



EXPERIENCES AND PERSPECTIVES OF BENEFICIARIES OF THE TRAIL BRIDGE PROGRAMME

REALITY CHECK APPROACH STUDY

Undertaken for the Rural Access Programme 3 Monitoring, Evaluation and Learning Component

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Acknowledgements

This Reality Check Approach study has been made possible by the commitment, enthusiasm and teamwork of many. The Reality Check Approach (RCA) was originally an initiative of the Swedish Embassy in Bangladesh where it was first commissioned in 2007 and has since been adopted in other countries and other contexts.

This RCA study was carried out as a contribution to the mixed methods approach to monitoring, evaluation and learning commissioned by DFID Nepal to complement and assist the routine monitoring and evaluation of the Rural Access Programme 3 in Mid and Far West Nepal.

The study was undertaken by a team of Nepali researchers. Their passion for RCA, and considerable physical and emotional efforts were essential to the success of this study. These efforts are greatly appreciated and acknowledged.

The RCA study was only possible thanks to the many families who opened their doors to the study team. We thank the families in all four study villages for contributing their valuable time and allowing the team members to live with them and share in their everyday experiences. We hope that this report reflects well the views and experiences of the families, their neighbours and others within the community.

All photographs were taken with the consent of the people

Terms, Acronyms and Abbreviations

ADB	Asian Development Bank
AHW	Auxiliary Health Worker
Brahmin	Higher caste Hindu (formerly regarded as priest caste)
C1	Study village in Dailekh district
C2	Study village in Dailekh district
CA	Constituent Assembly
Chettri	Higher caste Hindu (formerly considered as warrior/ruler caste)
D1	Study village in Doti district
D2	Study village in Doti district
Dalit	Lowest caste Hindu (formerly referred to as untouchable)
DDC	District Development Committee
DFID	UK Department for International Development
FHH	Focal Households (HHH neighbours)
GON	Government of Nepal
HHH	Host Households (families the researchers stayed with)
INR	Indian rupee
LNGO	Local NGO
MEL	Independent Third Party Monitoring, Evaluation and Learning of RAP3
M&E	Monitoring and Evaluation
NGO	Non Government Organisation
NPR	Nepalese rupee
RAP	Rural Access Programme
RCA	Reality Check Approach
SMC	School Management Committee
Terai	Southern plains of Nepal extending from west to east
Thakuri	Higher caste Hindu (formerly regarded as ruler caste)
TBUC	Trail Bridge Users Committee
UC	User Committee
VDC	Village Development Committee

Exchange rates and numerical explanation:

1000 NPR: £6.3 UK pounds sterling

1000 NPR: 615 INR

One 'lakh' = 100,000

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1. Executive Summary

This Reality Check Approach (RCA) study was commissioned by the UK Department for International Development (DFID) as part of the Monitoring Evaluation and Learning (MEL) component of the third phase of the Rural Access Programme (RAP3). It is the third RCA study undertaken by MEL in that it follows the baseline RCA study of May 2014 and another study in April 2015 to understand the experiences and perspectives of the direct beneficiaries of the third phase of the Rural Access Programme.

The study seeks to provide a rich qualitative insight into the experiences and perspectives of the beneficiaries of the trail bridges programme of RAP3, which is implemented by RAP3-Helvetas. The programme is part of the economic infrastructure component and complementary to both the roads and economic development components.

This RCA study intends to support the findings of the process monitoring review of the trail bridges carried out by MEL in January 2015 by trying to understand people's perspective on the progress and impact of the trail bridges component.

RCA is an internationally recognised form of qualitative research that requires the study team to live with people living in poverty in their own homes for periods of time and use this opportunity for informal conversations with all members of the household and their neighbours as well as frontline service providers with whom they interact. The emphasis on informality in people's own spaces enables the best possible conditions for openness and for the team to triangulate the conversations with first-hand experience and observations.

This RCA study was undertaken in June 2015 in two of the RAP3 districts, Dailekh and Doti. The districts were purposively selected to represent locations where RAP 3 has invested in trail bridge construction. A total of twelve households (six per district) were selected by the research team, who, where possible, stayed with households where at least one person was involved in bridge construction. In addition to the households where study team members stayed, the team had intensive interactions with the trail bridge user committee, neighbours and other households as well as local service providers in the community. The views of more than 350 people were included in the study.

This report starts with providing context for the findings and structures the findings under different themes like 1) people's perception of the significance of bridge construction, 2) people's recollection of the construction process, and 3) people's perception of impact of the bridge.

Findings

In all locations remittances from migrant workers were the main source of income for most families. The pattern of migration to India was for shorter durations (2-3 months), except in cases where men found well-paying jobs like that of a security guard or worked in hotels and restaurants. Overseas migration to Gulf countries and Malaysia was said to be increasing in recent years as men made more money there as compared to when working in India.

People said they were not interested in commercial farming and crops were grown for the family's consumption only. There is increased migration of younger generation to the Terai for education or work opportunities and many families who have moved or do not have young family members to work on the farm, have either leased their lands or entered into sharecropping arrangements with others in the village.

Significant NGO activity was observed in all study villages with as many as 4-5 NGO or donor programmes being implemented in each location. While some people say they appreciate the NGO led wage labour programmes as this provides them income earning opportunities, others are quick to point out that even though NGO presence in the villages is strong, people take this support for granted and actual change is very limited.

As the bridges in both locations (trail bridge in C1/C2, truss bridge in D1/D2) were upgrades from the existing wooden bridge, people told us that while no time was actually saved, the new bridges were significant in terms of better access and safety. In village C1 where the bridge was used to access public facilities (mostly the higher secondary school) and to go to the market, many women told us that it had become easier and safer for them to take their sick children to the private pharmacy at the market. They did not like going to the health post as it had no medicines. People in D1, D2 and C2 told us the bridge in their area would only be significant in minimising personal risk during the monsoon, but said they did not have much use for them otherwise as all facilities (health post, school and VDC office) and the market were already on their side of the bridge.

Most people said they were not aware of the process by which the community had made a request for the bridge. In D1, they were only concerned that the bridge would be safer to cross during heavy rains and said they had left the majority of decisions, like applying for the bridge, to others who were educated and '*understood these things*' (man, D1). In C1, people knew that the bridge had been prioritised when a girl had fallen off the bridge and died and the community elders had approached the local CA member to request for prioritisation.

While people in D1 and C1 had attended the first consultative meeting, they said they had not gone for subsequent ones as they had either not been informed or had been uninterested to go. In D2 and C2, men cited lack of interest to go for these meetings as the bridge did not serve any purpose for them. Across all locations, women and the elderly in particular had not attended any of the meetings as the women said they had to look after their children and do house work. The elderly had not gone as they were old and would not be able to work on the bridge anyway. Most people also seemed confused about when the different meetings were held and said they could not tell for sure as they had not attended all of them.

As most families across all locations had one or more men working as migrant workers in India or overseas, they saw the cash earnings from bridge construction as temporary. The work was also seen as a way of earning an income for those who were left behind in the village, mainly women and elderly people.

In all locations, people expressed concerns about low and irregular payment. Some men and women who had portered materials in D1 said the portering wages were low as compared to the local rates. They also felt the pay was low compared to what they made working on other NGO/donor funded programmes in the area. Likewise in C1, when they had been paid, it was not for the full days worked and many had not been paid even though the bridge had been completed a year ago.

In all locations, while people were aware that material and labour contribution had to be made, they were confused about the extent of these contributions. In D1, there was some confusion regarding the wood that had been provided for bridge construction, with the community forest users' group thinking they would be paid for the wood, while the trail bridge user committee members said it was a part of community contribution. In C1, people said as they had not yet been paid, they were beginning to think that it might be considered labour contribution, but could not be sure as they had not been informed by the user committee.

In D1, people said the work on the bridge had stopped one and half months ago as the plates to be used during construction were missing. However, many said the work had been lagging even before that as the user committee had not been able to mobilise labourers to work on the bridge as most men and women were more interested to work on another donor funded project that was paying more wages. Some others told us that as most men were in India, there was labour shortage in the village. However, some men in D2 said that while they had been ready to work on the bridge, the user committee had not asked them even when they were having difficulties finding people to work in D1.

In C1, there was no maintenance committee for the trail bridge and some user committee members seemed to think this was because the construction period (project duration) was two years and until the duration was over, the construction phase would not be considered complete and maintenance committee could not be formed.

Implications

The effectiveness of public/social accountability system was seen to be largely limited as the involvement of the community, particularly women and elderly was minimal. People thought those who were educated and vocal participated in the consultative meetings more actively, while others were not present or only there because it was required of them to be there. It was also observed that as the community felt that educated people had to be part of the different village committees, as they would be able to represent the community interest more effectively, it resulted in the same set of individuals '*whose voices were heard*' being on different committees. This was also seen to compromise the efficiency of the committees as the same people are involved in different places at once.

It is also imperative to understand that providing quotas have to be context specific and membership of committees should be based on people's availability and not be defined by quota. For example, the user committee in D1 was required to have 50% women participation, but most women on the committee felt the work was being done by other active members and their presence was only nominal. In addition, women members faced problems allocating work to their male family members, particularly father/brother-in-laws who worked on the bridge. Cultural practices demanded that women defer to the male members of the family and most said they felt uncomfortable when they had to direct their male relatives.

There is also a need to understand long term needs of the community before starting a village level intervention. In all locations, the trend is for young men to migrate for work which in D1 had resulted in problems finding labourers to work. Additionally, the burden of working on the bridge falls mostly on the women and older men who are left behind. Even these people see the work as generating temporary income only as the work is short term and pay is irregular.

In all locations, people see road as a priority after which other development activities will follow. Long term job opportunities in the village were another priority for the people as this will help retain those who are migrating to Terai or Kathmandu in search of jobs. Therefore, it is necessary to adopt a more nuanced approach to target these communities by understanding their specific needs and context.

2. Background

This report presents the main findings of the Reality Check Approach (RCA) study which was conducted in June 2015 to provide insights into the experiences and perspectives of beneficiaries of the trail bridge component of the third phase of the Rural Access Programme (RAP3). This RCA study is a qualitative element of the Independent Third Party Monitoring, Evaluation and Learning (MEL) of RAP3 which is supported by the UK Department for International Development (DFID) and is the third RCA study undertaken by MEL¹.

The purpose of this RCA is to provide a rich qualitative understanding of the lives of beneficiaries by providing a space for them to share their perceptions, opinions and grievances. It challenges what can be an extractive and validation seeking nature of interactions often associated with project led monitoring and evaluation (M&E). The report contributes to the primary data collection process under MEL that is specifically related to the trail bridges element and information for which was not included in the quantitative survey.

The trail bridge locations were excluded from the main MEL baseline household survey due to the fact that they are scattered and phased over time, along with the recognition that these activities may be somewhat stand alone and are often not supported by other components of RAP3. As such they are being evaluated using primarily qualitative approaches through 1) process monitoring and 2) the RCA. MEL undertook the first process monitoring review of the trail bridges programme in January 2015. During this process, MEL researchers held discussions with Trail Bridges Users Committees (TBUCs) and community members. The findings of this work were based on discussions with direct beneficiaries associated with nine TBUCs and included over one hundred beneficiaries. The process monitoring report² presents the findings of the team in relation to the following:

- Inclusion, representation and participation of women and marginalised groups.
- Work conditions and payment.
- Social accountability.
- People's perceptions of change.

The second qualitative component, the Reality Check Approach study was intended to complement this by providing more depth and to understand people's perspective on the progress and impact of the trail bridges component. It is intended to be a longitudinal study with researchers going back to stay with families at different intervals of the project.

The study was undertaken by a team of six Nepali researchers under the guidance of the international technical advisor, who provided advice and quality assurance for the study throughout its design and implementation as well as the analysis of findings. Overall management of the team, and logistical arrangements were undertaken by the Foundation for Development Management, Nepal.

