

Nepal with equity and prosperity

FORUM FOR COMMUNITY
UPLIFTMENT SYSTEM
(FOCUS) NEPAL
Strategy (2024- 2028)

FEBRUARY 3, 2024



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Executive summary

Nepal established a civil society (CS) initiative in 1606, led by Ram Shaha, which mobilized volunteers to participate in community development projects such as constructing shelters for lords, digging water wells, and planting sacred fig trees. These CS initiatives have continued to this day through Guthi and labour-sharing mechanisms in Nepal. The Social Welfare Council began accrediting INGOs in 1977, and after the restoration of democracy and open market operations in 1990, the Government of Nepal provided INGOs with greater space to support local NGOs and social development in Nepal. This led to the flourishing of 50,358 NGOs affiliated with SWC in Nepal, with 25,992 NGOs operating in Bagmati province. FOCUS Nepal, an NGO, has been active in Dhading and Bagmai province since 2059 BS. Most active NGOs are supported and funded by 260 INGOs in Nepal. However, after the earthquake and COVID-19, INGO support and funding sources have shrunk from development partners in Nepal. In this context, FOCUS Nepal is preparing a strategic plan to be more efficient in delivering sustainable development services.

The consultant, Paribartan, prepared this strategic plan through participatory facilitation of key stakeholders' workshops, document review, and competitiveness analysis of FOCUS Nepal. The facts and information were obtained through interactions among board members, Focus management technical staff, key external stakeholders, and secondary reviews.

This document presents a strategic plan that analyzes the operational history of civil society and the business competitiveness of FOCUS Nepal NGO. It evaluates the factor conditions, supporting institutions, and demand conditions for NGO services in Nepal and Bagmati province. Additionally, it identifies key driving factors for FOCUS program development and formulates a vision, mission, goals, strategy, programs, and resource mobilization. It also assesses risks and proposes an implementation structure for the strategy.

Based on the inputs of stakeholder workshop participants, the two most important and uncertain **driving forces** for FOCUS program development are political and networking relations and sources of funds. The future scenario of the FOCUS program development in Bagmati province is designed based on strong political and networking relations and the expansion of sources of funds. The envisioned scenario is "expertise led to the success of the Focus Nepal."

The stakeholders and expert team recommend income growth, quality use of resources, and governance as development priorities for Focus Nepal. The **vision** statement, "Nepal with equity and prosperity," was agreed upon by stakeholders as still valid for the period of the organization's strategic plan implementation. The vision statement focuses on long-term development orientation and direction for the organization. It is based on five strategic development thrusts, namely income growth, quality use of resources, inclusion, participation, and good governance.

The **mission** of Focus Nepal is to promote the prosperity and well-being of poor, vulnerable, socially excluded groups of people, and women-led entrepreneurs in Bagmati province. The

organization aims to achieve this by mobilizing quality resources, encouraging income and enterprise profit growth, and building good governance capacity of society and institutions. Focus Nepal adopts values of sustainability, consolidation orientation, inclusiveness, resilience, and equitable growth sharing.

The workshop identified five strategic goals necessary to achieve the vision and mission statement of Focus Nepal. These **goals** are to (1) increase the income of 5,500 poor, vulnerable, marginalized, and women-led households in Bagmati Province by 15% by 2028, resulting in enterprise profit growth, (2) ensure the systematic distribution and safe usage of water sources in selected municipalities to benefit a population of 22,500 by 2028, (3) enhance the leadership capacity of 25% of active participants among 29,150 targeted beneficiaries, (4) enhance the assets-building and decision-making capacity of 2.5% of inclusive participants among 14,575 targeted beneficiaries, and (5) improve the governance and institutional infrastructure of Focus Nepal up to national standards by 2028.

Lastly, the workshop identified seven main directions for the organization's future activities.

