amount remitted	

Goal 11. Make cities and human settlements inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable

Goals and targets (from the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development)	Indicators	National Indicators
11.1 By 2030, ensure access for all to adequate, safe and affordable housing and basic services and upgrade slums	11.1.1 Proportion of urban population living in slums, informal settlements or inadequate housing	1. Population living in slum and squatters ('000) (500 to 125), by sex, caste/ethnicity, age, disability, employment status, location, ecological belt, province
		2. Household units roofed with thatched/straw roof (%) (19 to 5) by sex, caste/ethnicity, age, disability, employment status, location, ecological belt, province
		3. Households living in safe houses with adequate space (%) (29.8 to 60) by sex, caste/ethnicity, age, disability, employment status, location, ecological belt, province i. Number of houses built for households without shelter or safe houses under Citizens Housing Program (NHRC Nepal)
11.2 By 2030, provide access to safe, affordable, accessible and sustainable transport systems for all, improving road safety, notably by expanding public transport, with special attention to the needs of those in vulnerable situations, women, children, persons with disabilities and older persons	11.2.1 Proportion of population that has convenient access to public transport, by sex, age and persons with disabilities	1. Availability of safe public transport (%) (0.1 to 50) 2. Access to paved road within 30 minutes of walking (%) (51.4 to 80) [NSIS 2018: time to nearest place to catch public transportation], by sex, caste/ethnicity, age, disability, employment status, location, ecological belt, province i. Number of events that sought free, prior, and informed consent of Indigenous peoples' autonomous institutions and compromises reached before approval
		of (1) development/improvement in transport systems and expansion of public transport facilities, (2) developing industrial establishments, (3) exploiting natural resources, and (4) implementing projects that affect their lands, properties, resources, and environment of their territories (WCIP)
11.3 By 2030, enhance inclusive and sustainable urbanization and capacity for participatory, integrated and sustainable human settlement planning and management in all countries	11.3.1 Ratio of land consumption rate to population growth rate	11.3.1 Ratio of land consumption rate to population growth rate by sex, caste/ethnicity, age, disability, employment status, location, ecological belt, province

	11.3.2 Proportion of cities with a direct participation structure of civil society in urban planning and management that operate regularly and democratically	1. Number of planned new cities which are environmentally sound, culturally appropriate, socially safe, sustainable, planned urban centers (number) (10 to 60)
		2. Households residing with 5 and more persons (%) (46.7 to 20) i. Composite Social Inclusion Index ii. Functioning of secular democratic state/ government (Excellent functioning, Good functioning, Neither good nor bad functioning, Bad functioning and Worst functioning)
11.4 Strengthen efforts to protect and safeguard the world's cultural and natural heritage	11.4.1 Total per capita expenditure on the preservation, protection and conservation of all cultural and natural heritage, by source of funding (public, private), type of heritage (cultural, natural) and level of government (national, regional, and local/municipal) (rephrased)	3. Separate masterplans with budget allocations for the protection, preservation, and promotion of natural and cultural heritage (%) (1.15 to 2) by the federal government, provincial governments, and local governments 4. Number and sites of cultural and natural heritage identified, preserved, protected, and conserved with the participation of related peoples (TEBTEBBA). i. Number of communities of heritage sites that received technical, material, and financial support for the protection, conservation, and promotion, and number of persons trained for heritage preservation. ii. Special measures (number and amount) adopted for indigenous youths in the areas of modes of transmission of traditional knowledge, languages and practices, and other aspects of intangible heritage. iii. Number of legislations amended and enacted to identify and protect natural heritage with the cooperation of local peoples iv. Number of traditional institutions relating to tangible and intangible cultural heritage, conflict mitigation/resolution, justice dispensation, community communication, social events celebration, and environment protection revitalized v. Number of languages, oral/aural traditions/literatures, cultural performances/expressions, folklores, folk songs, and traditional institutions of knowledge transmission (intangible cultural heritage) protected and promoted (UNDRIP).

		vi. Budget allocated (amount in US$) and programs/projects (number) implemented to promote multiculturalism and securalism for the elimination of age-old practices and prejudices of the caste system, untouchability, female heteronomy, and cultural hegemony.
11.5 By 2030, significantly reduce the number of deaths and the number of people affected and substantially decrease the direct economic losses relative to global gross domestic product caused by disasters, including water-related disasters, with a focus on protecting the poor and people in vulnerable situations	11.5.1 Number of deaths, missing persons and directly affected persons attributed to disasters per 100,000 population	1. Deaths due to natural disaster (number), by sex, caste/ethnicity, age, disability, employment status, location, ecological belt, province
		2. Injuries due to disaster (number) (22, 300 to 0), by sex, caste/ethnicity, age, disability, employment status, location, ecological belt, province i. Houses swept away/ flooded by landslides/ soil erosion by sex, caste/ ethnicity, age, disability, employment status, location, ecological belt, province ii. Volumes/quantities of crops destroyed by heavy rains, flood, hail stones iii. Number of domesticated animals killed
	11.5.2 Direct economic loss in relation to global GDP, damage to critical infrastructure and number of disruptions to basic services, attributed to disasters	
11.6 By 2030, reduce the adverse per capita environmental impact of cities, including by paying special attention to air quality and municipal and other waste management	11.6.1 Proportion of municipal solid waste collected and managed in controlled facilities out of total municipal waste generated, by cities	
	11.6.2 Annual mean levels of fine particulate matter (e.g. PM2.5 and PM10) in cities (population weighted)	1. Concentration of Total Suspension Particulates (µg/m3,24 hours' average) (230 to115)
		2. Concentration of Particulate Matters (µg/m3, 24 hours' average) (120 to 50)
		3. Concentration of PM2.5 (µg/m3, 24 hours' average) (40 to 20)
		4. Concentration of Sulphur Dioxide (µg/m3, 24 hours' average) (70 to 70)
11.7 By 2030, provide universal access to safe, inclusive and accessible, green and public spaces, in particular for women and children, older persons and persons with disabilities	11.7.1 Average share of the built-up area of cities that is open space for public use for all, by sex, age and persons with disabilities	