The team stayed with six families in each district for a period of four nights. The study design, areas of conversation and team information are given in the annexes.

¹ MEL has previously conducted two RCA studies. The first was the baseline RCA conducted in May 2014 and the second was a RCA study on the direct beneficiaries of RAP 3 in April 2015.

²RAP3 MEL monthly process monitoring report, January 2015.

3. Methodology

The Reality Check Approach extends the tradition of listening studies and beneficiary assessments by combining elements of these approaches with the researchers actually living with people whose views are being sought, usually those who are directly experiencing poverty. It could be likened to 'light touch' participant observation. Participant observation involves entering the lives of the subjects of research and both participating in and observing their normal everyday activities and interactions. It usually entails extensive and detailed research into behaviour with a view to understanding peoples' perceptions and their actions over long periods of time. The RCA is similar in that it requires participation in everyday life within people's own environments but differs by being comparatively quick and placing more emphasis on informal, relaxed and insightful conversations than on observing behaviour and the complexities of relationships.

Important characteristics of the RCA are:

- ***Living with*** rather than visiting (thereby meeting the family in their own environment, understanding family dynamics, how days and nights are spent, etc.)
- ***Having conversations*** rather than interviews (there is no note taking thereby putting people at ease and on an equal footing with the outsider)
- ***Learning*** rather than finding out (suspending judgement, letting people who experience poverty take the lead in defining the agenda and what is important)
- ***Being household-centred***, interacting with families rather than users, communities and groups
- ***Being experiential*** in that researchers themselves take part in daily activities (e.g. collecting water, cooking, cultivation, etc.), accompany household members (to school, to market)
- ***Ensuring inclusion*** of all members of households
- ***Interacting in private space*** rather than public space (an emphasis on normal, ordinary lives)
- ***Embracing multiple realities*** rather than relying on public consensus (gathering diversity of opinion, including 'smaller voices')
- ***Interacting in ordinary interaction*** with frontline service providers (accompanying host household members in their interactions with local service providers, meeting service providers as they go about their usual routines)
- ***Taking a cross-sectoral view*** although each RCA study may have a special focus, the enquiry is situated within the context of everyday life rather than simply (and arguably artificially) looking at one aspect of people's lives
- ***Understanding longitudinal*** change and understanding how change happens over time.

The main study involved four nights and three days with twelve families in the two study districts. The study was undertaken by a team of six researchers who have undergone the full RCA training and were also fully briefed on the scope of this study. They also worked collaboratively on the areas for conversations (see annex 3).



Researcher mapping the community with young girls from the village

The emphasis on informal conversations and observation allows for openness and insights into the difference between what people say and what they do. The RCA team found that the families with whom they stayed were very accepting and quickly relaxed and felt at ease talking openly. RCA team members engaged all members of the family as well as neighbours, the focal households (FHH), in conversations and accompanied them to fields, school, market, water collection points and assisted with household chores in order to minimise disruption in their daily routine and to ensure the most relaxed conditions for conversations. The RCA team members also interacted with local power holders (Village Development Committee (VDC) secretaries, political

party representatives and user committee (UC) members) as well as local service providers (health workers, school teachers, traditional healers, shop and kiosk owners, agricultural extension workers and the police) through informal conversations (see annex 4).

Each team member discreetly left a 'gift' for each family on leaving, comprising food items and stationery to the value of NPR 1,500 to compensate for any costs incurred in hosting the researcher. As researchers insist that no special arrangements are made for them, they help in domestic activities and do not disturb income-earning activities, the actual costs to a family are negligible. The timing of the gift was important so families did not feel they were expected to provide better food for the researchers or get the impression that they were being paid for their participation.

Each team member kept their own field notes but they never wrote these in front of the people they were conversing with. In addition, they facilitated some joint visual analyses with members of host households on their incomes and expenditure and with others to map the village and its resources.

To illustrate the context of the village and the households, photos were taken with the consent of villagers but also sometimes by the villagers themselves. These narratives and visual records formed the basis of detailed debriefing sessions held with each sub-team as soon as possible after the study was completed.

Intensive one-day long de-briefing sessions were held with each of the village sub-teams as soon as they returned from the village field sites. These served to ensure that rich and detailed stories and experiences were gathered and to provide further opportunities to triangulate the findings.

3.1. Study locations

The RCA study was undertaken in two districts, Doti and Dailekh where RAP3 had invested in construction of trail bridges. Four villages of four VDCs (two each from both districts) were chosen where the bridge construction was on-going or had completed recently. As it was decided that researchers would cover one location in each district which was directly benefitting from the

trail bridge construction (physical use, involvement in construction and existence of user committee) and another location that was benefiting indirectly (physical use only) a total of eight settlements were chosen which were twenty minutes to one hour's walk from each other. Based on this, purposive sampling resulted in villages within one to three hours walking distance from the trail bridges being selected in each district.

The villages are not named in this report in order to protect the identity and confidentiality of participants.

3.2. Selection of households

All twelve host households (HHH) were identified by team members through discussions with villagers and the host households themselves. At least one host household in each district included a person who had worked on the construction of the bridges and where possible with members of the user committee (see table 4). Care was taken to ensure that people understood the nature of the RCA and the importance of staying with **ordinary families** and not being afforded guest status.

The team members entered villages independently on foot in order to keep the process subtle and unobtrusive. In order to get as close to 'reality' as possible, the team introduced itself as independent learners so that the community did not see them as conducting an evaluation or as working on behalf of a particular interest group, in this case RAP3. The households selected by different members of the same team were at least 10 minutes walk away from each other and, where possible, were even further away to ensure interaction with a different collection of focal households. In addition to intense interaction (conversations and accompaniment) with the HHH, each team member also had extensive conversations with neighbours - usually at least four other households (focal households) and opportunistic and intended conversations with UC members, local service providers such as teachers, formal and informal health service providers, shop owners, etc. (see annex 4). In total the study involved conversations with over 350 people and represents more than 400 hours of conversation.

3.3. RCA methodological considerations: offsetting biases

Like all research methods, the RCA takes note of and attempts to offset potential bias. The following is an analysis of the potential for bias and the way the researchers in this study and through the approach itself sought to minimise these biases.

Bias from being researched

The approach benefits from being subtle (or 'low key') and unobtrusive. It seeks to provide the best possible conditions to listen, experience and observe ordinary daily lives and deliberately seeks to reduce the biases created by an external research presence. The team members take time to get to know the families they stay with, work alongside them with their consent and adapt to their pace and way of life. Ideally they seek to listen to family conversations and interactions rather than engage in lengthy question and answer sessions. Considerable effort is made to ensure the host families feel comfortable and at ease so they tell their own stories and explain their realities in their terms and in their own way. This goes some way to ensuring that the families do not feel their answers should be filtered, measured or in any way influenced by the presence of the outsiders. The team members actively suspend judgement. Considerable effort is made in pre-field team training to make the researchers consciously aware of their own attitudes

and behaviour which may be conducive or obstructive to openness and trust among those they interact with. This is critical to the RCA approach.

Bias from location

At least two team members stayed in each village, each living with a different family. All homes were at least 10 minutes walking distance from one another (and most were considerably more than this) so that each team member could maximise the number of unique interactions with people and service providers in the community and avoid duplication with other team members.

Researcher bias

A minimum of two researchers were allocated to each village but they worked independently of each other, by not visiting the same families and also keeping interactions between researchers themselves to a minimum, thus allowing for more confidence in corroborating data. Each village team underwent a day-long debriefing to review information and findings emerging from each location immediately after completing the immersion. This enabled a high level of interrogation of the observations, experiences and responses and reduced the possibility of individual researcher bias. Furthermore, following completion of the entire study, a workshop was held with the entire research team to analyse and confirm the main findings and ensure that both specificity and diversity in the findings were captured, along with more generalisable findings.

Evaluation framework bias

Rather than using research questions which can suffer from normative bias, the team used a broad thematic checklist of areas of conversation. These themes, summarised in annex 3, provided the basis for conversation topics rather than prescribed questions. The team members engaged with family members and others at appropriate times on these issues. For example, while cooking the meal, opportunities might arise to discuss what the family usually eats, when they eat and who eats what and while accompanying children to school, field opportunities arise to discuss access to, cost and experience of schooling.

Triangulation

An integral part of the RCA methodology is the continuous triangulation that follows. Conversations take place at different times of the day and night allowing unfinished conversations or ambiguous findings to be explored further. Conversations are held with different generations separately and together in order to gather a complete picture of an issue. Conversations are complemented by direct experience (for example, visits to bridge site, taking part in road works, working with families on their farms) and observation (family interaction/dynamics). Cross checking for understanding is also carried out with neighbours, service providers (for example, NGO field officers, input suppliers, veterinarian and agricultural services and teashop owners) and power holders (informal and elected authorities). Conversations are at times complemented with visual evidence or illustrations, for example by jointly reviewing group record books as well as through various activities, such as drawing maps of the village, ranking household assets, scoring income and expenditure proportionally, and so on.

Confidentiality, anonymity and continuing non-bias in project activities

The study locations are referred to by code only and the team ensures that neither this report nor other documentary evidence, such as photos, reveal the locations or details of the host

households. Faces of household members and images which reveal the location are either not retained in the photo archive or identities are digitally removed. This is partly to respect good research practice with regard to confidentiality but also has the benefit of ensuring that no special measures or consideration are given to these locations or households in the course of the programme. All families are asked to give their consent for their stories and photos to be recorded and shared.

4. Findings

This section includes the findings which are presented from the position of study participants (HHH, FHH and service providers), in particular the beneficiaries of the trail bridges programme and are intended to convey their experience and views without overlaying the interpretation of the research team. The findings are divided into two sections, the first provides contextual information on the villages where the study was conducted. The second section includes people's own perspectives and experiences of the trail bridges programme.