Direction 1: Targeting. Focus Nepal will target poor, vulnerable, and socially excluded groups, including single women and orphan households, women-led enterprises, and people with disabilities in selected 14 municipalities of Bagmati province. It will use well-being ranking and participatory rapid appraisal tools to develop programs, projects, and partnerships aimed at reaching 5,500 households by 2028.

Direction 2: Sector focus. Focus Nepal will focus exclusively on agriculture (green vegetables, goat, poultry, dairy, horticulture, indigenous crops), agro-tourism services (including homestays), water and sanitation, and governance capacity building of societies and institutions involved in these sectors. Its programs will address issues such as disaster risk reduction, climate change, gender and social inclusion, and resiliency across the focused sectors. The organization will review its focus based on the needs expressed by the targeted beneficiaries in the intervention areas rather than the demands made by funders.

Direction 3: Enterprise-based income growth. Focus Nepal will promote market-led and local resource-based enterprises at all stages of the enterprise development process, from input supply to output marketing. It will partner with funding partners, local government, and beneficiaries to utilize market opportunities, fallow arable land, and skills of targeted people and migrant workers' investment. An inbuilt technical support services provider and Focus Nepal team will provide demand-based support for this enterprise-based income growth.

Direction 4: Quality use of resources. Focus Nepal will prioritize the quality use of water, land, and natural resources while reducing the use of chemical fertilizers. It will seek grants and funds from the government, partner organizations, and community labour contributions to support its efforts. The organization will aim to maintain soil ecology while using natural resources such as water, forests, and land, and promote sustainable use of resources with equitable distribution and sharing.

Direction 5: Beneficiary-level governance. This direction focuses on inclusive selection standards and creating economic opportunities by linking technical skills and capital with economic opportunities. It aims to trigger technical skills with appropriate technologies and establish a producer-led market management system. The use of quality seed, breed, and technology will be ensured with a skilled and efficient production process. The organization will comply with local laws and regulations throughout the process.

Direction 6: Good governance is a key focus of the organization, with a commitment to upholding institutional and field-level regulations and laws related to membership entry and exit. The organization aims to promote the representation of diverse and competitive general members on the board, as well as encourage active participation of board members in monitoring program performance and results. Additionally, a sub-committee of board members will be established to ensure their involvement and engagement in the project. Communication and interaction between the board and the project team will be prioritized. The organization also plans to establish an agro-production processing and marketing company with an investment of NPR 1 million, and the remaining NPR 9 million will be mobilized from general members and staff, and the general public.

Direction 7: Development Approach. This direction will guide the organization in practising a humanitarian approach to the social and governance capacity development of beneficiary-led institutions and beneficiary selection. It will focus on a value chain and market-led approach for economic development and enterprise promotion for the targeted beneficiaries.

As per the seven directions, FOCUS Nepal formulated 10 strategies and 30 programs which require NPR 186.5 million resources, six monthly risk assessments preparing mitigating measures before launching any programs, and reviewing management structures policies as recommended in this strategy paper.

This strategic plan will guide all FOCUS planning over the medium and long term, considering the entire range of its programs. This document is a guide for future decisions concerning the strategic details outlined in three separate plans: programs, resource mobilization, and implementation management.

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Acronyms

AID	AID Management Information System
CS	Civil Society
FOCUS	Forum for Community Upliftment System
GESI	Gender Equality and Social Inclusion
ICDC	Integrated Community Development Campaign
INGOs	International None Government Organizations
NGOs	None Government Organisations
USD	United States Dollar
FAO	Food and Agriculture Organization
FCA	Finn Church Aid
PGA	Project Grant Agreement
PIN	People in Need
WASH	Water, Sanitation and Hygiene