	11.7.2 Proportion of persons victim of physical or sexual harassment, by sex, age, disability status and place of occurrence, in the previous 12 months	1. Proportion of persons victim of physical or sexual harassment in the previous 12 months (%) (14 to 0, by sex, caste/ethnicity, age, disability, employment status, location, ecological belt, province
11.a Support positive economic, social and environmental links between urban, peri-urban and rural areas by strengthening national and regional development planning	11.a.1 Number of countries that have national urban policies or regional development plans that (a) respond to population dynamics; (b) ensure balanced territorial development; and (c) increase local fiscal space (rephrased)	
11.b By 2020, substantially increase the number of cities and human settlements adopting and implementing integrated policies and plans towards inclusion, resource efficiency, mitigation and adaptation to climate change, resilience to disasters, and develop and implement, in line with the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015–2030, holistic disaster risk management at all levels	11.b.1 Number of countries that adopt and implement national disaster risk reduction strategies in line with the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015–2030	
	11.b.2 Proportion of local governments that adopt and implement local disaster risk reduction strategies in line with national disaster risk reduction strategies	
11.c Support least developed countries, including through financial and technical assistance, in building sustainable and resilient buildings utilizing local materials	11.c.3 Proportion of financial support to the least developed countries that is allocated to the construction and retrofitting of sustainable, resilient and resource-efficient buildings utilizing local materials	

Goal 12. Ensure sustainable consumption and production patterns

Goals and targets (from the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development)	Indicators	National Indicators
12.1 Implement the 10-Year Framework of Programmes on Sustainable Consumption and Production Patterns, with all countries acting, with developed countries taking the lead, considering the development and capabilities of developing countries.	12.1.1 Number of countries developing, adopting or implementing policy instruments aimed at supporting the shift to sustainable consumption and production (rephrased)	
12.2 By 2030, achieve the sustainable management and efficient use of natural resources	12.2.1 Material footprint, material footprint per capita, and material footprint per GDP	1. Proportion of total water resource used (%) (10 to 20)
	12.2.2 Domestic material consumption, domestic material consumption per capita, and domestic material consumption per GDP	1. Use of fossil fuel energy consumption (% of total) (12.5 to 15)
		2. Total carbon sink (tons) in forest area (2276 to 3200)
		3. Land use for agricultural production (cereal as % of cultivated land) (80 to 75)
		4. Soil organic matter (%) (1h to 4)
		5. Consumption of Wood per capita cubic meter) (0.11 to 0.05)
12.3 By 2030, halve per capita global food waste at the retail and consumer levels and reduce food losses along production and supply chains, including post-harvest losses	12.3.1 (a) Food loss index and (b) food waste index	1. Food waste rate at consumer level (waste per capita)
		2. Post-harvest loss (%) (15 to 1)
		3. Food loss index (% of supply, Cereal) (10 to 2)
12.4 By 2020, achieve the environmentally sound management of chemicals and all wastes throughout their life cycle, in accordance with agreed international frameworks, and significantly reduce their release to air, water, and soil in order to minimize their adverse impacts on human health and the environment.	12.4.1 Number of parties to international multilateral environmental agreements on hazardous waste, and other chemicals that meet their commitments and obligations in transmitting information as required by each relevant agreement	1. Use of plastics (per capita in gram per day) (2.7 to 0)
	12.4.2 (a) Hazardous waste generated per capita; and (b) proportion of hazardous waste treated, by type of treatment	2. Disposal of liquid Industrial waste
		3. Disposal of solid Industrial waste

12.5 By 2030, substantially reduce waste generation through prevention, reduction, recycling and reuse	12.5.1 National recycling rate, tons of material recycled	12.5.a Re-cycling of plastics in manufacturing industries (%of industries) (24.5 to 90) 12.5.b Re-use of glass and metal products in manufacturing industries (% of industries) (7.2 to 90)
12.6 Encourage companies, especially large and transnational companies, to adopt sustainable practices and to integrate sustainability information into their reporting cycle	12.6.1 Number of companies publishing sustainability reports	12.6.1 Number of companies publishing sustainability reports
12.7 Promote public procurement practices that are sustainable, in accordance with national policies and priorities	12.7.1 Degree of sustainable public procurement policies and action plan implementation (rephrased)	
12.8 By 2030, ensure that people everywhere have the relevant information and awareness for sustainable development and lifestyles in harmony with nature	12.8.1 Extent to which (i) global citizenship education and (ii) education for sustainable development (including climate change education) are mainstreamed in (a) national education policies; (b) curricula; (c) teacher education; and (d) student assessment	
12.a Support developing countries to strengthen their scientific and technological capacity to move towards more sustainable patterns of consumption and production.	12.a.1 Installed renewable energy-generating capacity in developing countries (in watts per capita) (changed version)	
12.b Develop and implement tools to monitor sustainable development impacts for sustainable tourism that creates jobs and promotes local culture and products.	12.b.1 Implementation of standard accounting tools to monitor the economic and environmental aspects of tourism sustainability (changed version)	
12.c Rationalize inefficient fossil-fuel subsidies that encourage wasteful consumption by removing market distortions in accordance with national circumstances, including by restructuring taxation and phasing out those harmful subsidies, where they exist, to reflect their environmental impacts, taking fully into account the specific needs and conditions of developing countries, and minimizing the possible adverse impacts on their	12.c.1 Number of fossil-fuel subsidies (production and consumption) per unit of GDP (rephrased version)	

development in a manner that protects the poor and the affected communities.		

