BACKGROUND

Parliament Support Project (PSP) is devoted to supporting the building of the parliament’s strength in the areas of institutional reforms, lawmaking, oversight, and outreach. This includes enhancing the capacities of individual members of parliament (MPs) and supporting parliamentary committees in lawmaking functions by making available expert reviews of and organizing public consultations on proposed bills and conducting oversight missions.

It supports the parliament secretariats to strengthen their capacities for providing their support to the MPs and Committees. The project also emphasizes on creation of opportunities for people from marginalized groups, women, and youth to participate in parliamentary affairs.

QUICK FACTS:

- **Duration**: January 2018 - December 2022 (Phase II)
- **Focus**: Democratic Transition
- **Source of Funding**: Government of Norway
- **Implementing Agency**: UNDP
- **Partner**: Federal Parliament and Provincial Assemblies (seven provinces)
- **Budget for the total Project Period**: US$ 4,877,000
ACHIEVEMENTS SO FAR

CAPACITY DEVELOPMENT

- Enhanced the capacity of members of the Federal Parliament and the Provincial Assemblies (724 in 2018, 602 in 2019 and 365 in 2020) on parliamentary procedures through over 200 inductions, trainings, orientations, consultations, mentoring sessions, expert-aided sessions and sensitization programs.
- Enhanced the capacity of staff of the Federal Parliament and the Provincial Assemblies (192 in 2018, 230 in 2019 and 168 in 2020) through over 30 trainings, orientations and expert-aided consultations on different areas of expertise to provide their support to MPs and Committees.
- Capacity of MPs of the Federal Parliament and the Provincial Assemblies fortified on responding to COVID-19 with over 12 orientations, trainings, sharing/interaction sessions and inter-provincial meetings.

BILL REVIEW AND PUBLIC CONSULTATIONS

- Expert reviews and public consultations on over 50 bills of the Federal Parliament and Provincial Assemblies with the engagement of over 6000 (25% female) public provided feedbacks to the bills by which MPs registered several amendments notices to the bills, thereby the parliaments endorsed several bills by incorporating the feedbacks received.
- Supported more than 10 parliamentary committees of the federal parliament and several committees of the provincial assemblies for public consultations on bills resulting into over 150 amendments proposals made by the MPs.
- Supported the Provincial Assemblies for expert reviews and public consultations on 5 bills with the perspective of pandemic situation like COVID 19.

PARLIAMENTARY OVERSIGHTS:

- Supported federal and provincial parliamentary committees for 50 oversight missions on contemporary issues including human rights, public accounts, SDGs including 10 oversight missions on COVID-19 issues.

FOCUS ON SDGS IMPLEMENTATION

- Supported to establish and operationalize SDGs Resource Center at Sustainable Development and Good Governance Committee (SDGGC) of the National Assembly in order to create an integrated knowledge hub on SDGs for parliamentarians.
- Supported Parliaments to come together in forming a loose forum of 45 MPs of the National Assembly and Provincial Assembly for building collective effort in localization of the SDGs in sub-national level.
- Promoted the SDGs in coordination with the SDGGC by conducting eight thematic policy dialogues on various themes including gender, climate change, anti-corruption, use of open data, media informing about 412,549 people on these themes via social media.
- Supported the SDGGC to develop and endorse a handbook on Parliamentary Oversight on Implementation of SDGs to help MPs oversee and scrutinize multiple areas of SDGs including resources, legal frameworks, mechanisms, and reporting.