1 Introduction

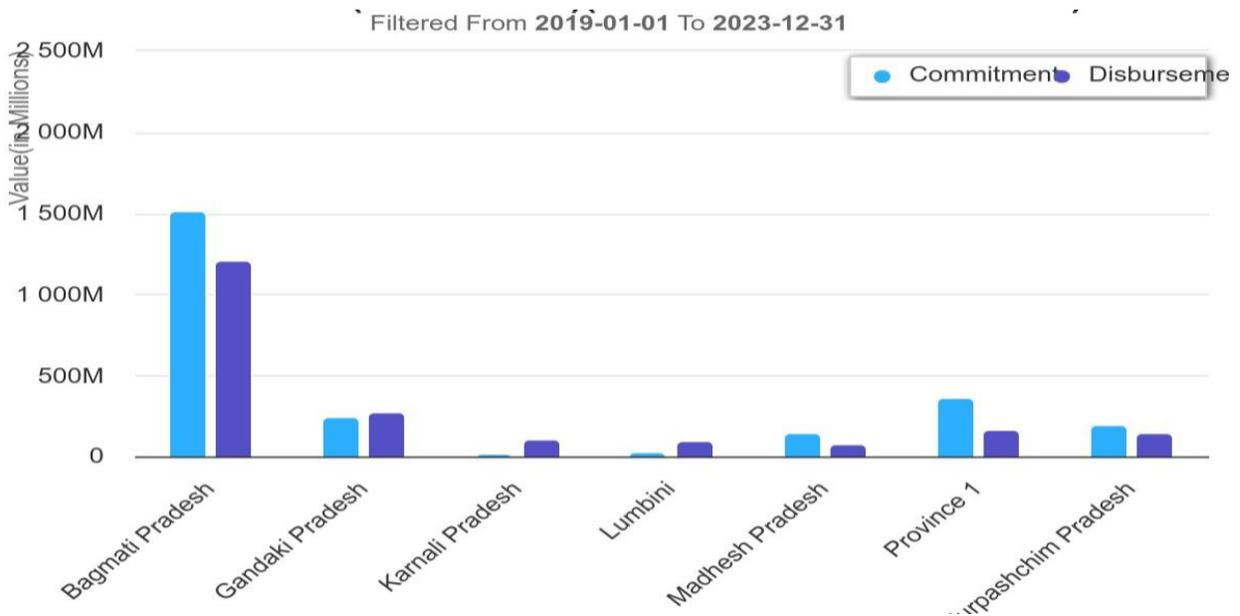
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2 Focus-Nepal's main business analysis

The analysis of competitiveness begins by examining the competition of the main businesses with similar NGOs operating in the Bagmati province and Nepal and assessing the ability of Focus Nepal to conduct NGO operations differently from others in the same context while considering INGO funding and NGO performance indicators. The data reported by INGOs to the government of Nepal reveals that all the INGOs working in Nepal have committed a total of USD 747,518, 496 and disbursed USD 601,194,930 through 434 projects, between January 1, 2019, to December 31, 2023. Most of the committed and disbursed funds in the last five years were available to the NGOs and beneficiaries in Bagmati provinces, which are the key working areas of Focus Nepal.

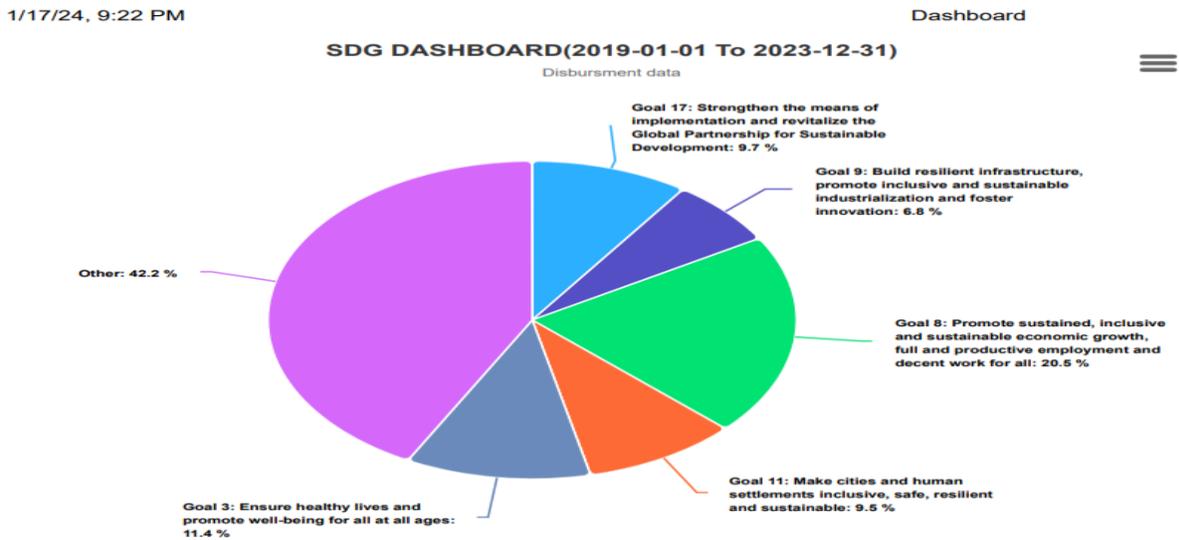
Figure 1: INGOs resource allocation by Province in the last five years in Nepal