Goal 13. Take urgent action to combat climate change and its impacts

Goals and targets (from the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development)	Indicators	National Indicators
13.1 Strengthen resilience and adaptive capacity to climate-related hazards and natural disasters in all countries	13.1.1 Number of deaths, missing persons and directly affected persons attributed to disasters per 100,000 population	13.1.1 Number of deaths, missing persons and directly affected persons attributed to disasters per 100,000 population
	13.1.2 Number of countries that adopt and implement national disaster risk reduction strategies in line with the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015–2030	
	13.1.3 Proportion of local governments that adopt and implement local disaster risk reduction strategies in line with national disaster risk reduction strategies	1. Green House Gas emission from transport sector (%) (12 to 6)
		2. Green House Gas emission from industrial sector (%) (12 to 6)
		3. Green House Gas emission from commercial sector (%)(5 to 2.5)
		4. GHG emission (CH4) from Agri sector (Gg) (614 to 796)
		5. GHG emission (N2O) from Agri sector (Gg) (32.6 to 39.8)
		6. GHG emission (CO2) from Agri sector (Gg) (23014 to 29063)
		7. GHG emission (CO2) from Industrial sector (cement and lime) (Gg) (632 to 316)
		8. GHG emission (CO2) from energy sector (Industrial, transport &others) (Gg) (7959 to 3979) i. Proportion of local governments that adopting and are implementing local disaster

		risk reduction strategies in line with national disaster risk reduction strategies
13.2 Integrate climate change measures into national policies, strategies and planning	13.2.1 Number of countries with nationally determined contributions, long-term strategies, national adaptation plans and adaptation communications, as reported to the secretariat of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (rephrased version)	a) Local adaptation plan preparation (number of village councils) (4 to 84)
		b) Community level adaptation plan (31 to 750)
		c) Implementation of adaptation plan (0 to 60)
		d) Climate smart villages (0 to170)
		e) Climate smart farming (0 to 500)
	13.2.2 Total greenhouse gas emissions per year	
13.3 Improve education, awareness-raising and human and institutional capacity on climate change mitigation, adaptation, impact reduction and early warning	13.3.1 Extent to which (i) global citizenship education and(ii) education for sustainable development are mainstreamed in (a) national education policies; (b) curricula; (c) teacher education; and (d) student assessment (repetition with 12.8.1) 13.3.1. Number of countries that have integrated mitigation, adaptation, impact education and early warning into primary, secondary and tertiary curricula (deleted version)	Proportion of schools covered by climate change education (%) (80 to 100)
	13.3.2 Number of countries that have communicated the strengthening of institutional, systemic and individual capacity-building to implement adaptation, mitigation and technology transfer, and development actions	1. Number of trained persons in climate change mitigation, by sex, caste/ ethnicity, age, disability, employment status, location, ecological belt, province
		2. Number of trained persons (local planners) in climate change adaptation, by sex, caste/ethnicity, age, disability, employment status, location, ecological belt, province (791 to 3000)

13.a Implement the commitment undertaken by developed- country parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change to a goal of mobilizing jointly $100 billion annually by 2020 from all sources to address the needs of developing countries in the context of meaningful mitigation actions and transparency on implementation and fully operationalize the Green Climate Fund through its capitalization as soon as possible.	13.a.1 Amounts provided and mobilized in United States dollars per year in relation to the continued existing collective mobilization goal of the $100 billion commitment through to 2025 (revised version)	
13.b Promote mechanisms for raising capacity for effective climate change-related planning and management in least developed countries and small island developing States, including focusing on women, youth and local and marginalized communities	13.b.1 Number of least developed countries and small island developing states with nationally determined contributions, long-term strategies, national adaptation plans and adaptation communications, as reported to the secretariat of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (changed version)	

Goal 15. Protect, restore and promote sustainable use of terrestrial ecosystems, sustainably manage forests, combat desertification, and halt and reverse land degradation and halt biodiversity loss.

Goals and targets (from the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development)	Indicators	National Indicators
15.1 By 2020, ensure the conservation, restoration and sustainable use of terrestrial and inland fresh water ecosystems and their services, in particular forests, wetlands, mountains and dry lands, in line with obligations under international agreements	15.1.1 Forest area as a proportion of total landarea	1. Forest under community-based management (% of total dense forest areas) (39 to 42) i. The extent and number of conflicts/ dissatisfactions and negotiations/reconciliation events regarding Indigenous peoples' users' rights
	15.1.2 Proportion of important sites for terrestrial and freshwater biodiversity that are covered by protectedareas, by ecosystemtype	1. Protected area (including forest, in % of total land area) (23.2 to 23.3)

		2. Conservation of lakes, wetlands, and ponds (number) (1727 to 5000) i. The extent and number of conflicts/ dissatisfactions and negotiations/reconciliation events regarding Indigenous peoples' users' rights
15.2 By 2020, promote the implementation of sustainable management of all types of forests, halt deforestation, restore degraded forests and substantially increase afforestation and reforestation globally	15.2.1 Progress towards sustainable forestmanagement	1. Handover of forests to leasehold forest groups (000 hectare) (44.6 to 44.6) i. The extent and number of conflicts/ dissatisfactions and negotiations/reconciliation events regarding Indigenous peoples' users' rights
		2. Afforestation in public and private lands (hectare per annum) (0 to 5000)
		3. Additional plantation (seedlings in million per annum)
15.3 By 2030, combat desertification, restore degraded land and soil, including land affected by desertification, drought and floods, and strive to achieve a land degradation- neutral world	15.3.1 Proportion of land that is degraded over total land area	1. Forest Density (Average number of trees Per Hectare) (430 to 645)
		2. Conservation of rivulet & river banks through bio-engineering (km) (1675 to 10000)
15.4 By 2030, ensure the conservation of mountain ecosystems, including their biodiversity, in order to enhance their capacity to provide benefits that are essential for sustainable development	15.4.1 Coverage by protected areas of important sites for mountain biodiversity	1. Potentially dangerous lakes (%) (0.37 to 0)
	15.4.2 Mountain Green Cover Index	1. Mountain ecosystems covered by the protected areas (%) (67.8 to 70)
15.5 Take urgent and significant action to reduce the degradation of natural habitats, halt the loss of biodiversity and, by 2020, protect and prevent the extinction of threatened species	15.5.1 Red List Index	1. Threatened flora (medicinal & aromatic plants) (%) (0.48 to 0)
		2. Threatened fauna (mammals, birds, reptiles, amphibians, fishes, insects, Platy helminths, mollusks, etc.) (%) (0.81 to 0)
		3. Wild tigers (number) (198 to 225)
		4. Rhino (number) (534 to 783)
		5. Community led anti-poaching units mobilized (number) (400 to 400)

