

**OPEN SOCIETY FOUNDATIONS – NEPAL PROGRAM
PROPOSAL TEMPLATE**

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कृपया यो टेम्प्लेट १० पानामा सिमित गरेर भर्नु होला ।*

I. Organizational Information (संस्थागत सूचना)	
Name of Organization: Rastriya Dalit Network Contact Address: Dhangadhi Sub-metropolitan city-5 Chakmeli Bazar Kailali Telephone: +97791520604 (Cell) Email: rdnnepal@yahoo.com	Primary Contact Person: Name: Mr. Ganesh B.K. Designation: Central Chairperson Email: ganeshbikal@gmail.com Mobile No: +977-9851082733 (Cell)
Organizational Background (maximum 250 words)	
<p>Rastriya Dalit Network (RDN) Nepal is the national level Dalit organization working in the field of Dalit rights, land rights, Haliya rights, Kamaiya rights and Human Rights through community mobilization, capacity building and advocacy campaigns since the time of its establishment. It is working all over the country in 77 Districts. It has one Dalit activist in each district and 7 provincial chapters formed and functional. RDN Nepal is registered as a non-governmental organization in District Administration Office, Kailali and affiliated in Social Welfare Council in 2003 AD. It organizes the General Assembly each year and election in each three years through democratic practice.</p> <p>Dalit rights and dignity, human rights and social justice, land rights and natural resource management are the core thematic organization. Similarly, Public Sector Accountability, Deepening Democracy, Gender Equality and Social Inclusion (GESI) Mainstreaming, are its cross-cutting interventions.</p> <p>The strengths of the organizations are outlined as below:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• <i>Inclusive and functional leadership with knowledge and skill on diversified thematic as well as cross-cutting interventions</i>• <i>More than 15 years of working experience in the field of advocacy, empowerment, mass-mobilization, capacity building, litigation, service delivery etc</i>• <i>At least 40% women representation has been provisioned in its constitution at all level</i>• <i>Leading role in various national and international alliances and networking for collective advocacy interventions</i> <p>Rastriya Dalit Network (RDN) Nepal is governed by its central board of directors led by Mr. Ganesh B.K. central chairperson of the organization who has more than 25 years of working experience in development sector.</p> <p>The organizational plan and policies are guided by the decision of its national assembly and regular general assembly. Out of the total 23 staffs in the organization, there are 5 regular also known as core staffs and rest 18 are project staffs who working under the implementation of various projects.</p> <p>As per the record of audit report of the organization, the annual expenditure of previous two fiscal years 2075/076 and 2076/077 is NPR 3,192,484 and NPR 4,489,778 respectively. Currently, RDN Nepal is actively working as the coordinator of Forced Labour Elimination Advocacy Group (FLeAG) that includes more than 25 local NGOs, experts on forced labour and trade unions in Nepal.</p>	

II. Project Information (परियोजनाको बारे सूचना)

Title of the Project:-Land Rights Campaign at 9 districts of Sudurpaschim Province in Nepal

Proposed duration of the project: 2 years (01 March, 2021 to 28 February, 2023)

Proposed project location (s):The project will be intensively implemented at 18 palikas of 9 districts (2 in each district-1 rural municipality and 1 municipality) in Sudurpaschim province of Nepal

Proposed budget (in NPR):NPR 4,654,100 (USD 39,973.374)

Purpose of the project: To contribute promoting the socio-economic status of Dalits through increasing their access in land and housing rights.

1. Current Context (maximum 500 words)

The newly promulgated constitution-2015 under the federal democratic republic Nepal has ensured that every citizen has equal opportunities in civil and political as well as economic, social and cultural rights. The article of new constitution (Article-29) has clearly stated that nobody are compelled to be engaged in forced labours such as exploitation, human trafficking as well as slavery system. Such deeds are liable to be punished by law in constitutional point of view. Every citizen has identical civil liberties for consuming the rights. Although there are legal and constitutional provisions, poor and disadvantaged groups in the community are still deprived from their fundamental human rights. Dalits, women, children and land-poor are not only excluded due to gender, classical and caste based discrimination in the society but also they are also victim of exploitation, forced labours and modern slavery.