Source: AID Management Platform, Ministry of Finance, 2024

In Figure 2, it is evident that the majority of the funds were allocated towards achieving the SDG objectives of 3, 8, 9, 11, and 17. Out of the complete fund, 20.5% was utilized to promote inclusive, sustainable economic growth, full and productive employment, and decent work for everyone.

Figure 2: SDG-wise allocation of funds in the last five years



Source: AID Management Platform, Ministry of Finance, 2024

Over the past five years, Focus Nepal has only accessed a portion of the resources from the available committed funds in the INGO fund supply side. Despite this, they have been providing livelihood, WASH, and disaster risk management support services to beneficiaries, the below-elaborated sections are considered to be the key strengths and weaknesses of the Focus Nepal organization in its working area.

2.1 Livelihood support

Based on the findings of a stakeholders' consultation, it has been determined that Focus Nepal has extensive experience working in the livelihood sector. Over the past 20 years, they have successfully implemented 14 projects and employed 15 skilled full-time personnel to provide livelihood support services and oversee project implementation. Their team consists of 6 livestock technicians, 6 agriculture JTA, and 3 management personnel who work to provide livelihood support services to both the funder and beneficiaries in Bagmati province.

Focus Nepal can commercialize and market agriculture and livestock products produced by beneficiaries in the local market. They have the technical expertise and experience to empower beneficiaries and increase their income. They have also developed an in-house training manual related to livelihood support services that can be used by newly recruited livelihood staff in the field.

To excel in livelihood services in needy areas, Focus Nepal needs to concentrate on specialized sub-sectors, use beneficiary-driven solutions, improve the retaining capacity of expert human resources, prepare separate policies related to the livelihood sector, develop learning materials and share experiences related to livelihood among stakeholders.

2.2 Water and sanitary health support

According to the findings of stakeholder consultations, FOCUS Nepal has technical experts in the field of water and sanitation who are available on demand and as per the requirements. These experts are regularly employed to provide specialized services. The WASH services and programs are guided by policies and supported by more than 20 years of experience, modern technology, and management skills of the field-level operation and staff. It is necessary to retain technical staff and develop products and tools with minimal influence from funding partners. Additionally, post-implementation monitoring should be conducted, and a sustainable warehouse for hardware tools should be managed for the effectiveness of future programs and strategy implementation. The service product should be based on the community-level database, use, and analysis of practices.

2.3 Disaster risk reduction support

FOCUS Nepal is among the funding partners listed for disaster risk reduction. The organization successfully carried out disaster response and economic recovery interventions after the 2015 earthquake in the Dhading district. FOCUS Nepal has a strong community network and regularly updated socio-economic study reports, which are conducted by trained human resources. They can be accessed immediately and are available as required. However, FOCUS Nepal does not have

a quick response fund, a DRR policy, or a functional response team. Improvements in these areas would enhance the efficiency of FOCUS Nepal's delivery capacity.