15.6 Promote fair and equitable sharing of the benefits arising from the utilization of genetic resources and promote appropriate access to such resources, as internationally agreed	15.6.1 Number of countries that have adopted legislative, administrative and policy frameworks to ensure fair and equitable sharing of benefits	i. Number of legislative, administrative and policy frameworks adopted by Nepal to ensure fair and equitable sharing of benefits arising from the utilization of genetic resources to all concerned people
15.7 Take urgent action to end poaching and trafficking of protected species of flora and fauna and address both demand and supply of illegal wildlife products	15.7.1 Proportion of traded wildlife that was poached or illicitly trafficked	15.7.1 Proportion of traded wildlife that was poached or illicitly trafficked
15.8 By 2020, introduce measures to prevent the introduction and significantly reduce the impact of invasive alien species on land and water ecosystems and control or eradicate the priority species	15.8.1 Proportion of countries adopting relevant national legislation and adequately resourcing the prevention or control of invasive alien species	
15.9 By 2020, integrate ecosystem and biodiversity values into national and local planning, development processes, poverty reduction strategies and accounts	15.9.1 (a) Number of countries that have established national targets in accordance with or similar to Aichi Biodiversity Target 2 of the Strategic Plan for Biodiversity 2011–2020 in their national biodiversity strategy and action plans and the progress reported towards these targets; and (b) integration of biodiversity into national accounting and reporting systems, defined as implementation of the System of Environmental-Economic Accounting (revised)	1. Plant (floral) species under conservation plan (number) (3 to 15) 2. Animal (faunal) species under conservation plan (number) (5 to 15)
15.a Mobilize and significantly increase financial resources from all sources to conserve and sustainably use biodiversity and ecosystems	15.a.1 (a) Official development assistance on conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity; and (b) revenue generated and finance mobilized from biodiversity-relevant economic instruments (rephrased)	
15.b Mobilize significant resources from all sources and at all levels to finance sustainable forest management and provide adequate incentives to developing countries to advance such management, including for conservation and reforestation.	15.b.1 (a) Official development assistance on conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity; and (b) revenue generated and finance mobilized from biodiversity-relevant economic instruments (15.a.1. repeated)	

15.c Enhance global support for efforts to combat poaching and trafficking of protected species, including by increasing the capacity of local communities to pursue sustainable livelihood opportunities	15.c.1 Proportion of traded wildlife that was poached or illicitly trafficked	

Goal 16. Promote peaceful and inclusive societies for sustainable development, provide access to justice for all, and build effective, accountable, and inclusive institutions at all levels.

Goals and targets (from the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development)	Indicators	National Indicators
1. Significantly reduce social and cultural discrimination everywhere. 16.1 Significantly reduce all forms of violence and related death rates everywhere.	1. Number of people subjected to social and cultural discrimination by major social tgroups (Dalits, Indigenous peoples, Madhesis, Muslims) 16.1.1 Number of victims of intentional homicide per 100,000 populations, by sex and age	1. Number of people subjected to social and cultural discrimination by major social groups like Dalits, Indigenous peoples, Madhesis, and Muslims 1. Direct deaths from armed and violent conflict (number)
	16.1.2 Conflict-related deaths per 100,000 populations, by sex, age, and cause	
	16.1.3 Proportion of population subjected to (a) physical violence, (b) psychological violence, and (c) sexual violence in the previous 12 months	16.1.3. Proportion of population subjected to (a) physical violence, (b) psychological violence, and (c) sexual violence in the previous 12 months, by sex, caste/ethnicity, age, location i. Independent and credible mechanism for investigation of torture and the statutory limitation in line with the Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman, or Degrading Treatment or Punishment established and number of victims provided justice (NHRC)
	16.1.4 Proportion of population that feels safe walking alone around the area they live	i. Incidences of crime, burglary, vandalism, physical attack/harassment, and group fighting per 100,000 populations in a year (ISEI)

16.2 End abuse, exploitation, trafficking, and all forms of violence against and torture of children.	16.2.1 Proportion of children aged 1–17 years who experienced any physical punishment and/or psychological aggression by caregivers in the past month	1. Children age 1-14 years who experienced psychological aggression or physical punishment during the last one month) (%) (64 to 0) i. Complaint procedures, CRC-OP3 ratified, and planned actions implemented to end child marriage, child labor, corporeal punishment, and child sexual abuse (NHRC Nepal)
	16.2.2 Number of victims of human trafficking per 100,000 populations, by sex, age, and form of exploitation	1. Children trafficking to abroad (including India) per annum (reported number) (81.7 to 0) i. Human Trafficking and Transportation Control Act amended in line with the UN TIP Protocol for the effective control of human trafficking, especially women and children, and for developing efficient mechanisms for survivors (NHRC)
	16.2.3 Proportion of young women and men aged 18–29 years who experienced sexual violence by age 18	16.2.3..... i. Coverage of a public education campaign to end abuse, exploitation, trafficking, and all forms of violence against women, children, and persons of marginalized communities using multiple types of media in multiple local languages and inter-personal communication
16.3 Promote the rule of law at the national and international levels and ensure equal access to justice for all.	16.3.1 Proportion of victims of violence in the previous 12 months who reported their victimization to competent authorities or other officially recognized conflict resolution mechanisms	1. Transparency, accountability, and corruption in public (score out of 6) (3 to 5) i. Number of laws amended and new laws enacted by federal, provincial, and local levels to strengthen the effectiveness of the justice system, enhance efficiency of the court system, promote legal pluralism for ensuring equitable and affordable access to justice, and provide high-quality, equitable coverage of service delivery (UNDP 2017). ii. Number of conducive legislations to make service providers sensitive, responsive, alert, benign to service seekers, and fully control bribery/ corruption, prejudices, ill-treatment, and nepotism/casteism. iii. Number of complaints registered against denial of services and discriminatory treatment on the basis of caste or ethnicity, gender, religion, language, and location of origin