4.1. Context

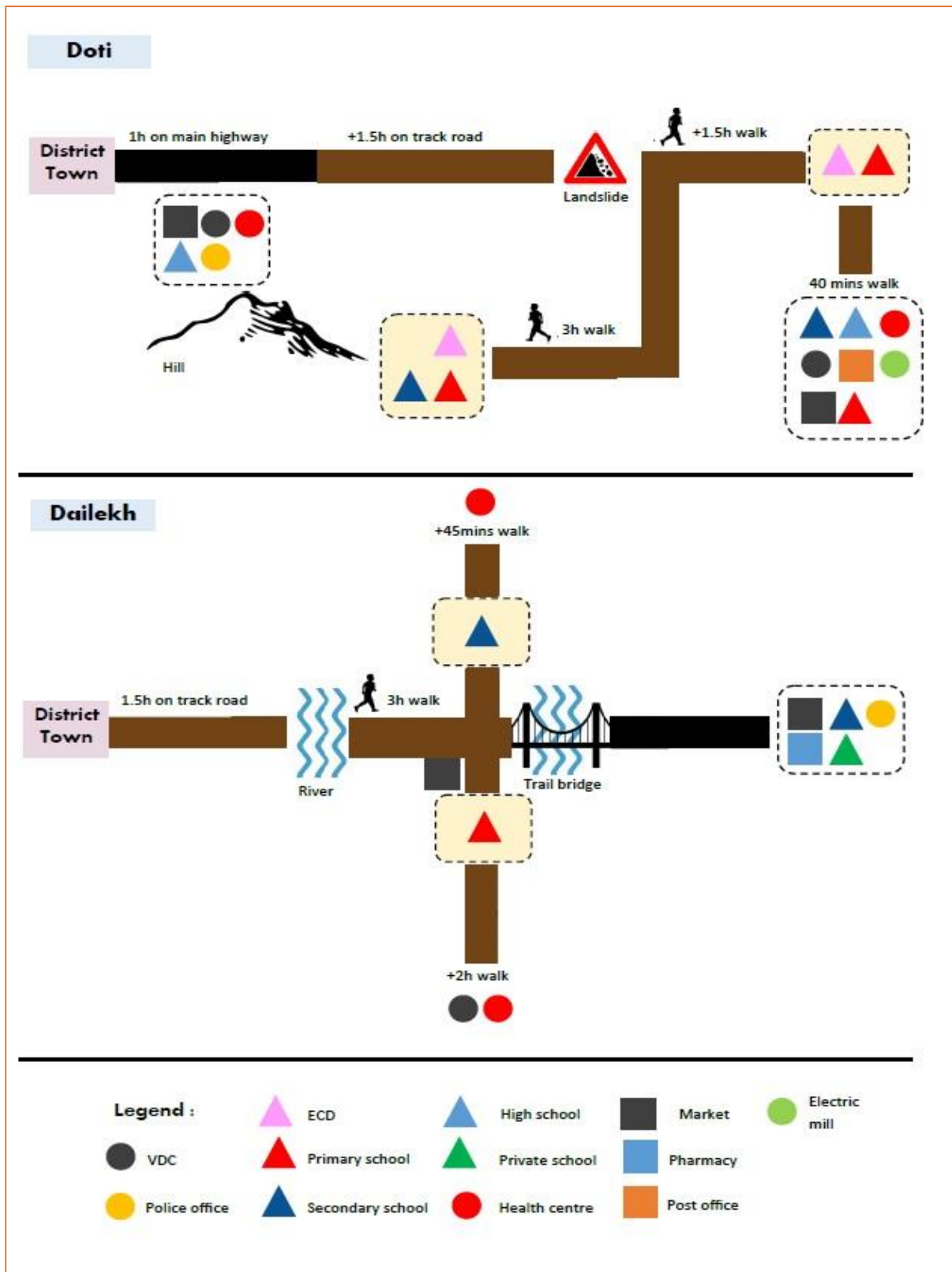
4.1.1. Access and facilities

While all study locations were linked to the main highway, black-topped in the case of Doti and a mud road in Dailekh, the team had to walk for up to 6 hours in both districts to reach the study locations; the road was blocked by a landslide near the study villages in Doti (D1 and D2) and the team had to cross a river, where a trail bridge was being constructed, by wading through on foot to reach study villages in Dailekh (C1 and C2). In Doti, people said vehicles plied on the inner track road up to the VDC centre until a landslide occurred 2 years ago and blocked the road. The road was now under maintenance with funds from the District Development Committee (DDC) and Electoral Constituency Development Fund (NPR 200,000 or 2 lakhs). Men in D1 had also heard that RAP3 had contracted a company for NPR 500,000 for removal of the landslide debris and subsequent road maintenance. While pick-up trucks, lorries and jeeps plied the main highway in C1 and C2, people said they preferred walking as the transport fare was expensive (NPR 200 per person each way for a 20km journey) and timings unreliable.

Access to local markets was between 30 minutes to 3 hours' walk for all locations and people generally preferred to go there than to the district towns which were much further away. These local markets generally have around 15-35 shops selling tea, snacks, household items, clothes, recharge phone cards, school books, gold and silver jewellery, and in some areas, pharmacy-cum-clinic, vegetable collection centre and tailors. All study locations had 1-2 small kiosks in the village itself where groceries like tea, sugar, salt, rice, soap were sold. In C2, shop owners had arrangements with a few people who portered in goods to the village shops from the local market. People said the price differential for goods was NPR 10-30, for example, a pack of cigarettes costing NPR 50 in the district town and NPR 70 in the village kiosk. They also felt the price difference in goods was fair considering the transport and portering charges (transport cost from district town to local market, portering cost from local market to village kiosk) and were content to pay the extra amount as it meant they would not have to make the journey to the local market.

All basic government services like the Village Development Committee (VDC) office, health post, police post were within 30 minutes to 2 hours distance from the study locations. In D2, an Auxiliary Health Worker (AHW) told the team that the health post was busy only when the VDC office had an on-going NGO or government programme. Villagers, he said, attended the programme *'for the allowances'* and would later drop in at the health post to collect free medicines, irrespective of being ill, to stock for future use. In C1, families went to the private clinic at the local market, rather than spend the same amount of time (2 hours) walking to the government health post as *'it only has medicines for diarrhoea and fever'* (woman, HHH, C1).

Figure 1: Access map of the village



Every location had at least one Government of Nepal (GON) primary school with secondary and higher secondary schools within 2 hours walking distance of all study households. The school in D1 also conducted 'Bachelor level' classes and had hostel accommodation for 400 students from 4 different VDCs. In C1, people preferred to send their children to the private school located at

the market, even though it was more expensive than the GON school, as the school curriculum was taught in English and families felt their children would fare better in terms of future prospects if they had an English-based education. This trend was higher in migrant workers' families with wives sometimes renting a room at the market where they stayed with their children and enrolled them at the private school.

People considered education for their children to be essential to better their life chances and emphasised that they did not discriminate between their sons and daughters while sending their children to school. In D1, young girls told us they wanted to study in boarding schools in the Terai and 'learn how to dance' (girl, D1). In C1, people said it was usually the girls who continued with their education while the boys 'left for India as soon as they turned 16' (man, C1). Girls could study till the 'Intermediate level' at the local schools and then move to Surkhet or Dhangadi for Bachelors, while those who were married continued their education locally. Young married girls (often under the official marriageable age) told us that once they were married, they were expected to look after the husband's family and going outside the village for education was out of the question.

4.1.2. Village composition and social relationships

While the study communities in all locations were diverse in terms of ethnicity and caste, social arrangements between people had allowed for groups to co-exist. The majority of villages were ethnically mixed with Brahmins, Chettris, Thakuris and Dalits living close by but in different settlements.

Table 1: Village Context

Village location	District	Approx. village size	Ethnic mix	Main livelihood	Subsidiary livelihoods	Education levels	Comments
D1 (S)	Doti	30	Nearly equal Brahmin and Dalit (some Chettri)	International migration to India, Gulf, Malaysia for long periods domestic migration for work (long 2-3 years & short term- few months)	None. Agriculture only for own consumption No interest in commercial farming	Well educated (Bachelor level, also a few who had completed their M.A) – have left or leaving	Mostly elderly left in village. Strong aspirations to move to Terai.
D1 (N)	Doti	25	Brahmin, Chettri and Dalit	Migration to India- long term, domestic migration to Terai, overseas migration to Gulf	Shops Agriculture for own consumption - one man selling vegetables at local market	Well educated	Discrimination against Dalit use of water taps/no entry allowed to other caste houses
D1 (B)	Doti	27	Brahmin, Chettri and Dalit	Migration to India- long term, domestic migration to Terai, overseas migration to Gulf and Malaysia	Agriculture for own consumption	Well educated- have left or leaving	-

D2 (A)	Doti	33	Mostly Dalit	International migration to India, mostly short term. Overseas migration for work to countries like Malaysia and Dubai	Agriculture for own consumption	Dalit boys leave school after secondary level and migrate to India for work	Many have moved to Terai, especially after armed conflict-declining trend. Much less discrimination of Dalits than D1(N)
D2 (R/T)³	Doti	54	Mixed-Chettri, Thakuri, Dalit (who live close together)	Migration- India (short term), overseas (Malaysia, Dubai)	Agriculture for own consumption. Small shops, salaried jobs-teachers	Boys leaving school after secondary level	Much less discrimination of Dalits than D1 (N)
C1 (N/A/S/B)⁴	Dailekh	36 scattered	Chettri, Brahmin, Thakuri	Seasonal and long term migration to India. Long term to Gulf & Malaysia (increasing trend). Domestic migration	Agriculture mostly own consumption. Cow milk sold. GON wage labour programmes	Girls more likely to continue to higher education (boys migrate)	Dalits barred from this ward. Polygamy common. Teen marriages (elopements) common
C2 (T)	Dailekh	18	Brahmin & Dalit mainly, some Chettri, Sherpa & Gurung	Indian Army/Nepal police. Dalits short term migration to India. Brahmin/Chettri migration to Gulf	Own consumption agriculture. New cash crop programme started in '14. Portering HH items	Well educated	No discrimination
C2 (R)		42	Chettri (majority) and equal nos. Brahmin & Dalit	Short term migration to India. Nepal Army/Police	Agriculture for own consumption. Portering	Educated	No discrimination

Though many across all locations said there were no overt ethnic tensions, older people were quick to point out entrenched tensions relating to water source between the Brahmins and Chettris and Dalits in village D1. The drinking water source was separate but adjacent for the different castes and people said if Dalits drank water from the Brahmin/Chettri tap *'the Gods will be angry'* (old woman, D1) and there would be unexplained illnesses on both sides. One Dalit man told us that this was nowadays the only *'way of discriminating against us'* and that if there was no water in their tap, Brahmins and Chettris would fill water from the Dalit well. People said if the water in the well used by the Dalits ran dry, they would rather pour water for them in their utensils rather than have them touch the tap. Young boys, however, did not seem to subscribe to

³Two HHH

⁴Four HHH

this view as they said they ate together with their Dalit classmates and *'even drink from the same glass, but the girls did not as they listened to their mothers'* (young boy, D2) indicating that girls were more inclined to accept prevailing social norms laid down by the family, where as the boys were not.

Dalits were not allowed entry into other caste houses and people in the village thought they were *'lazy and crooked'* (woman, D1). One woman told us that the Dalit community tried to maintain their lower status quo as that way, *'they would be sure to get NGO programmes'* (woman, FHH, D1). Non-Dalits were also quick to point out that Dalit took loans from saving programmes run by NGOs, but would *'drink the money away'* (man, FHH, D1).

In village C1, most Chettri and Thakuri families in the village had migrated from Jumla five generations ago and were related by blood or marriage. The Brahmins had moved in later. Long ago Dalits had been barred by the Chettris, Brahmins and Thakuris from settling down in the ward. People said they had established a temple for their local deity and if Dalits settled there, *'the deity would become polluted'* (man, HHH, C1). People said they generally lived in harmony with each other and fights were limited to drunken brawls between men. Even the men who got into fights *'cannot stay mad at each other for long as they need each other's help during planting season'* (school principal, C1).

In C1 and C2, teen marriages were said to be very common with boys and girls as young as 14-15 years old eloping and getting married. Older people were *'matter-of-fact'* about this as they said that is how most marriages in the village had happened for many generations. The school principal in village C1 told us that these elopements usually resulted in girls getting pregnant early and missing activities in school. Polygamy was also a very common occurrence in villages C1 and C2 with men marrying two or three times. The wives did not stay in the same house with the men, who usually left for India with their second wives. One host household had incurred NPR 4-5 lakh (400,000-500,000) debt to go to India with his second wife and the family left behind was struggling to pay off the loan.

4.1.3. Livelihoods and migration

'A person's aspirations are never ending. My children want to leave the village and go to the Terai. Once they are in Terai, they will want to move to Kathmandu. Sometimes I feel our whole life goes away in wanting a better life.' (Man, D1)

In all locations, families depend on remittances and agriculture for their livelihood but for the majority of families, crops were only grown for household consumption. People said they grew paddy, wheat, maize, barley, lentils and an assortment of vegetables and fruits. With the exception of one family in village D1 who was producing vegetables semi-commercially and another family in C2 who had made NPR 35,000 selling oranges and turmeric last season, most people told us they only sold a small amount of surplus produce within the village itself.

People in D1 said they had no interest in commercial agriculture and those who had landholding in the Terai had either moved already or were in the process of moving. A high degree of importance was placed on educating children and people said that as there were no jobs available locally, educated youngsters either moved to district headquarters or the Terai with only the elderly members of the family staying back in the village and even *'they would move eventually'* (man, D1) once the children had set up a life for themselves there.