A domestic outbreak of COVID-19 commenced in May, prolonging the lockdown and imposing substantial human and further economic costs. As a result of the impact of COVID-19, GDP growth in Nepal is estimated at 1.8 percent in FY2020, compared to 7 percent in FY2019. Growth in the service sector is now estimated at 1 percent, the lowest since FY2002, while growth in the industrial sector is estimated at 3.2 percent, a four-year low, due to the deceleration in overall growth. The corona-virus (covid-19) has also impacted Nepal. Due to the lock-down, all the industries, educational institutions, transportation, tourism were fully closed and human life has become more suffering. It has impacted the income generation of whole people for their livelihood options. Particularly Dalit communities who are engaged in daily wage work are facing the problem of joining their hands to mouth and also suffering from starvation.

There is new development in science and technology. Similarly, the average temperature is increasing by 1.8 to 4 degree in global basis through which we have to face great challenges of covid-19 pandemic.

Similarly, the government of Nepal is eager to implement the fundamental rights by formulating relevant bylaws and procedures. The government of Nepal has also initiated to solve the problem of land by forming land problem solving commission. The commission has provisioned to provide the land to landless Dalits. The special authority has been given to this commission as per law. The federal government has also planned to participate Dalits in regards to operate the land bank under ministry of land management, cooperative and poverty alleviation targeting to Dalits.

2. Organization's Previous Interventions (maximum 350 words)

RDN Nepal has 2 decades of experience in working with Dalits, women, land-poor as well as forced labours; freed Haliyas, ex-Kamaiyas and Harawa-Charawa in the areas of deepening democracy, human rights and rule of law. Since the time of its establishment, more than 25 projects have been implemented with the support of diversified funding partners/donors. Out of them, 9 projects are related to human rights and rule of law, 5 are connected to strengthening civil society organizations and 6 projects relates with community activism. In line with the prior experience mentioned above, the key past and on-going activities focusing the area of human rights and rule of law, community activism as well as strengthening civil society interaction.

The achievements of the projects that RDN Nepal has successfully implemented are outlined as below:

- *The advocacy campaign of the organization contributed for the declaration of the untouchability Free State. The innovative campaigns such as mock Dalit parliament, alternative municipality and district councils sensitized policy makers.*
- *RDN established its network with various national and international alliances and movement for the collective advocacy to establish the socio-economic and political rights of Dalits*
- *RDN Nepal has proactively initiated for the submission of alternative report on scientific reservation, Dalit and freed Haliya rights caravan, declaration for untouchability freed state, concept of untouchability crime watch center, Dalit rights day, Dalit rights decade which have been fully adopted by government of Nepal.*
- *The involvement of RDN Nepal remained in constitution building process in Nepal. Similarly, it creatively organized various debates and dialogues on restructuring of the state and facilitated for integrated and solidarity movements being strong civil society organization with the presence in all 77 district of Nepal.*
- *RDN Nepal is continuously lobbying and advocating for the effective implementation of the constitutional and legal provisions through the empowerment of Dalit communities in Nepal. The government of Nepal emancipated the Haliya system in Nepal as RDN Nepal has been working for the rights of ex-bonded labors since the time of its establishment.*
- *More than 100 Dalit leaders/activists from RDN Nepal have been represented in local, provincial and federal government mechanism*

3. Problem Statement (maximum 500 words)

In Nepal, landlessness is a deeply entrenched and widespread problem, rooted in a long history of feudal land governance, political complacency and nepotism, and a heavily taxed, yet ultimately dependent and weak, farmer class. The resultant skewed landownership patterns were compounded by a deeply discriminatory and strictly hierarchical society that excluded women, ethnic minorities and tribal groups, and especially those of low-caste (particularly Dalits).