		iv. National Action Plan for the implementation of ILO 169, covering free, prior, and informed consent; the right to self-determination, autonomy, and self-governance; and self-determined development formulated and brought into operation within one year (NHRC Nepal). v. Number of cases of caste-based discrimination, violence reported or registered, and number of victims received justice (NHRC) vi. Specific laws enacted for the protection of human rights defenders and the creation of a conducive environment for their work (NHRC)
	16.3.2 Unsentenced detainees as a proportion of overall prison population	1. Proportion of seized small arms and light weapons that are recorded and traced, in accordance with international standards and legal instruments
		2. Good governance (Reported along a scale of -2.5 to 2.5. Higher values correspond to good governance) for control of corruption (-0.78 to 2)
	16.3.3 Proportion of the population who have experienced a dispute in the past two years and who accessed a formal or informal dispute resolution mechanism, by type of mechanism	i. Proportion of population who have experienced dispute or conflict in the past two years and access to (1) local judicial committee under local government, (2) local traditional institution, and (3) court arbitration section for dispute resolution
16.4 By 2030, significantly reduce illicit financial and arms flows, strengthen the recovery and return of stolen assets, and combat all forms of organized crime.	16.4.1 Total value of inward and outward illicit financial flows (in current United States dollars)	
	16.4.2 Proportion of seized, found, or surrendered arms whose illicit origin or context has been traced or established by a competent authority in line with international instruments	
16.5 Substantially reduce corruption and bribery in all their forms.	16.5.1 Proportion of persons who had at least one contact with a public official and who paid a bribe to a public official or were asked for a bribe	1. People's perception of corruption (% of people with at least one instance in the past 12 months that required giving a bribe/ present) (corruption index score) (29 to 0)

	by those public officials during the previous 12 months	
	16.5.2 Proportion of businesses that had at least one contact with a public official and that paid a bribe to a public official or were asked for a bribe by those public officials during the previous 12 months	16.5.2 …. ….. i. (1) Number of persons convicted of bribery and corruption, (2) total amount of money/ property amassed in such way seized and (3) imprisoned … persons for less than 5 years, …..persons to 5 to 10 years and … persons for more than 10 years?
16.6. Develop effective, accountable, and transparent institutions at all levels.	16.6.1 Primary government expenditures as a proportion of the original approved budget, by sector (or by budget codes or similar)	16.6.1 …. ….
	16.6.2 Proportion of population satisfied with their last experience of public services	16.6.2 1. System of performance evaluation of service providers/duty bearers by service seekers established in each office (highly satisfactory, satisfactory, so-so, bad, and worst) and report published on a trimester basis and nationally every year. 2. Proportion of state institutions/bodies with the right people with the right skills available at the right time for public services and program/project implementation (UNDP 2017)
		3. Number of officials taken actions against refusing to file First Information Reports (FIRs) and failing to undertake criminal investigations (NHRIs)
16.7 Ensure responsive, inclusive, participatory, and representative decision-making at all levels.	16.7.1 Proportions of positions in national and local institutions, including (a) the legislatures; (b) the public service; and (c) the judiciary, compared to national distributions, by sex, age, persons with disabilities, and population groups (rephrased)	1. Proportions of positions in national, provincial, and local institutions, including (a) the legislatures; (b) the public services; and (c) the judiciary, compared to national distributions by caste/ethnicity, sex, age, persons with disabilities, and other population groups

	16.7.2 Proportion of population who believe decision-making is inclusive and responsive, by sex, age, disability, and population group	1. Proportions of decision-making positions held by women in public institutions (15 to 35) a. Proportions of decision-making positions of public institutions held by diverse social groups (caste/ethnic groups including Dalits and Indigenous peoples, Madhesis, Muslims, and others) b. Number of persons and organizations/ institutions belonging to Indigenous peoples and other marginalized communities provided financial and technical support to enhance their capacity for meaningful participation. c. Institutions established and mechanisms developed with adequate resources at all levels of governments to protect persons with disabilities belonging to different social groups from exploitation, violence, and abuse from both within and outside the home (NHRC)
16.8 Broaden and strengthen the participation of developing countries in the institutions of global governance.	16.8.1 Proportion of members and voting rights of developing countries in international organizations	
16.9 By 2030, provide legal identity for all, including birth registration.	16.9.1 Proportion of children under 5 years of age whose births have been registered with a civil authority, by age	16.9.1 Proportion of children under 5 years of age whose births have been registered with a civil authority by age (58.1 to 100) 1. Number of groups/ethnicities recognized as Indigenous peoples/nationalities by relevant law 2. Number of LGBTIQ who received citizenship IDs reflecting their preferred gender (NHRC) 3. Proportion of population aged 16+ years who have received citizenship cards/papers
16.10 Ensure public access to information and protect fundamental freedoms in accordance with national legislation and international agreements.	16.10.1 Number of verified cases of killing, kidnapping, enforced disappearance, arbitrary detention, and torture of journalists, associated media personnel, trade unionists, and human rights advocates in the previous 12 months	16.10.1.. i. Number of cases of alleged killings, kidnapping, forced disappearance, arbitrary detention, and torture investigated respecting the right to life and following the principles on the use of force and firearms as recommended by NHRC Nepal in the last 12 months (NHRC).