The same is apparent in D2, where families were moving to Kailali district so their children could get a better education than offered by local schools. Many families had migrated to the Terai districts during the armed conflict (1996-2006), and though people said migration was less now compared to earlier, people had built a life for themselves there and many had not returned back to the villages. Though they said that goods were more expensive in the Terai *'those who smoked cigarettes in the village have begun to smoke beedi (local, unfiltered cigarettes) now that they are in Dhangadi'* (man, D2), opportunities for cash earnings were ample. Those families that had migrated out had either leased their land or entered into sharecropping arrangements with the land they still owned in the village with some Dalit families who remained in the village. Some Dalit men told us that these sharecropping arrangements meant they were now able to farm more land than what they have and provide food sufficient for 6-8 months in a year if they worked hard.

Across all locations, people see their families' future in international migration, either to India, Gulf countries or Malaysia. Men have been traditionally migrating to India for short term periods (typically between 3-6 months in a year) and migration for longer periods (2-3 years) is now gathering pace, particularly among those men who get work as security guards or in hotels. People say they work as security guards, drivers, construction workers, cooks and waiters in hotels. We often heard that men usually came back when *'their pockets are full and then spend everything having fun in the village'* (man, C2). Overseas migration had increased in recent years and people said those who were serious about providing an income for their families saved up the money they had earned in India and used it to pay for visa processing and tickets to go to Malaysia or Gulf countries for better income earning opportunities. One returnee migrant from Malaysia who had worked as a labourer carrying iron rods said the work was tiring and required long hours, but the money was almost double compared to India where labourers made INR 10,000 per month.

People in D1 said it was mostly Dalit men and boys who went to India as migrant workers as they have *'comparatively less land holding and face constant stigma'* (Dalit man, D1). Because there are no job opportunities for educated people in the village, boys as young as 10 years old told us that migration was a way out of poverty. One young boy told us they *'only had to learn enough to recognise printed money, after that there is no need for us to stay in school'* (Dalit boy, D1). In D2 and C1, girls were much more likely to stay on at school than boys because of this 'pull factor' to migrate for work.

While families left behind in the villages knew the kinds of work men were engaged in India, they were not so sure about what they did in other countries. They also did not know the amount of money men made monthly as remittances were sent sporadically through money transfer agencies and in lump sums. People said they had to go to district towns to collect remittances and had to make the journey 1-2 times a year. As remittances were generally sent to wives, people told us that the women did not disclose their husband's actual income as this meant they would have to share the money with the wider family. While families did not receive regular payments from male migrants in India either, they were aware of monthly wages the men received. The reason for this, people explained, was that since men had been working in India for many years now, their families knew how much money they made. Some people also told us that it was easier and cheaper for family members to stay connected with men in India through phone calls and they were able to discuss pay and other issues over the phone. Remittances were usually carried by men directly who also brought clothes and other goods like mobile phones for the family.

4.1.4. Development assistance

The level of NGO/donor activity was significant across locations with development interventions being focused on different sectors like education, rural access, water and sanitation, nutrition, livelihoods and micro-finance. While programmes on water and sanitation, rural access and livelihoods were targeted at the community as a whole, people said education and nutrition related programmes focused on target groups. Table 2 lists the type of development projects across study locations.

Table 2: Development projects in the villages

Village location	Water & sanitation project	Road	Education	Women empowerment	Micro-finance	Livelihoods
D1	Irrigation/ water management (Asian Development Bank-ADB) ongoing Toilet construction (NGO) completed	RAP maintenance	School residence scholarships (especially for Dalits) (NGO) Solar lights for school (INGO) Skills training for teachers (NGO)	NGO awareness raising (reproductive health & 'women violence') Maternal and child nutrition (donor)	Women's savings groups (NGO) Family savings group (NGO)	Goats asset transfer (GON) Chicken asset transfer (NGO)
D2			INGO (unclear what doing) Teachers' training (NGO)		Savings training (INGO)	Goats asset transfer (GON)
C1	Toilet/washing facilities construction , Drinking water (NGO)	WFP 'Food for work'	WFP mid-day snack for primary schools			Irrigation canal construction (NGO)
C2	Toilet/washing facilities construction , Drinking water (NGO) Water reservoir (INGO)	RAP maintenance			Savings programme (phasing out) (NGO)	Irrigation canal construction (NGO) Cash crops (INGO) Goat asset transfer (NGO)

People in C1 said as there are no work opportunities in the village, young and educated men and women move out to look for jobs. Some men said they were glad when NGOs or the GON began introducing waged labour programmes as this meant that they '*got to eat, at least*' (man, C1). In D1, a watershed management programme was building water tanks for irrigation and drinking water supply using community labour. While people said they had not yet received any payment, they knew the wage rates for unskilled and skilled labour (NPR 400 per day for unskilled labour and NPR 650 per day for skilled masons). In D2, some men complained that it had become difficult

finding labourers to work on their fields as NGOs had *'spoilt them'* by paying them high wages and as a result everyone now demanded more money than they could afford to pay.

In D1, some people complained that even though the village had some form of NGO support for years now, no change in thinking was seen in those who got these interventions as they took the support for granted. One woman told us that about two years ago, an asset transfer programme had given goats to Chettri and Dalit households in the village. After a year, there were no goats left in the village as the *'Chettris ate the goats or sold them and the Dalits said the goats had died of an illness'* (woman, D1).

People in C1 also told us that waged work on NGO programmes like RAP, had an added benefit as they can now take credit from local shops more easily. While shop owners were hesitant to give grocery items and alcohol on credit earlier, they had become more willing to do so as they were sure assured of being paid back. Shop owners we spoke to said that as they knew when wages were paid to labourers they waited until then to ask for their money.

4.2. People's perception on the significance of the bridge construction

4.2.1. Access and safety

In all locations, conversations around the bridges usually started with people associating bridges with better access to facilities (C1), market (C1), fields (D1) and safety (D1, C1). This association was more pronounced in C1 where accidents involving people and livestock had occurred on the old wooden bridge. About a year and a half ago, two people who were returning home from visiting relatives in C1 had fallen from the old wooden bridge, which was slippery from the rain, and into the river below. While villagers were able to save the boy, the girl had drowned. A group of men told us that this incident had made the community realise the immediate need for a trail bridge there and community elders had approached the Constituent Assembly (CA) member to advocate for the bridge as a priority. The trail bridge construction was then fast-tracked due to the connections of the CA member as he was the father-in-law of the then-current trail bridge user committee chairperson.

The bridge in D1 was under construction and an upgrade from the existing wooden bridge, which according to people was *'safe enough'* except during the heavy rains when the river's water level rose dangerously high. Many recounted an incident in which a woman carrying her baby had become dizzy and had almost fallen into the river. They said if the man behind her hadn't caught hold of the mother and baby both, there was *'no chance of her surviving as the river water was so high'* (indicating it had almost reached the bridge) (woman, D1).

One HHH in D1 told us that during the first consultative meeting for the bridge, where staff from the VDC, DDC and RAP3's local NGO partner (LNGO) were present, they were told a trail bridge would be built. When the actual construction started, people found out that a truss bridge was being built instead. No-one we spoke to knew why this change was made and who was involved in the decision. There were rumours in the village that the change happened because families that had fields on the other side had to take their oxen for ploughing and other families took their livestock to graze and it was thought that animals would not be able to cross a trail bridge that swayed constantly.

Table 3: Bridge details

Village location	State of construction	Intended purpose of trail bridge	Perceived relevance of trail bridge	Actual village priority
D1	Truss bridge (25m) currently under construction (work started 5-6 months ago) NB: people say it was originally planned as a trail bridge.	Link two VDCs, (formerly a wooden bridge) Safety, especially in monsoon	Low, anticipated Benefit only for ward 2 where they have fields close to the bridge, regarded as an upgrade from the wood bridge Less risk in rains No economic benefit	Irrigation and drinking water Cash for work Road- has been closed by a landslide
D2			Low, anticipated Access to school and college for one village only. Others say 'no use'	Road
C1	Trail bridge (42m) completed 2014	Links two VDCs (replaced log bridge) Safety (a death using old bridge)	Good, easier for outside teachers to reach schools in village/easier for higher secondary students to go to school out of village Easier market access, especially to private pharmacy Safer than old bridge Minimising risk during heavy rains	Not mentioned
C2			Low, access to mill, temple Not used to access services as have own VDC, HP Safer than old bridge	RAP road maintenance- last two kilometres blocked by landslide

In villages D1, D2 and C2 people said that other than minimising the personal risk during monsoon, the new bridge would not have much significance for them as all services such as the VDC office, health post, higher secondary school and markets were already on their side of the bridge. Families in C2 said that apart from using the bridge to go to use the electric mill and visit the temple occasionally, they did not have any use for the bridge. Additionally, some men in D1 told us that the bridge was mostly important for those families of ward 2 (in D1) who had fields on the other side of the bridge and also noted that these were the ones who wanted a truss bridge so they could move their livestock for grazing and ploughing. Even people from other wards (D2) only came across the bridge occasionally to go the area health post and meet relatives in D1 or when someone got married. While a few families in D2 had children who went to the college in D1, those we spoke to said they only had to go twice a week as the classes were not very regular anyway.

In C1, a primary school teacher told us that previously reaching the school on time during the rainy season was a challenge and the school had to be closed on days when the water level in the river was high as both students and teachers could not cross the bridge. He recalled an incident

when school had to be cancelled as the keys to all the rooms were with the principal who was unable to make the bridge crossing.

People in C1 said reaching the market had become easier after the trail bridge was constructed and they could now cross the bridge *'with our eyes closed'* (woman, HHH, C1) while earlier they had to be very careful of where they stepped (on the wooden bridge) as parts of the bridge was rotten and missing. As many families preferred the private pharmacy at the market over the health post, *'the pharmacist gives us the right medicine for our illness'* (woman, C1), mothers told us they were less anxious to take sick children to the pharmacy now that they did not have to cross the wooden bridge.

One kiosk selling groceries, shoes, packaged snacks and stationery had opened near the school in C1 after the bridge was built. The owner told us that he had been thinking of opening a kiosk there for quite some time but had not been able to because of resource constraints. He said the completion of the bridge had coincided with his son sending money from Malaysia and he had thought it would be a good time to start a business as it would also be easy to porter in goods from the market through the new bridge. He explained that though he used porters to carry goods to his kiosk, he had no choice but to keep the price of goods the same as in the market. He said since the bridge had been built people went to the market more often and if he increased the price of goods in his shop, *'they would just go to the market instead'*.

4.2.2. Temporary waged labour on the bridges

Most families in all locations had at least one or more male member who was working as a migrant worker in India, hence people saw cash income from working on construction of the bridge as temporary. As the bridge work was for a short time (3-5 months) and much of the payment had not been made because *'the money for wages had not been released'* (UC chairperson, D1), people said they did not depend on the income from the bridge.

People saw the work as something for those who were left behind. As most young men in all locations were in India or abroad, the work was mostly done by older people and women. Table 4 shows the involvement of the community and study households in bridge construction.