2.4 Governance and institutional infrastructure

FOCUS Nepal has moderately strong governance and institutional infrastructure that can help improve leadership among beneficiaries and increase society-level governance capacity. The organization follows prudent governance practices, such as periodic renewal with government authority, adherence to updated policies, social and financial audits, and inclusive representation on the board by general members, functional HR, procurement, and GESI committees and focal person. The executive committee regularly meets and reviews its decisions, coordinates, and collaborates with local governments, and has an updated communication and disclosure platform. However, FOCUS Nepal faces some limitations, such as not owning an office building, lack of transportation means, lack of digitization of management processes, absence of livelihood and economic development policy, sectoral leadership, and a limited representation of livelihood experts in the executive committee. These limitations need to be addressed to improve the organization's performance in the future.

2.5 Management and human resources

FOCUS Nepal is run by a qualified senior management team with expertise in water resource management. They offer a competitive salary and benefits package, including a retirement plan, to reduce staff turnover. However, they need to improve their human resources management practices to focus on achieving common goals, tracking HR performance, establishing a performance management system, recognizing employee efforts, implementing a competitive staff selection process, providing core staff and building employee capacity.

3 Factor conditions

This section analyzes the factor conditions for the FOCUS Nepal program's operation, which creates a conducive environment for accessing funds, delivering services, and ensuring change among the targeted beneficiaries. The competitiveness diagnostic identified that the key factors that create a favourable or unfavourable environment for FOCUS Nepal are the support facilities provided by the local, provincial, and federal governments, supporting funding agencies, and private and cooperative sector support conditions. The sections below analyse the strengths and weaknesses of these factor conditions.

3.1 Local government support facilities

According to Schedule 8 Point 7 of the Constitution of Nepal, local governments are solely responsible for creating development plans and projects. The Local Government Operation Act 2017, Article 25 allows for coordination with NGOs and INGOs, including the approval of projects and joint monitoring. Article 26 also permits partnerships or management with other organizations to implement specific economic and development activities. Based on stakeholder consultations, local governments are willing to collaborate and coordinate for project planning, monitoring, and joint implementations. However, Focus Nepal faces challenges during project inception and implementation due to political interference, delays in funding and resource

mobilization from local governments, and insufficient market infrastructure to support targeted beneficiary enterprises.

3.2 Provincial government support

The first provincial-level plan has a key motto of "Civilized happy people: a prosperous province oriented to socialism" for long-term development. It focuses on protecting and developing culture and natural resources, ensuring good governance, achieving high production and productivity, and equitable national income. Additionally, the Bagmati Province Industrial Enterprise Act 2076, Youth Council Act 2076, Agriculture Business Promotion Act 2076, Public Private Cooperative Partnership Act 2076, Province Seed Act 2076, and Province Society Registration Act 2075 provide an environment to expand operations in livelihood and economic promotion, natural resources management, and governance for Focus Nepal. While the Bagmati province has sufficient resources for sustainable development, Focus Nepal has limited access to provincial government resources.

3.3 Federal government support provisions

The Constitution of Nepal, under article 17.2 (a, b, d), grants every citizen the right to freedom of opinion and expression, the ability to assemble peacefully without arms, and the option to form unions and associations. It has also created provisions to ensure the population has access to food in crisis scenarios (clause 36, section 3) and to support vulnerable and marginalized communities for their protection, empowerment, and development (clause 42, section 3). This support is to be delivered by or through NGOs in Nepal. Moreover, article 51. J. (14) of the Constitution guarantees the adoption of a single-door system for the establishment, approval, operation, regulation, and management of community-based and national or international non-governmental organizations. Such organizations should only be involved in sectors of national need and priority while ensuring transparency and accountability in their investments and roles. The Development Cooperation Policy 2019, article 3.10, states that international development funds are to be mobilized through NGOs in Nepal. The Social Welfare Act 1992, article 12, provides INGOs with permission and agreement facilities, which is the key source of funds for NGOs. The Association Registration Act 1977, article 5, provides registered associations with the power of an autonomous body corporate with perpetual succession. All partner NGOs and not-for-profit civil society organizations are functional under this act. Association registration started in 1959 before the enactment of this act. The 15th National Plan prioritizes development in modern infrastructure and intensive connectivity, well-being and decent life, development and full utilization of human capital, high and sustainable production and productivity, high and equitable national income, and good governance. Similarly, the Agriculture Development Strategy (ADS) (2015-2035, p4) prioritizes governance, productivity, profitable commercialization, and competitiveness to accelerate agriculture sector growth. It emphasizes social and geographical inclusion, natural and economic sustainability, development of the private and cooperative sectors, and connectivity to market infrastructure. These policies and provisions are favourable for NGO operations in Nepal. However, the federal government of Nepal has sufficient funds to support civil society organizations, but they are inaccessible to local NGOs like Focus Nepal. There