	16.10.2 Number of countries that adopt and implement constitutional, statutory, and/or policy guarantees for public access to information	16.10.2 …. ….
16.a Strengthen relevant national institutions, including through international cooperation, for building capacity at all levels, in particular in developing countries, to prevent violence and combat terrorism and crime.	16.a.1 Existence of independent national human rights institutions in compliance with the Paris Principles	1. The Constitutional National Human Rights Commission (NHRC) exists in Nepal in compliance with the Paris Principles to protect human rights and prevent violence, crime, and terrorism. 2. Number of cases of human rights violations recommended by the NHRC to the government for necessary actions 3. Number of offenders/violators of human rights, criminals, and terrorists brought under legal jurisdiction and convicted in the last 12 months
16.b Promote and enforce non-discriminatory laws and policies for sustainable development.	16.b.1 Proportion of population reporting having personally felt discriminated against or harassed in the previous 12 months on the basis of a ground of	
	discrimination prohibited under international human rights law	

Goal 17. Strengthen the means of implementation and revitalize the Global Partnership for Sustainable Development

Goals and targets (from the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development)	Indicators	National Indicators
Finance		
17.1 Strengthen domestic resource mobilization,including through international support to developing countries,to improve domestic capacity for tax and other revenue collection	17.1.1 Total government revenue as a proportion of GDP, bysource	17.1.1 Total government revenue as a proportion of GDP, bysource (19.1 to 30)
	17.1.2 Proportion of domestic budget fundedby domestictaxes	17.1.2 Proportion of domestic budget fundedby domestictaxes (76 to 80)
17.2 Developed countries to implement fully theirofficial development assistance commitments, includingthe commitment by many developed countries to achieve the target of 0.7 per cent of gross national income for official development assistance (ODA/GNI) to developing countries and 0.15 to 0.20 per cent of ODA/GNI to leastdeveloped countries; ODA providers are encouraged to consider setting a target to provide at least 0.20 per cent of ODA/GNI to least developed countries	17.2.1 Net official development assistance, total andto least developed countries, as a proportion ofthe Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) Development Assistance Committee donors' gross national income (GNI)	17.2.1 .... i. Proportion of net development assistance of development partners invested on targeted interventions aimed at "No One Leave Behind"
17.3 Mobilize additional financial resources for developing countries from multiplesources	17.3.1 Foreign direct investment, official development assistance and South-South cooperation as a proportion of gross nationalincome (Slightly revised)	a. Official development assistance as a proportion of total domestic budget, (%) (15.1 to 18)
		b. Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) as a proportion of total domestic budget (1.9
		c. South-south cooperation as a proportion of total domestic budget
		d. FDI as a proportion of GDP (Inward stock) (%) (4.8 to 20)
	17.3.2 Volume of remittances (in United States dollars) as a proportion of totalGDP	17.3.2 Volume of remittances (in United States dollars) as a proportion of totalGDP (29.1 to 35)

17.4 Assist developing countries in attaining long-term debt sustainability through coordinated policies aimed at fostering debt financing, debt relief, and debt restructuring, as appropriate, and address the external debt of highly indebted poor countries to reduce debt distress.	17.4.1 Debt service as a proportion of exports ofgoods and services	17.4.1 Debt service as a proportion of exports ofgoods and services (12.6 to 15) 1. Outstanding Debt to GDP Ratio (%) (26.5 to 35)
17.5 Adopt and implement investment promotionregimes for least developedcountries	17.5.1 Number of countries that adopt and implement investment promotion regimes for developingcountries, including the least developedcountries	17.5.1 Number of countries that adopt and implement investment promotion regimes for developingcountries, including the least developedcountries i. Number of countries that provided technical and financial support to Nepal to increase and commercialize its native products like cardamom (Amomum subulatum), ciraito (Swertia angustifolia), titepati (Artimisia vulgaris), Himalayan drinking water
Technology		
17.6 Enhance North-South, South-South and triangular regional and international cooperation on and access to science, technology and innovation and enhance knowledge- sharing on mutually agreed terms, including through improved coordination among existing mechanisms, in particular at the United Nations level, and through a global technology facilitation mechanism	17.6.1 Fixed **Internet** broad band subscriptions per100 inhabitants, by speed (rephrased)	17.6.1 Number of science and/or technology cooperation agreements and programs between countries, by type of cooperation (deleted version) 17.6.2 Fixed Internet broadband subscriptions per 100 inhabitants, by speed and by sex, caste/ethnicity, age, marital status, location, ecological belt/ region of the subscribed persons/clients 1. Internet Density (per 100 person) (49.8 to 95) by sex, caste/ethnicity, age, marital status, location, ecological belt/region
17.7 Promote the development, transfer, disseminationand diffusion of environmentally sound technologiesto developing countries on favourable terms, including on concessional and preferential terms, as mutually agreed	17.7.1 Total amount of funding for developing countries to promote the development, transfer, dissemination and diffusion of environmentally soundtechnologies	
17.8 Fully operationalize the technology bank and science, technology and innovation capacity-building mechanism for least developed countries	..... 17.8.1 Proportion of individuals using theInternet	..... 17.8.1 i. Proportion of individuals using theInternet /Proportion of Internet users by sex, caste/ethnicity, location, ecological belt and province