Table 4: Involvement in bridge construction

Village location ⁵	Proximity to the bridge	Involvement of community	Involvement of our HHH
D1 (S)	1 hour	None	None
D1 (N)	1.5 hours	Cutting trees, portering & labour	Labour
D1 (B)	1.75 hours	Cutting trees, portering & labour	As UC member, monitoring
D2 (A)	2 hours walk	Portering	None
D2 (R/T)	2.5 -2.75 hours walk	None	None
C1 (N)	40 mins walk	Portering & labour	Portering (grandma 45)

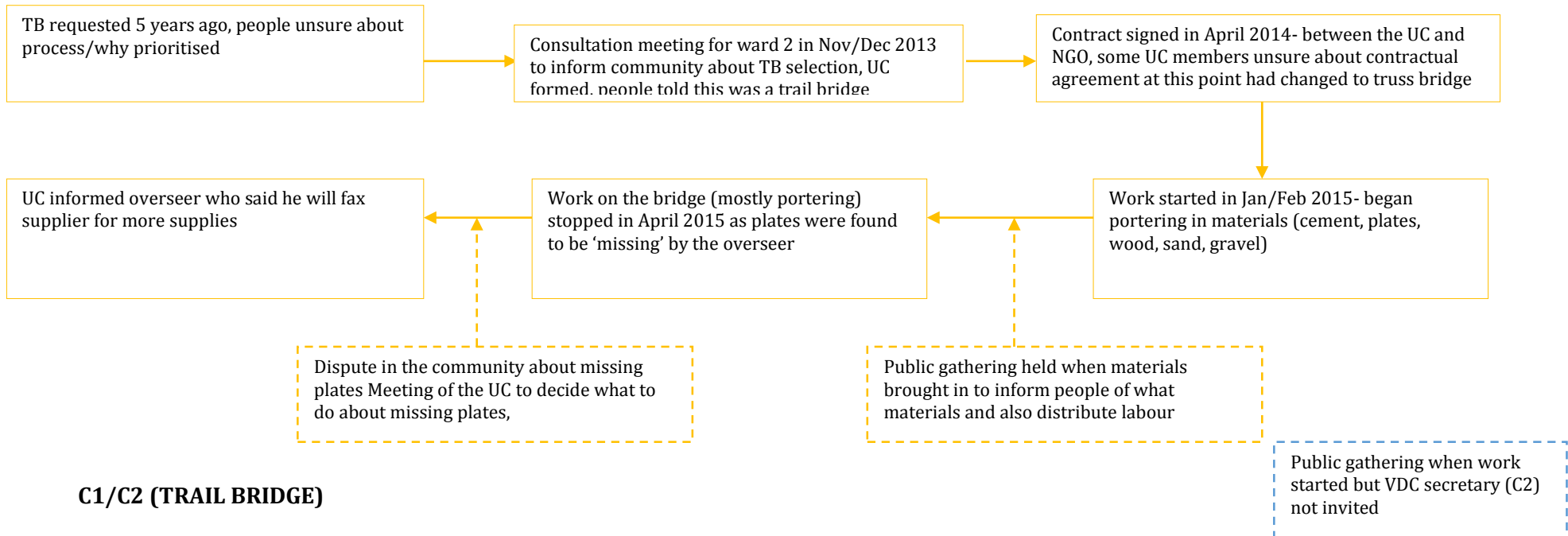
⁵ Letters in brackets refer to researchers and merely appears here for referencing purposes.

C1(S)	10 mins walk	Portering & labour	Portering (grandfather (58) & son (32) returned from India), also grandfather is the bridge warden
C1 (A)	35 mins walk	Portering & labour	Daughter in law (20) & granddaughter (18) portering
C1(B)	50 mins walk	Portering and labour	Portering and unskilled labour (Grandfather (60))
C2 (T)	2 hours walk	Those near the site got work	None
C2 (R)	2.5 hours walk	Those near the site got work	No work

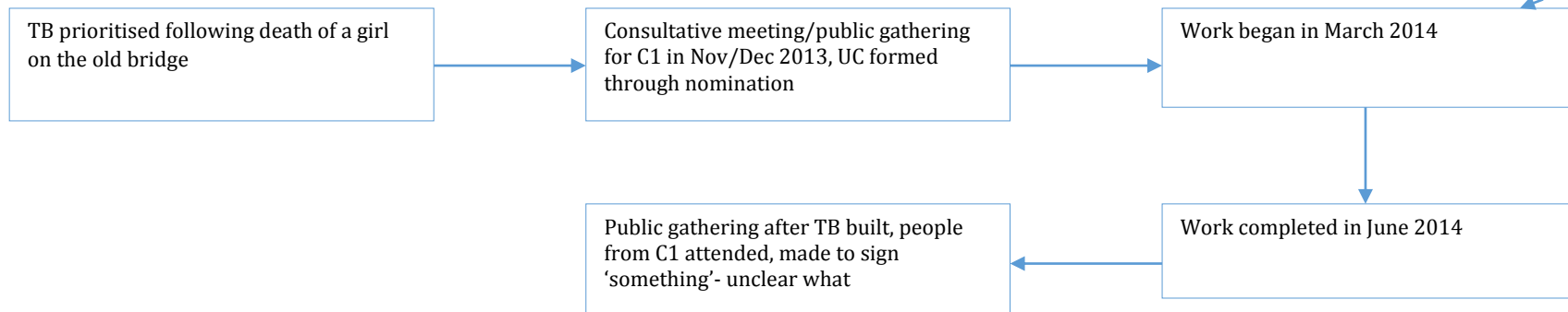
4.3. People's recollection and views of the construction process

Timeline of the construction process

D1/D2 (TRUSS BRIDGE)



C1/C2 (TRAIL BRIDGE)



4.3.1. Prioritisation

While people in D1 and D2 said the community elders and local leaders from ward 2 (in D1) had made a request for the bridge five years ago, many were unsure of the actual process that had been followed and why the construction of the bridge had been approved. Some said a written request had to be made by the community to the DDC, while others told us that a written request at the VDC office was enough and it was the VDC secretary's work to follow up with the DDC office. Most people, including some UC members, were only concerned with the fact that once the bridge was made it would be safer during monsoon to cross to the other side and said that they had left the decisions to those who were educated and '*understood these things*' (man, D1).



The old wood bridge in D1

In C1 and C2, we were told the work on the bridge was supposed to start a year later, but had been accelerated after an accident involving two people had occurred on the old bridge. People said a few educated men and leaders from the community had jointly decided to bring up safety issues and the need for a new bridge in the area. A request had been made to the CA member from the area to fast track bridge construction and work on the new bridge had started a few months later. People said the CA member's daughter-in-law was then made the chairperson of the UC to recognise the CA for his help. While some in C1 thought there were better candidates in the village for the chairperson's position, most had more-or-less accepted this and thought it was '*fair enough*' (woman, C1) as this meant the bridge was built earlier.

4.3.2. Consultations and accountability measures

While most people in D1 said they had attended the first consultation meeting, many had not attended subsequent ones. While some said they were not interested to go for any meetings that happened in the village (D1, C1), a few we spoke to said they had not been informed when the meetings took place. When we verified with the UC members, they said that the information relay was only through word-of-mouth and the likelihood is that some had missed the information.

A few women we spoke to in D1 said though they had information about the meeting, they had chosen not to go as there was no one to look after the children. Some others told us that since their men were away, they had to look after the family and work in the fields and they had '*no time for meetings*' (woman, HHH, C1). Explaining the disinterest of women to be involved in community level work, the school principal in C1 told us that he finished all the important agendas of the School Management Committee (SMC) early on in the meetings as most women members '*usually left in the middle the meetings to finish some work or other.*'

Box 1: People's recollection of the process in D1

The first consultation meeting in D1 took place in November 2013. While everyone from D1 was asked by the community elders to attend, the meeting was mostly attended by those people from ward 2 who had their fields on the other side of the bridge. People say a 'sir' from RAP was in attendance, along with one staff from the LNGO and another one from the DDC office. Someone (they do not remember who) among the three told them a new bridge was going to be constructed and as the people of ward 2 had made a request for the bridge, the user committee would be made up of people from the same ward. Those who attended the meeting say it was stressed over and over again that 50% of the UC would have to comprise of women and that Dalits had to be included too.

While some say people nominated themselves or others based on their availability and interest to participate in the UC, others say they had no chance because these positions usually went to the 'educated and active people' of the community - 'we all should get the government's (referring to RAP) money, not only them' (man, D1- referring to some people who get most opportunities because they are educated or active). People also said that the UC secretary and a young Dalit man were in almost all of the different village committees in their village. This was because they were educated and people thought they would be able to represent the village's interest.

The UC chairperson (Dalit man) had been the chairperson of the SMC a few years back. People recalled that during the SMC selection, he had threatened to throw himself into the Seti River if they did not elect him as chairperson. Many said that people had nominated him to be the UC chairperson this time so as to avoid 'all the melodrama' (man, D1)

Field notes, D1

Apart from women, a few elderly men we interacted with said they had not gone for any of the consultative meetings as they were old and said they '*would not be able to work on the bridge anyway, so what was the point of going?*' (Group of elderly men, D1). There were others in D1 who cited a lack of interest in attending the meetings as they used another bridge and the one under construction did not serve any purpose for them as they did not have their fields across the bridge, and the market and school that their children went to was on their side as well.

People in D1 also did not have much clarity about when the different consultation meetings were held and said they were confused as there had been a long gap between the first meeting and the start of construction work. They also said that since they had not attended all of the meetings, they could not tell for sure how many meetings had been held, but a few men knew that a public gathering had taken place when the materials for the bridge (cement, plates, sand, gravel, wood) had been portered in, but the UC had not clarified how much money had come in or been spent on materials and wages. In C1, people knew how much had been spent and how much was left, but could not say clearly if this was discussed at a public hearing or just something they had heard in the village. We were also told that 2-3 meetings had taken place while the bridge was under construction, but those we spoke to could not clarify if they were referring to UC meetings or something else.

Box 2: Perception on the User Committee in D1 and D2

The UC for the bridge in D1/D2 consists of 13 members. People say it is the vice chairperson who does most of the work as the chairperson himself spends much of his time in his tailoring shop at the market. The secretary who was selected because she is an *'educated woman'* has not been able to give much time to the committee as she is a Bachelor-level student at the local college.

People in D1 think the UC is not working very well as they have not been able to mobilise enough labour to work on the bridge. While some UC members say that is because they haven't been able to make complete payment to workers for the work already done, people say this is because the UC itself is not proactive.

The UC members themselves are not clear on who is actually on the committee. During our stay in the village, we were referred to the house of one UC member by another person who was also in the committee. When we reached there, the woman (who was supposed to be a UC member) said she was not aware that she had been made a member. She said she had attended the first consultation meeting but her name had not come up on the list of members and was unaware if someone had nominated her as a member later on.

Some UC members were unsure about whether they had signed the contract with RAP or the DDC. They say the UC chairperson and secretary went for the contract signing because *'the chairperson was required to be there'* (man, UC member, D1) and the secretary *'is the most educated in the committee'* (woman, UC member, D2).

A few women members told us that as they were on the committee, they were required to direct the labourers. When these were their own male family members like father/brother-in-laws they found it difficult to assign tasks to them because of the cultural dynamics that demand that they defer to the men from their family. Another problem was that UC members were sometimes required to travel on UC business and married women said it was difficult for them to get permission from elders at home so they could leave.

Field notes, D1

People in C1 say that the UC was formed by self nomination where the VDC secretary, who was present along with staff from DDC and LNGO, asked who wanted to participate in the committee and people *'raised their hands'* (man, HHH, C1). As the LNGO staff said the chairperson had to be a woman, the daughter-in-law of the CA member, who had expedited the construction process, was chosen. People say that after some deliberation, the bereaved woman who had lost her sister in the accident was also nominated to be a member.

Box 3: Perception of the User Committee in C1 and C2

The UC in C1/C2 has had 5 meetings so far. In the first meeting, the secretary was fired as other members said he could not give time to the committee. They did not think it was necessary to select another one in his place as it was mostly *'the chairperson and treasurer who did most of the work, anyway'* (man, UC member, C1).

People say the chairperson only heads the committee for appearance's sake. It is her father who yields much of the power in the UC. They say he can pull strings and make things happen and it is he who makes the decisions for the committee while *'the rest of them only sign'* (woman, C1).

As the chairperson could not read and write very well, committee members said the treasurer was responsible for managing all important documents. However, while talking to a school teacher, we were told that the UC chairperson had asked him to update all documents including the UC's expenses register as he was *'the most well-read person in the village'* (school teacher, D1).

Field notes, C1

Only a few people from C2 who had their homes near the bridge site had attended the meeting. Additionally, the VDC secretary in C2 told us that though the bridge connected the two VDCs and was supposed to benefit the population from both, he had not been informed of the meeting and thus had not attended. He also said that the only time he had been to any of the meetings/public gatherings was when he had coincidentally reached the bridge site on the day the work was supposed to start.