PROMOTION OF PARLIAMENTARY OUTREACH AND OPENNESS

- Promoted parliamentary outreach and openness towards creating avenues for wider civic engagement in parliamentary affairs. In which over 5000 public were engaged in lawmaking activities, 116 MPs from provinces sensitized on openness principles, journalists oriented, over 300 radios (with over 50 episodes) mobilized reaching out to over 10 million people for two-way communication between the parliament and the public.
- Launched outreach programmes such as Meet the Speaker. Meet the MPs, public hearing with parliamentary committees and public consultations on the proposed bills in the provincial assemblies reaching out to over 17,000 people.
- Introduced ICT in parliaments by availing Provincial Assemblies with Video Conferencing Facility (VCF) in 6 provinces including in 63 District Coordination Committees and two committees of the federal parliament to broaden the public-parliament communication. These VCFs have enabled the PAs to conduct virtual outreach, over 60 meetings (including that of Speakers National Meet) held involving over 180 MPs and 3000 public.
- Supported parliaments to install YouTube Live broadcast technology in Sudurpaschim and Karnali provincial assemblies, and the Federal Parliament towards making the parliaments more open and transparent.
- Sensitized/oriented 600 (30% female) journalists to enhance their skills in parliamentary reporting and in association with them, developed profile of 534 MPs from 4 provinces and the Federal Parliament.

INNOVATIVE PRACTICES

- Supported dozens of inter-provincial sharing programmes among MPs, established a culture of speakers’ Meet, supported building institutions of parliamentary journalists and promoted inter-provincial learning among them, all of which have become a practice now.
- Supported the Committees of the National Assembly with experts to streamline its working procedures and avail knowledge on global comparative practices (a book produced) and conducted post-legislative scrutiny of two laws (Cast-based Discrimination Act and Anti-Corruption laws).
- Supported Federal and Provincial parliamentarians to scrutinize the Universal Periodic Review (UPR) reporting of the Government of Nepal, inviting 36 MPs with 33 points of recommendations to the government.
- Over 80 parliamentarians acknowledged PSPs initiative of developing a comprehensive resource material for mapping Nepal’s priorities and obligations on international treaties and conventions on environment and climate change through various learning sessions.

YOUTH ENGAGEMENT

- 90 youth (44% female, 4% others) who were trained on parliamentary affairs formed a network of youth fellows which is advocating for youth’s active participation in the parliamentary affairs.
- Above 20,000 youth engaged in vibrant discussion with MPs through a six-day long virtual Youth Parliament School conducted to the youth from provinces.

KNOWLEDGE PRODUCTS

- Published and disseminated a comprehensive package of over 30 knowledge products including Profiles of MPs, separate guidelines for General oversight, public accounts committees, bill review and public consultations, handbook for oversight on implementation of SDGs, and publications on delegated legislations, government assurance, parliamentary openness and reporting. Also published global literature on parliamentary affairs, ethics, lawmaking, SDGs and oversights to help deepen understanding of MPs, journalists and the public on parliamentary affairs and procedures.
EXPECTED RESULTS/OUTPUTS

- Enhance the capacity of the Federal Parliament and Provincial Assemblies to be effective and participatory.
- Enhance the capacity of parliamentary secretariats to be capable and innovative in their support to MPs and Committees.
- Enhance the capacity of the Federal Parliament and Provincial Assemblies to be open, interactive, and accountable to citizens.
- Build the capacity of women MPs and MPs from disadvantaged groups to be effective and parliaments at the federal and provincial levels to routinely engage with women, youth and other disadvantaged citizens.
- Enhance the capacity of parliaments at the federal & provincial levels to routinely response pandemic in the post COVID-19.

GENDER AND SOCIAL INCLUSION

- Over 50% beneficiaries of the events and the outreach programmes have been women, women MPs and MPs from the marginalized/disadvantaged communities. Others included persons with disabilities, sexual and gender minority groups, and senior citizens.

- 152 women parliamentarians enhanced their skills on various fronts including leadership, appreciate inquiry, media tools handling, communications, leadership, and advocacy for their effective representation in the parliament.

- Over 200 women MPs and 185 MPs from marginalized/disadvantaged groups of the Federal and the Provincial Parliament benefitted through 20 mentoring sessions including on COVID-19 and its impact, and 8 sessions on psychosocial and mental health to cope with the situation caused by the pandemic.

- At least 50% of women MPs and 35% of MPs from marginalized groups were reached out through over 100 capacity-building interventions and explored their inner talents and capabilities as MPs for their effective role in the parliament.

- 50 women MPs of Province 2 and Bagmati Province analyzed annual budgets of the governments and advocated for gender-responsive and inclusive budgeting and suggested areas of improvements to make the annual budgets more gender-responsive and inclusive.