by 2017 and enhance the use of enabling technology, in particular informationand communicationstechnology		
Capacity-building		
17.9 Enhance international support for implementing effective and targeted capacity-building in developing countries to support national plans to implement all the Sustainable Development Goals, including through North-South, South-South, and triangular cooperation.	17.9.1 Dollar value of financial and technicalassistance (including through North-South, South-Southand triangular cooperation) committed to developing countries	
Trade		
17.10 Promote a universal, rules-based, open, non-discriminatory and equitable multilateral trading system under the World Trade Organization, including through the conclusion of negotiations under its Doha Development Agenda	17.10.1 Worldwide weighted tariff-average	
17.11 Significantly increase the exports of developing countries, in particular with a view to doubling the least developed countries' share of global exports by 2020	17.11.1 Developing countries' and least developed countries' share of global exports	
17.12 Realize timely implementation of duty-free and quota-free market access on a lasting basis for all least developed countries, consistent with World Trade Organization decisions, including by ensuring that preferential rules of origin applicable to imports from least developed countries are transparent and simple and contribute to facilitating market access.	17.12.1 Weighted average tariffs faced by developing countries, least developed countries and small island developing States (weighted added)	
Systemic issues		
Policy and institutional coherence		
17.13 Enhance global macroeconomic stability, including through policy coordination and policy coherence	17.13.1 Macroeconomic Dashboard	
17.14 Enhance policy coherence for sustainable development	17.14.1 Number of countries with mechanisms in place to enhance policy coherence of sustainable development	

17.15 Respect each country's policy space and leadership to establish and implement policies for poverty eradication and sustainable development	17.15.1 Extent of use of country-owned results frameworks and planning tools by providers of development cooperation	17.15.1 Extent of use of country-owned results frameworks and planning tools by providers of development cooperation
Multi-stakeholder partnerships		
17.16 Enhance the Global Partnership for Sustainable Development, complemented by multi-stakeholder partnerships that mobilize and share knowledge, expertise, technology, and financial resources to support the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals in all countries, in particular developing countries.	17.16.1 Number of countries reporting progress in multi-stakeholder development effectiveness monitoring frameworks that support the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals	17.16.1 Number of countries reporting progress in multi- stakeholder development effectiveness monitoring frameworks that support the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals
17.17 Encourage and promote effective public, public- private and civil society partnerships, building on the experience and resourcing strategies of partnerships	17.17.1 Amount in United States dollars committed to public-private partnerships for infrastructure (for infrastructure added)	
Data, monitoring and accountability		
17.18 By 2020, enhance capacity-building support to developing countries, including for least developed countries and small island developing States, to increase significantly the availability of high-quality, timely and reliable data disaggregated by income, gender, age, race, ethnicity, migratory status, disability, geographic location and other characteristics relevant in national contexts (rephrased)	17.18.1 Statistical capacity indicator for Sustainable Development Goal monitoring (revised)	17.18.1 Proportion of sustainable development indicators produced at the national level with full disaggregation when relevant to the target, in accordance with the Fundamental Principles of Official Statistics (changed version)
	17.18.2 Number of countries that have national statistical legislation that complies with the Fundamental Principles of Official Statistics	17.18.2 Number of countries that have national statistical legislation that complies with the Fundamental Principles of Official Statistics
	17.18.3 Number of countries with a national statistical plan that is fully funded and under implementation, by source of funding	17.18.3 Number of countries with a national statistical plan that is fully funded and under implementation, by source of funding
17.19 By 2030, build on existing initiatives to develop measurements of progress on sustainable development that complement gross domestic product, and support statistical capacity-building in developing countries	17.19.1 Dollar value of all resources made available to strengthen statistical capacity in developing countries	

	17.19.2 Proportion of countries that (a) have conducted at least one population and housing census in the last 10 years; and (b) have achieved 100 per cent birth registration and 80 per cent death registration	1. Proportion of children under 5 years of age whose births have been registered (58.1 to 100)

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Annex 1

9. Annex 1: List of indigenous experts, field researchers and key informants (participants of in-depth interviews, interactive sessions and focus group discussions)

1. Mr Dammar Rai, Development Consultant, Sangkhuwasabha, currently in Kathmandu
2. Mr. Shambhu Rai, Development Consultant, Lalitpur
3. Mr. Dhruba Menyangbo, Indigenous activist/Political Scientist, Itahari, Sunsari
4. Mr. Bhimsen Lingdam, Indigenous activist, Dhankutta
5. Dr. L.B. Pun. Indigenous expert/Sociologist, Bhaktapur
6. Mr. Aita Khajum, Key Informant, Taplejung
7. Mr. Netra Tumbahangphe, Development Consultant, Terathum, currently in Kathmandu
8. Dr. Krishna Sarbahari, Indigenous expert, journalist/key informant, Dang/Kathmandu
9. Mr. Madhuraj Kerung, Indigenous activist/intellectual, Panchthar
10. Mr. Dilendra Kurumbang, Linguist, Field researcher, Panchthar
11. Mr. Raj Kumar Bote, Field researcher/ Key informant, Nawalparasi
12. Mr. Harichan Chhantyal, Field researcher/Key informant, Baglung
13. Mr. Khagendra Pun Magar, Field researcher/ Key informant, Dailekh
14. Ms. Rita Majhi, Field researcher/ Key informant/women's rights advocate, Kabhrepalanchok
15. Ms. Bina Pahari, Field researcher/ Key informant/women's rights advocate, Lalitpur
16. Mr. Surya Narayan Hasda, Field researcher/Key informant, Morang
17. Mr. Amrit Yonjan, Linguist/key informant, Kathmandu
18. Mr. Keshar Menyangbo, President, Pathivara-Yangwarak Municipality, Taplejung
19. Mr. Arjunbabu Mabuhang, Mayor, Laliguras Municipality, Terathum
20. Mr. Amar Tumyahang, Linguist/Key informant, Taplejung recently in Kathmandu
21. Ms. Chinimayan Majhi, Chair, NIWF, Ramechhap/Kathmandu
22. Ms. Junita Dewan, NIWF, Key informant, Kathmandu