Despite reforms that began in fits and spurts in the early 1950s to dismantle the system, lack of political will and any mechanism for oversight means that the same power dynamics that were in place two centuries ago persist today. Land ownership is a key indicator of identity, power, wealth, and political access. Yet up to 25% of Nepal's population is estimated to be landless or near-landless: the bottom 47% of agricultural households control only 15% of agricultural land; the top 5% control more than 37%.⁵ Documentation of the human rights consequence of landlessness reveals a wide scope of impact: landlessness in Nepal is characterized by exploitative labor conditions for tenant farmers and near bonded-labor conditions for bonded labourers; freed Ka as

recently as 2002 and 2008; frequent, arbitrary, and often violent evictions; lack of access to traditional resources (e.g., fisheries and forests) for tribal and indigenous groups; lack of access to water and food resources; inability to access police and the judiciary; and deep discrimination against women, Dalits, ethnic and religious minorities, and tribal groups who make up a disproportionate proportion of landless people..

A Land right is also issue of human rights and social justice. Now it has become a compulsory subject-matter to be addressing the socio-economic and political transformation of marginalized groups in the society. Mostly, a total of 13.2% population of Dalits in Nepal is deprived from land rights. The data shows that 23% Dalits in mountain region of Nepal are fully landless who are suppressed and oppressed for a long time. Similarly, 44% Dalits in Terai region are landless. 90% Dalits do not have sufficient land for their livelihood option. In addition 18% Dalits do not have legal documents to establish their ownership in land and housing. As per the study 46.5% Madesi Dalits are landless.

The article of new constitution (40 of (5) and (6) has provisioned the land to landless Dalits community. The Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR) has pointed-out the housing rights as fundamental human rights. Although, there are legal and constitutional provisions, but still it is not being implemented after 5 years of promulgation of the constitution. In addition, the government of Nepal has revised its land policy (8th revision) that has prioritized Dalit community.

The major challenges are as to; the political parties and duty bears do not have willing power to implement the land policy in practice and they do not have also proper monitoring mechanism..Dalits communities who are discriminated for a long time are poorly aware of their rights and claiming procedure and mechanisms, lack information and not well organized, and isolated.

4. Available Opportunity (maximum 350 words)

The following are the opportunities in regards to contribute to solution, organizational capacity, learning and evidence of prior work, etc. as;

- Rastriya Dalit Network (RDN) Nepal has two decades of working experience in the area of land rights, Dalits rights and human rights through community empowerment and social mobilization.
- The newly promulgated constitution-2015 of Nepal has significant provisions for the rights and empowerment of Dalit community who are politically excluded, economically poor and socially discriminated
- The local government bodies have priority to formulate and implement new policies and act
- The government of Nepal is eager to implement the fundamental rights by formulating relevant bylaws and procedures. The government of Nepal has also initiate to solve the problem of land by forming land problem solving commission which was formed in 2020. The commission has provisioned to provide the land to landless Dalits.
- The land commission has special authorities to provide the land to landless Dalits as well as handle the unmanaged settlement creates hope for the Dalit people that it will work to make land and housing accessible to all Dalit people.
- The government is required by law (Land Act, 8th Amendment September 2018) to identify a permanent solution for the on unregistered lands.

- It is provisioned that the effective utilization of rural municipality budget in the land registration process of Dalit communities.

5. What is your approach to address the problem/s you have mentioned above? (maximum 300 words)

The project will adopt the Human Rights Based Approach (HRBA) to Development by carrying-out the following implementation strategies/approaches as mentioned as;