Barring the UC and those who had work portering materials for the bridge, others in D1 did not know that the bridge was being made by RAP. One team member also observed a banner printed with information about the donors inside the UC treasurer's house. The treasurer told us they had not had the time to put it up near the bridge site. Even the VDC secretary in D1 thought the funding for the bridge came from the Asian Development Bank (ADB). Most people said it did not matter who had funded the bridge as long as the bridge was made.

In D1, people felt that the LNGO had not been very helpful and the UC chairman said all responsibility for mobilising labourers and porters from the village had fallen on the UC with the LNGO taking no part in it. Visits by the LNGO were said to be limited with some men from D2 who had worked as labourers saying that the overseer would '*come on some days, stay for 10 minutes and leave*' (man, D2). By contrast, while some people in C1 said that the NGO had been relatively unheard of before the bridge construction began, most said the overseer had stayed at the local market throughout the duration of bridge construction and was at the work site every day.

The UC treasurer in D1 said the work on the bridge had stopped a month and half ago when the overseer had come on one of his visits and seen that 12 plates (worth NPR 17,000 for the whole batch) which were to be used on the bridge were missing. It had taken half a month for the community to figure out what had happened to the plates (refer to Box 4), during which time the overseer had not made an appearance. The UC chairperson told us that he had only recently been able to get in touch with the overseer to inform the supplier to send more plates for the bridge.

4.3.3. Construction phase

People in all locations say it is the UC's responsibility to give work to those who are interested to work on the bridge. As there are no building groups, men and women can either contact the UC chairperson or just show up at the worksite where they will be allocated work. The committee chairperson keeps track of the number of days worked and workers are then paid accordingly.

In D1, people said the unwritten rule in the area was that whichever village/ ward applied for a community development work, the people from that ward would be given priority to work on that project. Other wards/villages would get offered the work only if labour was short. Because of this, only people from ward 2 in D1 had got work as porters and labourers. One household in D2 told us that three men from D2 had also worked a few days carrying wood for the bridge. This was because the UC had not been able to mobilise men and women from D1 and had asked these men who were working on their fields if they wanted to earn some money. The man told us that he had agreed to work as the proposed money was good (NPR 7,000 for carrying wood for 4 days), but said he had only received NPR 2,000 till now.

While most people in D2 were of the view that it did not matter who got the work as long as the bridge was built, there were some who said they would have gladly taken up the work, but '*no one had asked them*' (man, D2). One school teacher was vocal about his disapproval about this system telling us that as the bridge was being built for all villages in the area, the least the UC

could have done is opened up work opportunities for everybody. He said he had spoken to the committee regarding this, but nothing had come of it.

The UC secretary in D1 told us that they had problems finding people to work on the bridge. People say they are not interested as the pay is low for work that is physically hard (most labourers have to work for 9 hours a day for NPR 350 per day). While the pay is more than what people make in a day by working on others' fields (NPR 200-250), it is less than what they make by working on the ADB supported water tank construction project. People also said they had expected that they would be paid wages on the same day as they had worked but this was not the case. Many say that they have to wait for months to be paid for 5 days of work and they would rather work as labourers in other people's fields as at least they get paid on a daily basis there. One girl who had portered gravel and sand from the riverbed said that she received NPR 50 for carrying a 50kg sack of gravel while the usual portering rates in the village were NPR 5 per kg (i.e. she felt she should have received NPR 250). She was adamant about not working on the bridge any more as the money was not deemed enough.

Older people in D1 also told us that since all the young men were either in India, overseas or studying in the Terai, there was shortage of labour in the village. They could not work as they were old and women were mostly busy working on the fields or doing housework during most of the day.

Though the UC members in D1 say that people refuse to work on the bridge as they are 'lazy' (UC chairperson, D1) and there is 'no motivation for community good' (UC secretary, D1), people tell a different story. Most families have one or two male members working as migrant workers in D1. These families only have either the elderly or women living in the family home. Even those who are in the village are working to build water tanks for drinking water and irrigation under the ADB's water management programme. People say they prefer working on building an *intake* (water tank) as the daily wage is more (NPR 400 for unskilled/NPR 650 for skilled labour compared to NPR 300-350/NPR 500-550 they get on the bridge) and even though they haven't been paid yet, the work is on-going. The work on the bridge has stopped for almost two months ever since the plates were lost, and people say they would rather work on a project that pays more than stay at home not earning anything.

Concerning payment for work done, people in C1 and C2 say that full payment has not been made even though it has been a year since the bridge was constructed, 'we finished the work a year ago, but it looks like in one year they (UC) have eaten and digested our money already' (man, C2). Those who worked on the bridge say they have been paid only once and even then did not get paid for the full days worked. One man had worked as a labourer laying foundation stones for 11 days and been paid for only 7 days work, while a woman who had carried sand



People in D1 constructing the ADB funded water tank

for 7 days was paid for 3 days only. One shop owner said he had only been paid NPR 7,000 for 40 days work. The same was true for D1 where two months ago one man had worked for 7 days portering plates and other metal equipment from the highway market, but had not yet been paid. While some men and women say that funds have not been released from the VDC to pay their wages, others seemed to think that the UC had misappropriated funds. Some others say that since the project period is 2 years on paper, this is why the final payment has not been made, as there is still 6 months of the project duration left.

In C2, a man told us that while he had worked to fix cables and plates on the bridge for 21 days, the chairperson had only marked his attendance for 15 days. When the issue was raised with the chairperson, she told him that he was mistaken. He then took a few witnesses to her house to testify for him and to ask her to mark his attendance correctly, but her father threatened to have him and his witnesses beaten up if he raised the issue again. He said he stopped going to work the very next day and though he was paid just before the bridge construction was complete, it was not the full amount for 21 days.

In D1, most UC members are confused about the total amount spent so far. The secretary and the treasurer are the only ones who seem to have a clear idea about the financial aspect of matters. They say approximately NPR 100,000 (one lakh) is yet to be released by the VDC from a total budget of NPR 1,400,000 (14 lakhs) and that this money is to pay people's wages once the construction is completed. In C1, the UC chairperson told us NPR 129,000 was yet to be released, but people said there had been no meetings to discuss this. While people know the remaining money is for paying their wages, they are concerned whether the payments will be made. They say that since it has already been a year since the last payment, they would not be surprised if the UC put the remaining money in their own pockets.

Table 5: Wage details

Location	Work	Basis of payment	Amount paid (NPR)
D1	Unskilled Labour (breaking stone, laying foundation)	Daily (for 9 hours work)	300 -350
	Skilled labour (fixing plates, cables)	Daily (for 9 hours work)	500-550
	Portering - gravel	Per sack of 50 kg	50
	Portering - sand	Per sack of 50 kg	25
	Portering - wood	Daily	400
	Portering - metal equipment (knot-bolt, plates/cement)	Per kg	5 (person) 4 (mule)
D2	Portering – wood	Contractual (number of days-4)	7-8000
C1	Unskilled labour	Daily	300
	Skilled labour	Daily	500
	Gabion wire construction	Daily	300
C2	Unskilled labour	Daily	335
	Skilled labour	Daily	500

While people in D1 and C1 say that they had been told during the first consultative meeting that the community would be contributing labour and materials for bridge construction, the UC and LNKO staff had not exactly clarified how much the labour contribution would be. In D1, they had been told that labour contribution would be 3% of the total labour, but many were confused as to what was meant by 3% and how the UC or the NGO would calculate this and no one had clarified this for them. The UC in D1 told us that once they had paid for all the material cost, they had divided whatever money was left among the workers so that everyone would get some money. For example, if an unskilled worker was supposed to receive NPR 350 per day but only ended up getting NPR 300 after the money was divided among others, the other NPR 50 would be considered as labour contribution.

In C1, some women had worked for 7 days carrying rocks from the river but had not been paid any money. While some men said the work was adjusted as labour contribution, one of the women said, *'we would have still done the work if they (UC) had told us it would be considered as contribution- the bridge is for us. The frustrating part is, it has been more than a year and they have neither told us that it was labour contribution, nor have they paid us'* (woman, C1). She said they had gone to the chairperson a few times to sort out the issue, but she had evaded their questions and not given them a straight answer.

As part of material contribution, D1 had provided bamboo, sand, gravel and rocks. People had heard that wood worth NPR 40,000 had also been donated from the community forest. Though some members from the community forest users' group (CFUG) told us they were expecting money for the wood, UC members said the wood was supposed to be a contribution. Likewise, C1 had also contributed sand, gravel and rocks during bridge construction. By contrast, the VDC secretary in C2 told us that they had not made any contribution toward bridge construction. The UC had asked the C2 VDC to give NPR 40,000 for the bridge, but since no written request had been made, the C2 VDC office had not provided the money as *'we were worried that the already existing funds were being mis-utilised'* (VDC secretary, C2).

Box 4: Those missing plates (D1)

One issue that was most discussed in D1 was about the lost plates. People told us that when the overseer had come one and half months ago, he had found that 12 plates that were to be used on the bridge were missing. The overseer informed the UC and left saying the work on the bridge could not start until they had new plates. People say there was major confusion as to where the plates went. As the overseer had told the UC that the supplier had sent all the plates, the UC members blamed the porters for losing them but they were adamant that they had brought all the materials to the village. While people thought it was the committee's responsibility to make sure that all the materials had reached, the UC say they were overwhelmed as all of the material for the bridge was portered in at once and it was difficult to take stock of it all.

The confusion was finally cleared when it was realised that the supplier had not sent the remaining 12 plates. The UC chairperson had got in touch with the overseer who had informed the supplier and the plates were due to arrive soon.

Field notes, D1

People in D1 said there had been no training for either the user committee or for any of the locals. Some UC members told us that there would have been a training if a trail bridge had been constructed as intended earlier, but constructing a truss bridge *'did not require technical expertise'* and since the overseer would provide all technical knowledge there was no need to train people. In C1, the UC chairperson and 2 masons (who were selected because they were skilled) attended a training in Surkhet where *'we learnt how to build a small bridge and were made to pull it down on the last day of training'* (trainee, C1). People said the training was for 5 days and they received 6000 NPR as allowance.

While people think the training was not very useful *'those who did not go (for the training) did better work than those who did'* (man, C1), the two masons who attended the training say it was helpful for them as they had never built a bridge before and the training taught them technical skills and knowledge about bridge construction such as how to lay cables and plates, etc. The UC treasurer told us that it had been difficult finding people to send for the training as it was held during peak agricultural season and people were very hesitant to go.

Regarding insurance, people in D1 say though they had heard talks in the village about workers being insured, they are not sure if the insurance is in place. They say insurance is a *'foreign idea'* and that they are used to accidents and injuries because village life is hard and they *'just have to be careful when working on the bridge to avoid injuries'* (man, D1). In C1, while those who had worked on the bridge did not know if they had been insured, the UC chairperson told us that the LNGO staff had made an announcement regarding insurance during the first meeting. The staff had said that if a worker was injured all treatment costs would be borne by the project and in case of a death the family would be paid NPR 500,000.

क्र.सं.	विवरण	योगदान	पूरो मूल्य (रु.)
1	म.वि.स.	नगद	६६५२०.७८१
2	समुदाय	नगद	३८५६०.३७१
3	दातृ संस्था	स्थानीय निर्माण समिति, निर्माण कार्य	३८५६०.३७१
4	RAP	ग्याविन तार, सिमेन्ट, फलाने छड, स्टिल पार्ट्स, दुवानी निर्माण कार्य।	१८२८८३०.६०१
5	TBSU	लसु, बुलडोज, शिम्बल आदि।	१६८८२६.६०१
6	कुल		१७३८००८.६८१

म.वि.स तथा उ.स. बीच सम्झौता भएको मिति: २०७०/१०/१८
 कामदारहरूको दुर्घटना बीमा: छ। प्रति कामदार अधिकतम ३ वर्षको उमराला बराबर
 मर्त्योना १५ जना सम्मको)
 कार्य सुरु भएको मिति: २०७० चैत्र
 निर्माण कार्य सम्पन्न हुनु पर्ने मिति: २०७१ आषाढ मसान्त
 यस जानकारीको लागि कृपया म.वि.स. देखेर वा सम्बन्धित उपमोका समितिमा सम्पर्क गर्नु होला।

Flex print with details of budget and accident insurance in C1, but people say they are unaware of if they were insured

Safety equipment had been given in C1 to workers during bridge construction. Helmets, goggles (for cutting stone), gloves (for mixing cement), and safety harness (for laying cables) had been provided to workers. Most workers said the gloves had been uncomfortable and thought it was easier to work when they were not wearing the gloves. People said no equipment had been provided in D1.