23. Ms. Pratima Gurung, NIDA, Key informant, Kathmandu
24. Mr. Kashiram Chaudhary, Field researcher/Indigenous rights advocate, Bardiya
25. Mr. Birbal Rai, Mayor, Sadananda Municipaity, Bhojpur
26. Ms. Omkumari Tharu, Deputy Mayor, Madhyabindu Municipality, Nawalparasi
27. Ms. Rita Kummari Chaudhary, Deputy Mayor, Chaudandi Municipality, Udayapur
28. Mr. Om Bahadur Gurung, President, Mapaidi/Dordi Municipality, Lamjung
29. Dr. Mukta Sing Lama Tamang, Social inclusion expert/ Anthropologist, Kabhrepalanchok/Kathmandu
30. Prof. Dr. Yogendra B. Gurung, Indigenous expert/ Demographer, Kirtipur, Kathmandu
31. Mr. Jyoti Danuwar, Development consultant/Sociologist, Siraha
32. Mr. Yogeshor Rai, Environmentalist, Taplejung/Bhaktapur
33. Mr. Ramji Kongren, Indigenous Rights Advocate/Key informant, Dhankutta
34. Ms. Lal Kumari Rokka, Field researcher/Key informant, Myagdi
35. Dr. Ramesh Ijam, Linguist/Indigenous expert, Dharan, Sunsari
36. Mr. D.B. Angbung, Sociologist/indigenous activist, Terathum/Laltpu
37. Mr. Bikram Subba, Development Expert, Jhapa/ Lalitpur
38. Mr. Shankar Limbu, Lawyer/ indigenous rights activist/ Key informant, Ilam/ Kathmandu
39. Mr. Lakpa Thokar, Indigenous activist/ Key informant, Rasuwa
40. Ms. Junu Gauchan, Indigenous woman activist, Pokhara, Kaski
41. Mr. Pasupati Chaudhary, Indigenous rights activist/ Key informant, Kailali
42. Mr. Ekraj Chaudhary, Indigenous rights activist/ Key informant, Banke/Bardiya
43. Mr. Baburam Bhujel, Indigenous rights activist/ Key informant, Tanahu
44. Ms. Sirjana Subba, Sociologist/ Gender expert, Research collaborator, Kathmandu
45. Ms. Shanti Kumari Rai, Lawyer / Indigenous rights activist, Kathmandu
46. Mr. Dinesh Ghale, Lawyer/ Archaeologist, Indigenous rights activist, Kathmandu
47. Mr. Bhim Rai, Lawyer/ Indigenous rights activist, Lalitpur

48. Mr. Mingmakami Sherma, Indigenous rights activist/ Key informant, Taplejung

49. Dr. Krishna B. Bhattachan, Sociologist, Indigenous Expert/ Professional, Kathmandu

50. Ms. Yassokanti Bhattachan, Indigenous women expert /rights activist/ development practitioner

51. Ms. Dilip Baske, Key informant/ Santhal rights activist, Jhapa

Annex 2

10. Annex 2: Guiding questions in interviews and group discussiong

3.1. What is the practical significance of SDGs from the people's perspectives, and in what way do the time-bound SDG achievements contribute to monitoring the change in the lives of the disadvantaged and disempowered people?

Complementary questions:

3.1.1. Are you aware of Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)?

3.1.2. How do you perceive the goals of sustainable development and targets and indicators of SDGs?

3.1.3. Do you agree with the conceptual definitions used in the SDGs' document?

3.1.4. Are the time-bound targets applicable or suitable to Indigenous peoples?

3.2. Do the global and complementary national SDG targets and indicators truly represent the context and changing statuses of Nepal and its peoples and perfectly measure the progress in achieving SDG targets? What are the major gaps?

Complementary questions:

3.2.1. Have you studied the global targets and indicators of SDGs?

3.2.2. How far are they applicable or appropriate in the context of Nepal and its peoples?

3.2.3. Have you read and scrutinized the complementary national indicators of the NPC?

3.2.4. Are the national indicators suitable to truly measure the SDG progress of Indigenous peoples? (Soliciting responses with the help of the global and national indicators framework)

3.2.5. If you think not, what are the gaps or shortfalls?

3.3 How can we identify, specify, and construct appropriate indicators that represent the contemporary lived experiences or realities of Indigenous peoples for the incorporation in the National Indicators Framework?

Complementary questions:

3.3.1. In your opinion or experiences, what would be the suitable or perfect indicators that capture the contemporary lived experiences or realities of Indigenous peoples? (Soliciting responses with the help of a global and national indicator framework)

3.3.2. How can we build consensus on newly proposed indicators?

3.3.3. What should be done to incorporate those newly proposed indicators in the official national

indicators framework?

3.4. What are the speedy and practical ways or methods to develop better understanding of SDG indicators among Indigenous activists, development workers, and rights advocates and

motivate them to generate credible data relating to process, output, and outcome indicators of SDG achievements; and

Complementary questions:

3.4.1. Can you tell us the best and most practical ways or methods to raise awareness and proficiency of Indigenous activists, development workers, and rights advocates about SDGs, SDG targets, and indicators?

3.4.2. How can we generate credible data relating to process, output, and outcome indicators of SDG achievements?

3.4.3. How can we increase the participation of Indigenous peoples in the preparation, development, and submission of civil society's periodic progress report on the achievements of SDG targets?

3.4.4. How can we pursue and obligate the SDGs nodal agency of the government to produce/generate data disaggregated by caste/ethnicity, religious identity, locality, gender, age, disability, and other characteristics following the spirit of SDGs?

3.4.5. What type of strategy and actions would be effective to compel the government to disseminate pertinent information (data) frequently about our social, cultural, political, and economic statuses, respecting our constitutional right to information?

3.5. Do we need to develop Indigenous SDG advocacy literature targeting Indigenous peoples?

Complementary questions:

3.5.1. Is the SDG advocacy literature targeted to diverse groups of Indigenous peoples necessary?

3.5.2. Is it possible to identify Indigenous peoples who are 'left behind' and 'farthest behind' and launch campaigns to prompt the development agencies of various levels to reach them first with effective interventions?

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