- **Activist Based Campaign (ABC):** As RDN Nepal has 20 years of working experience on evidence based advocacy, activism and movement building for advancing human rights and social justice of Dalit communities, the project will continued its Activist Based Campaign (ABC) to ensure the social-economic empowerment initiatives of Harawa-Charawa for sustainable Development:
- **Critical Engagement with duty bearers and stakeholders:** Initially the project will critically engage with local government bodies in large scale. They will be collaborated for data collection and analysis process, verification of collected data as well as sharing of necessary information. The people based organizations of landless Dalits will be formed and mobilized. In the second step, land problem solving commission will be cooperated at all project districts. As required, these two agencies will be collaborated separately and jointly. In addition, civil society organizations, media and land rights movements will be coordinated respectively.
- **Adopting Safety Measures:** Considering the current covid-19 pandemic context, the project team including target beneficiaries will adopt the safety measures; physical distance, using mask, sanitizer and glove etc as well as optimum means of communication technology and field work while implementing the project activities.
- **Gender Equality and Social Inclusion (GESI) Mainstreaming:** This project will ensure the equal participation of all sections (caste/sex/ethnicity) of the community to bring about sustainable changes in the households and societies, contributing in GESI. Minimum 50% women participants will be ensured in project planning and implementation.
- **Accountability and Transparency:** RDN Nepal beliefs on both upwards and downwards accountabilities for the success of each project and interventions. Thus, both upwards and downwards accountability will be practiced and ensured during the entire project period.

6. Objective(s) (maximum of three)

- 1. To organize and mobilize the target communities for land and housing rights of Dalits**
- 2. To enhance the collaboration with government bodies and land commission for increasing the access of Dalits in land rights**
- 3. To conduct the evidence and knowledge based advocacy to systematically claim for their rights and entitlements**

7. Activities (maximum 1000 words)

The implementation process and minimum standard for each activity will be further detailed-out at the beginning of the project while developing detail implementation plan. The key activities of the project are described as;

1. Activities under Organize and Mobilize Dalit Community

1.1 Mobilization of the federation of dalits and Dalit community for the advocacy: The project will form and strengthen federation of dalits and dalit community also known as people based organizations at local, districts and provincial level. The federations will facilitate in land registration of Dalits under the program of land problem solving commission. These forums will be mobilized in-depth discussion, interaction, knowledge building and information sharing/dissemination for lobby and advocacy for the voice and concerns of target beneficiaries.

1.2 Organizing the Dalit Network, Dalit community: RDN will organize Dalit community including its own networks for making them prepare about advocacy strategy, their claims, and demands. A total of 36 meetings will be organized voluntarily at rural municipalities and municipalities of 9 project districts.

1.3 Development and Mobilization of Organization Mobilizers: RDN will mobilize 9 organization mobilizers at project working districts to facilitate the project activities smoothly. Particularly, they will be mobilized in collaboration with land problem solving commission at district level for accessing the rights of Dalits on land and housing. They will also facilitate to increase the access of Dalits in government resources and services.

1.4 Mobilization of campaign Coordination: The project will mobilize one campaign coordinator during the project period in course of participatory planning, implementation, monitoring and reporting.

2 Activities under Collaboration with land commission and local government

2.1 Close meeting and interaction with the commission: RDN will organize 18 events of close meetings and interactions with land commission with an aim to make the guidelines recommend the policies make the strategy or action plan. RDN will also help the local government to collect the data, and their documentation of dalit for the distribution.

2.2 Roundtable discussion with the commission and local government: The project will organize 9 events of round table discussions to provide its technical expertise with evidences, data, geographic information about Dalit community, their needs, problems to the commission and local government in their process of generating the data, making the policies.

2.3 Meetings with the local government: The project will also conduct 18 meetings with local governments bodies at project targeted districts to discuss on the land rights issues of dalits. The local government bodies will be sensitized on the issues of land rights.

2.4 Workshop with the land commission, local government and key dalit right activists on the land issues: RDN will organize 9 events of one day workshops with the land commission, local government and key dalit right activists on the land issues. The program will be focused to discuss on the land rights issues in wider level. The chairperson, expert member and other members of district level land problem solving commission including local government representatives and key dalit rights activists will actively take part in the workshop.

3. Advocacy (Claiming on land Rights)

3.1 Advocacy strategy making workshop: RDN will organize one event of two days advocacy strategy making workshop in the presence of target groups and other concerned stakeholders. The discussion of workshop will conclude to sketch-out the strategy to conduct the advocacy on land rights of Dalits.