Box 5: Trail bridge not what they expected (C1)

As the bridge construction in C1 was swift and completed before time, people say the UC was congratulated not only by the LNGO staff but also by 'a foreigner' who had visited with a staff from DDC. However, people suspect some corruption on the part of the UC and the overseer from the LNGO.

People say their suspicions stem largely from the length of the bridge which they believe has been shortened. Some men told us the original length of the bridge was supposed to be 52 metres but the current bridge is almost 10 metres short. They found out that the bridge was shorter than it was supposed to be when they noticed that though the soil had already been dug out for laying the foundation at one location, the overseer had made workers re-start digging at a second location lower down the slope. When the overseer was questioned about this he said the first location had not been viable as it was on a slope.

Some men told us that the site of the bridge had purposely been changed since if it had been built on the original site, the UC chairperson and her relative (on whose land the bridge was being built) would have to give up more land. Others say that though the length of the bridge has been shortened, the budget for it has remained the same (NPR 1,750,000 or 17.5 lakhs).

Though people think funds might have been misappropriated, most say they do not know whom to confront and even if they had known, they would not ask them directly as '*they are our people, how can we ask them if they misappropriated funds- so we only talk among ourselves*' (man, C1).

However, there are a few like one school teacher who say that these are baseless rumours and the funds could not have been misappropriated while procuring materials as all the material for the bridge was sent by the LNGO. According to him, the UC's fault is that they have not been transparent enough by informing the village where the money was utilised.

Field notes, C1

4.3.4. Completion and maintenance

Though the trail bridge construction in C1 was completed a year ago, the leftover materials like the plates and nuts and bolts and steel frames are still there at the construction site. People think that the UC chairperson or the treasurer had informed the LNGO to pick up the excess materials, but no one came for it and the steel frames have now rusted because of continuous exposure to sun and rain. Some men also told us that as no staff from the LNGO had come to pick up the materials, the chairperson had taken a few plates home and was using them as a base for her goat pen.

Some men in C1 told us that they had attended a meeting after the bridge construction was complete and at the conclusion of the meeting, were made to sign on a sheet of paper. This was the first time they had put their signature on anything related to the bridge, and they said they were unsure if they had signed to verify their attendance in the meeting or if it was to show that the remaining funds had come through and that they had received their pending payment for the work they had did. They said they had thought of this only after the meeting and did not want to ask the committee members as it would look like they were '*poking their nose into others' business*' (man, C1).

In C1, where the bridge had been completed a year ago, the UC chairperson told us that since the people in the village and the LNGO had been happy with the work that the committee had done,



The leftover plates from the trail bridge construction being used in a goat pen

they decided to agree to the continuation of the maintenance committee (MC). However, other members of the UC and people from the village told us that no MC had been chosen yet. During the first consultative meeting, people were told that the project duration was for 2 years. Additionally, the UC treasurer also told us that the maintenance committee can only be formed after the construction phase is complete on paper, that is once all the funds are released and the 'phor-pharak' (final audit) has happened before the people.

As the maintenance phase on the bridge had not yet begun in C1, a bridge warden had not been appointed. People said they knew that a bridge warden had to be appointed after the construction and there had been disagreements in the community as to who should get the work. There were two main contenders for the job. One was an elderly man who lived right next to the bridge and said as people respected and listened to him he should be the bridge warden. The other man claims that since he had given up some land for bridge construction and had not been compensated, he should be given the job. People said the UC had been in two minds about it and had decided that both men would get the work and the salary (NPR 6,000 per year which would be paid through the VDC) would be split in two.

Most people said they knew that the bridge warden's responsibility was to see that nothing from the bridge was stolen, but they thought that it was a waste of money to appoint a person just for that, 'What is the need for a bridge warden? We need the bridge, why will we steal nails or nut-bolts?' (Man, C1). People in the village also jokingly referred to the bridge wardens as 'pool heralu' (bridge watchers) and some women said that the wardens would 'sit at two different ends of the bridge and look at the bridge all day!' (Woman, C1).

4.4. People's perception of impact

As mentioned elsewhere in the report, people felt the biggest impact of the bridge was on safety. As there had been accidents on the old wooden bridges in both D1 and C1, people felt that the new bridge was significant and was now 'less scary' (woman, C1) to cross the bridge and that it would reduce accidents.

Some men from ward 2 in D1 think that the new bridge would improve access to their fields as it would be less risky to cross and they will be able to take their cattle across to work in the fields. They said that the only time they could take their cattle across now is actually through the river when the water level was low and even then, the animals would sometimes refuse to cross. At times like these, there was no option but to directly cross the river which was dangerous and impossible during monsoon.

Women in C1 said they felt safer while crossing the new bridge and it had become easier for them to take children to the pharmacy in the market as they were not afraid of crossing the bridge now. They also said that though the time taken for school students to reach the school at the market was more or less the same, it had improved their accessibility as they were less likely to miss school during monsoon which they had been missing about 4-5 days a month.

As most of the people in D2 were not direct users of the bridge, they said that it would have no impact on them. However, while talking about the impact of community level projects in general, a few older men told us that as compared to before; local men had begun to demand more wages for a day's work. Earlier while the wage rate for a day's work was NPR 200, the projects were paying them more than that (NPR 300-350 per day). They said that since the projects had begun paying more wages it was difficult to find men who agreed to work for the wages they were paid earlier.

People also say the bridge work has not had any impact on migration as the work is short term and the wages are less than what migrant workers make in India. While men who are home from India might work a few days, no one has actually stayed back for the season to work on the bridge. Men in all locations are still migrating for work or education and it is mostly the older men and younger women who work on the bridge.

People in D1 say they do not see any economic benefits (like opening of new shops in the village, goods moving out of the village) associated with the new bridge. They say that the villages already have a few shops that sell essentials like sugar, soap, and as some men say, cigarettes etc. and people in the area prefer to go to the market anyway, for which they do not have to cross the bridge. In C1, a kiosk selling rice, sugar, tea, and other household goods had opened in the village within six months of bridge construction. People say now they do not have to walk 2 hours to reach the market just to buy household items and the prices are not very different to the market prices. People also say that working on the bridge had improved their credit availability at the local shops (C1), where they could buy goods like rice, cooking oil, sugar, salt, tea on credit and the shop owners would collect the money owed after they had been paid for their work on the bridge.

5. Study Implications

As with all RCA studies, the study team prefers to draw implications from the findings and attempts to contextualize these perceptions with the team's observations from the field. The following are implications which have emerged from our detailed engagement with people in their own homes and subsequent reflection with the RCA team.

Issues	Comments
Relevance of TB and related work	<p>The study notes that there is a need for understanding long term trends and needs of the village before starting a community level project. Our conversations and observations from the field show that in all study locations the trend is for younger men to migrate to India or overseas. In such cases, finding labourers to work on the bridge becomes difficult as is evidenced by the problems recounted by older men and the UC in D1. Furthermore wages offered do not compare well with what can be earned abroad.</p> <p>In all locations except C1, people say one of their major priorities is the road (new construction in D2 or maintenance in D1/C2), as most seem to see this as major development after which others, like vehicles, electricity and electronic goods (TV, DVD player), will follow. People in D1 feel there is also a need for long term job opportunities in the village itself to be able to retain educated individuals who at the moment are migrating to Terai or Kathmandu for work opportunities.</p> <p>The study also indicates that apart from the direct benefits like better access to schools, market, private health facilities (C1) and fields (D1), working on the bridge has not had a substantial influence on people's earnings. People are not motivated to work for low wages and irregular payments and opine that when given an option they would make the obvious choice of opting for a better earning opportunity, like working on the ADB water management programme (D1). Lower wages and untimely payment in all locations mean that people have not been able to benefit much from the bridge earnings.</p>
User Committee composition	<p>The study found that people perceived education attainment to be important for UC members, particularly in D1, where people had nominated two young and educated individuals as it was thought they could represent the community interest well.</p> <p>Another point noted was that it was usually the same people who tended to be on different village committees (D1, C1). As people seemed to think that there were only a small group of people in the</p>

village whose '*voices were heard*', they would be able to take up their issues at a higher level.

In such cases, however, there are chances of other community members being excluded from these committees. The committee as well as the community then has to bear the brunt of the decision as people who serve on more than one committee might be more inclined to get distracted by their various responsibilities and this hampers the efficiency of all involved.

The study team also thinks that specifying quotas may not necessarily be in the best interest of the committee. While the UC in D1 was required to have 50% women, it was seen that women members faced problems, especially when it came to allocating work to family members and also had problems related to their mobility outside the village. With most men working as migrant workers, women are also bearing most of the household responsibilities and it is felt strongly that to make committees more effective, it is imperative to focus on people's availability rather than forcing the issue of quotas.

Community contribution While the usual project assumptions are that contribution of labour and materials instil a sense of ownership in the community, this is not seen to be the case in our study locations, particularly in D1. This stems from the fact that there are other projects working in the area that do not require the community to make contributions and people begin to question the need for material and labour contribution from their side.

It was also felt that the concept and details of community contribution had not been adequately explained to the people by the UC or the staff from LNGO. Many in D1 were confused by what was meant by 3% labour contribution and even the UC seemed unclear on how the labour contribution was to be calculated.

Social/public accountability It has emerged from the study that though the social/public accountability system looks good on paper, its effectiveness is largely limited. It was observed that while the accountability process (through public hearing, review and audit) requires the involvement of the community at every step of the project, public reviews had not been conducted in any of the study locations and no public audit had been held in C2 even though the bridge had been constructed a year ago.

It was also noted that people did not see these gatherings as a place where they could ask questions and voice opinions. People imply

that it is mostly the '*outsiders*' (LNGO, DDC, VDC staff) who speak at these meetings and when community's opinions are asked, '*educated people with a voice*' are encouraged to answer.

The study also highlights the de-facto absence of women and elderly from the accountability mechanism. As migration is traditionally practiced in all of the study locations, most families only have women or the elderly living in the village. While the mobility of the elderly is limited because of their age, that of the women is limited by added responsibility of looking after the family, working in the fields, household chores and in some cases, working to earn additional income. Under such circumstances, it is exacting for them to be a part of these social accountability practices.

Thus, it becomes necessary to understand how best to adapt the social accountability system to the local context so that it can improve information flow, accountability and transparency.