3.2 Land Rights Vigilance Caravan: RDN will conduct one event of land rights vigilance campaign an aim to create mass solidarity on land rights issues of Dalits. Similarly, the event will also sensitize the policy makers and stakeholders. A total of more than **5000** participants have been planned to join the cycle caravan. There will be protest and signature campaign during land rights vigilance caravan.

3.3 Submission of demand paper and press release: The target groups and their networks will be mobilized for the submission of demand paper to the land commission and policy makers in local and district level. They will be provided the technical support for press release to sensitize the duty bearers on land rights issues of Dalits.

3.4 Public hearing: A total of 9 episodes of 9 events of district level public hearing will be lively broadcasted from local FMs with an aim to sensitize the duty bearers on land rights issues of Dalits. Each event of public hearing will consist of 40 participants among both target beneficiaries and relevant stakeholders. Before conducting the public hearing, the resource-person will conduct exit-poll/perception survey that aims to predict the final results on the basis of the information collected from the right holders and relevant stakeholders.

3.5 Mobilization of Social Media for advocacy: RDN will mobilize social media for land rights advocacy. The key message regarding the project implementation as well and policy provisions will be widely disseminated through various means of information communication technology such as face-book, official website, viber etc. Similarly, journalist will explore grass-root realities on the land rights issues of Dalits and make them publicized.

3.6 Story telling (Documentation) of the land problems of the people: RDN will collect and compile the stories of land problems of the people in the project target area to use these as evidences to claim for various advocacy campaigns.

3.7 Documentation and evidence generation: Documentation of evidences is central to strengthen advocacy for policy changes and enforcement of laws and policies. The project will collect and document exemplary cases which will be compiled and documented for the evidence based advocacy initiatives.

3.8 Publication: The project will publish the collected evidences and stories as documentation so as to disseminate in wider level among Dalit community, land commission, local government and other relevant stakeholders. The published document will speak about the fact and figures regarding the land rights problem of Dalit community that contributes to increase the sensitization of policy makers and duty bearers.

8. Targeted Achievements (maximum 500 words)

a) 6 months' achievement

- People based organization mobilizers developed and mobilized in land rights advocacy campaign.
- Target groups especially Dalit communities are empowered on claiming their land rights provisioned on constitution and legal provisions.
- Amplified voices of Dalit community , right holders for identifying advocacy issues and evidences
- Increased collaboration with land rights commission and local government bodies
- Created common understanding among land commission, local government and key dalit right activists on the land issues

b) 1 year achievement

- Relevant stakeholders and civil society organizations (CSOs) at local, district and provincial level fully collaborated the Dalit land rights campaign
- Local and provincial level policy makers and duty bearers sensitized on land rights issues of Dalits
- Generated evidences consist of stories of land problem of the people and policy provisions for evidence based advocacy interventions.
- Developed one advocacy strategy paper to advocate on land rights issues through participatory discussion methodology

c) 2 year Achievement

- Sensitized policy makers, duty bearers and other concerned stakeholders on land rights of Dalits through various advocacy interventions.
- Duty bearers are accountable towards the land rights issues of Dalits by conducting public hearing.
- Increased sharing and learning on the land rights related information of Dalit community through use of various social medias; face-book, website, viber etc and information communication technology
- Published and disseminated the evidences and stories as documentation so as to disseminate in wider level among Dalit community, land commission, local government and other relevant stakeholders

9. Expected Outcomes (in bullets, maximum of 5)

अपेक्षितपरिणामहरू (क्रमबद्ध रुपमा बढीमा ५)

- Land and housing rights federation would be fully mobilized also known as people based organizations and functional for collective advocacy campaign
- Sensitized policy makers and duty bearers to land rights issues of Dalits through policy advocacy campaigns
- Increased access of Dalits to land rights
- Enhanced advocacy campaign and mobilization of right holders based on legal and constitutional provision on land rights.
- Improved knowledge, sharing and understanding among relevant stakeholders to improve the socio-economic status of Dalits.