Annexes

Annex 1: Study team

Sub team leader	Toran Singh
Team members	Narbada Ghimire Avisha Tuladhar Sanju Sah Bikram Sherchan Ram Chandra Adhikari

Annex 2: Host household information

Total number of host households: 12

1. Family Type

Nuclear	Extended
8	5

2. Head of households



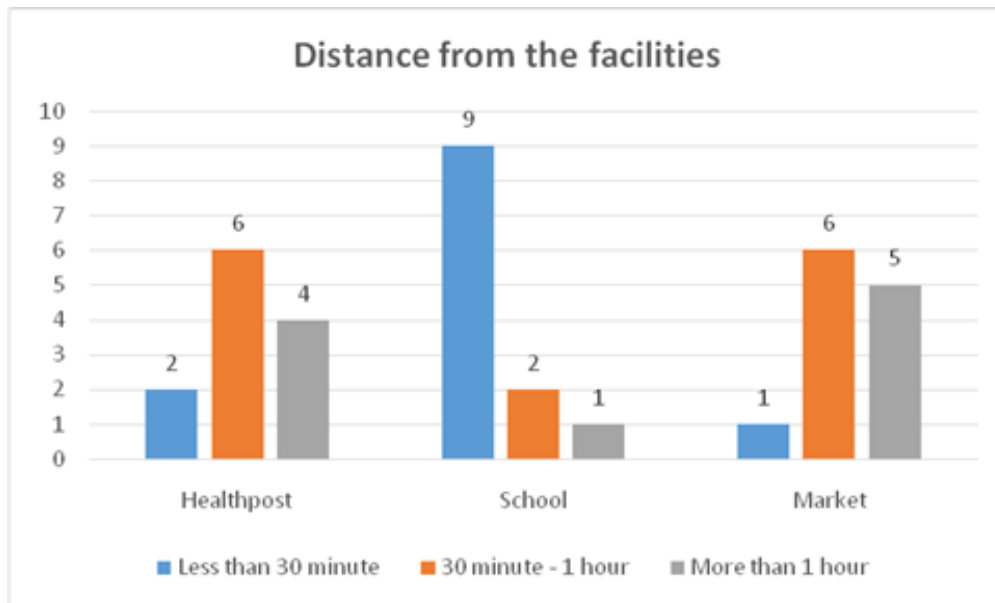
3 women, 9 men

3. Number of children in the family

Families with no children = 4



4. Distance from the facilities



5. Status of electrification and sanitary facilities

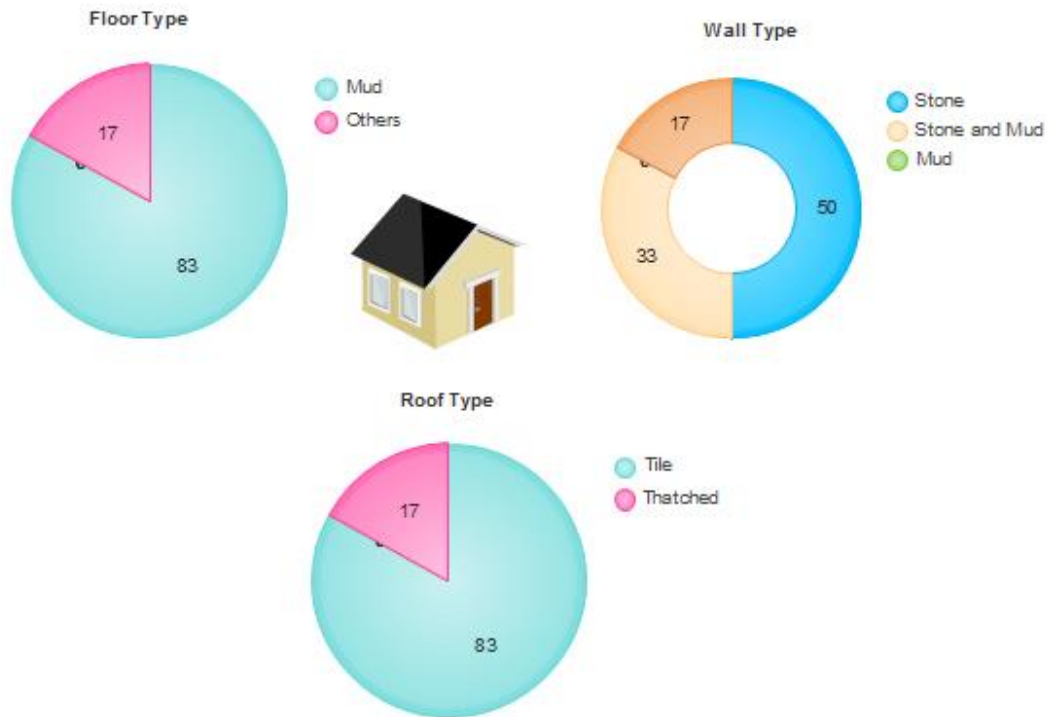


Metered electricity	25%
Solar Panel	75%

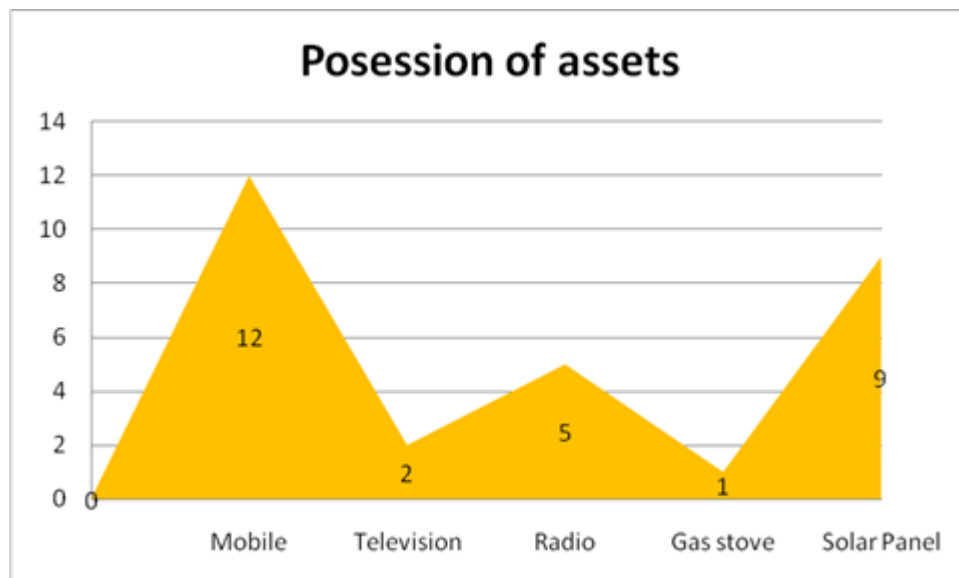


Toilet outside	83%
No toilet	17%

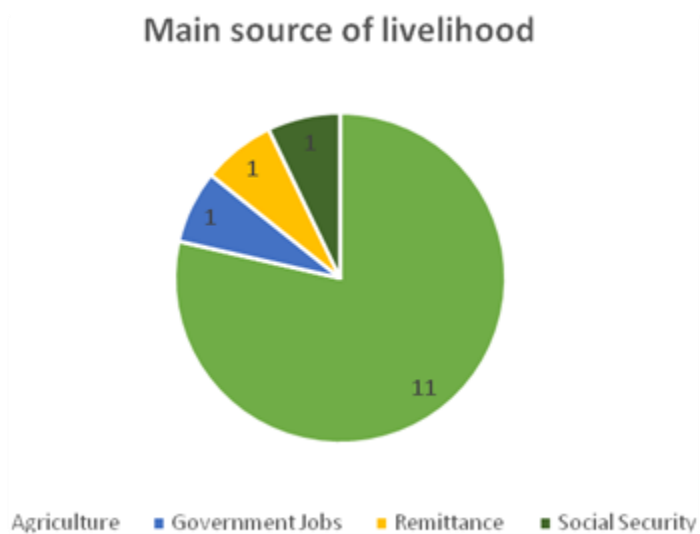
6. House Details



7. Possession of assets



8. Livelihood details



Note: The total number of household exceeds 12 as some households cited more than one sources as their main source of livelihood

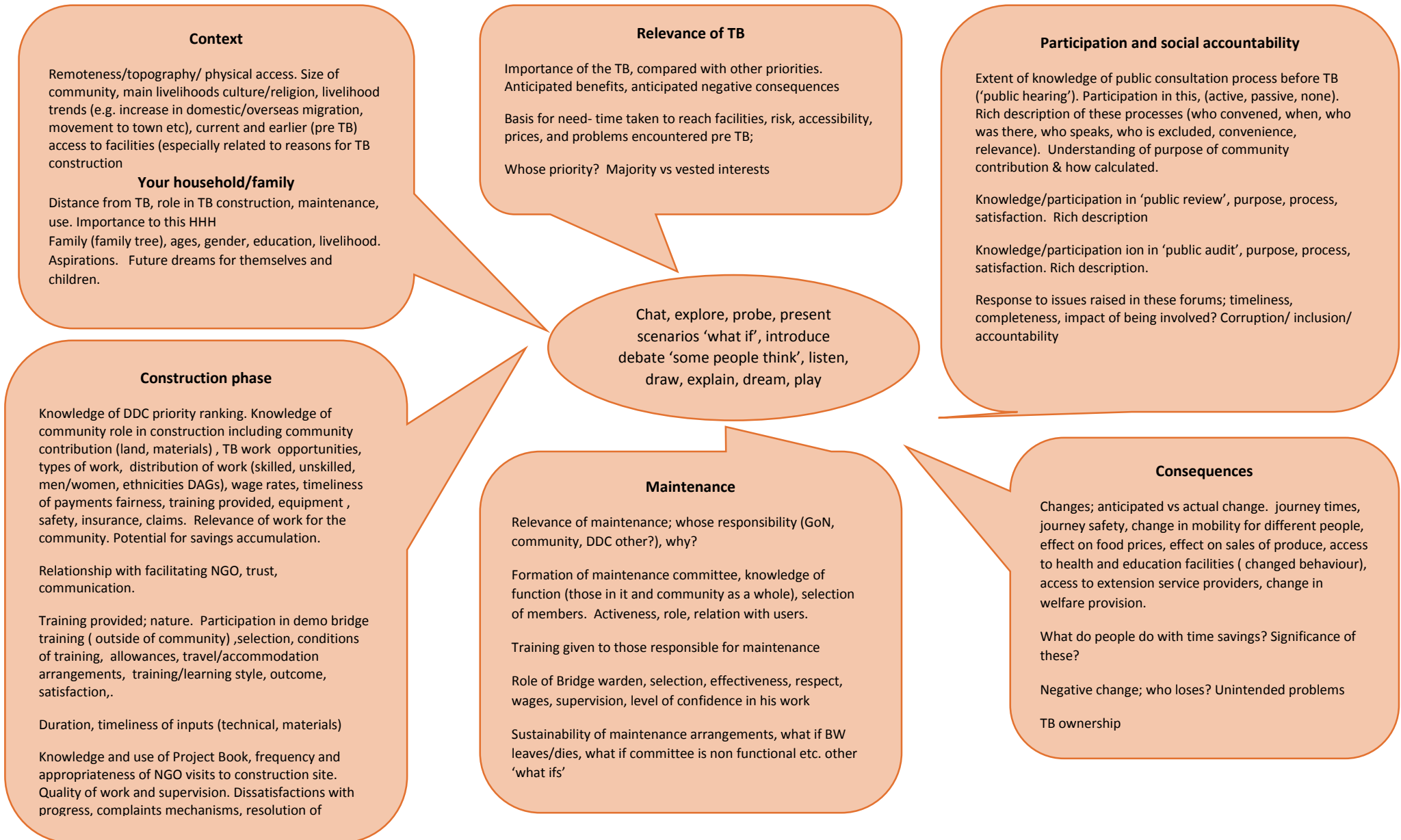
a. Additional Livelihood

Additional Job →	Pharmacy	Agriculture	Shop	Livestock	Social security	Remittance	TB	Daily wage	Work in devt. projects	Own business	Rent	Salariated jobs
Main Job ↓												
Agriculture	1		4	4	2	8	6	4	2	1	1	4
Remittance		1	1									

b. Details of additional jobs

Additional Jobs →	+ 2 Jobs	+ 3 Jobs	+ 4 Jobs	+ 5 Jobs
Main Jobs ↓				
Agriculture	2	3	4	2
Remittance	1			

Annex 3: Areas of conversations



Annex 4: List of people met

Shop owners

Formal health workers (Auxiliary Health Worker, Auxiliary Nurse Midwife)

Doctor

Traditional healer (dhami)

NGO staff

School principal

Teachers (primary, secondary and ECD)

Community Forest User Group members

VDC Secretary

VDC Assistant

Political party care

Trail bridge User Committee members

Labourers and porters for bridge construction

Traders

Craftsmen

Bus driver

Nepal Army officer