are farmer-friendly policies and agriculture development strategies, but they are not being implemented in favour of real farmers.

3.4 Supporting institutions and collaborators

This section examines the strengths and weaknesses of institutions and collaborators who support Focus Nepal. Oxfam and Heifer International are identified as supporting institutions, while FAO, Nagarik Awaj, WFP, FCA, PIN, Ministry of Agriculture and Livestock Development, and local governments are considered key collaborators.

Table 1: Supporting institutions and collaborators of Focus Nepal

Supporting institutions and collaborators	Strong points	Areas of opportunities for improvement	Areas of strategic fit
Oxfam	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Long-term partnership motivation • Supports on capacity building • Supports institutional capacity development • Provides on-site coaching and monitoring 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Period of PGA signing process • Structural control mechanisms • Emergency fund allocation • Ensures transparency in the planning process 	WASH management, Governance
Heifer International	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Long term partnership • Provides cornerstone training as a replicable product 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Supports institutional development • Manages partnerships with quality • Employees dedicate time to partner support 	Agriculture, livestock Income growth, Value chain promotion Women empowerment, cooperatives, and institutional development
FAO	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Technical competence in agriculture livestock and climate change • Globally trusted • Strong funding access 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provides need-based activities instead of pilot-based • Emphasizes partnership collaboration over the contract-based 	Farm models development
Nagarik Awaj	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Supports flexible budget • Long term agreement • Designs flexible program based on community needs 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Quality monitoring system • Supports capacity building program 	Livelihood Advocacy
WFP, FCA	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Similar organizational strategies and working areas • Focus Nepal selected for an upcoming partnership 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Communication mechanism • Collective efforts to search for new opportunities 	Resiliency, livelihood

Supporting institutions and collaborators	Strong points	Areas of opportunities for improvement	Areas of strategic fit
PIN	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Supports Nepal on livelihood and DRR • Registered in Nepalese authority and country office • Working in the partner's selection area 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Networking • No prior working history with FOCUS Nepal 	Livelihood Education and DRR
Ministry of agriculture and livestock development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Favorable policies • Adequate resources 	Eases access to programs and resources	Similar working space Income growth areas
Local governments	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Agreed on cost collaboration 	Eases payment process	Bagmati province Income growth Natural resource management, governance

3.5 Private sectors and cooperatives

Focus Nepal's primary focus is on livelihoods, WASH, and capacity development. These efforts are greatly influenced by the working environment with private sector associations and cooperative unions. The collaborative support from these entities can improve quality and productivity and increase the economic value of agriculture and livestock production in project locations for the beneficiaries. However, private, and cooperative sectors often demand goods and services from farmers on credit and delay payments, offer monopoly pricing for outputs, and overprice resources that are needed for the project's beneficiaries. All stakeholders in Bagmati province must collaborate to address these barriers.

4 Supporting industries and services

This section evaluates the advantages and disadvantages of the industries and services that support Focus Nepal in producing and delivering its main businesses, which were analyzed in section 2, based on the conditions examined in section 3. Hotel Janajibika, Laxmi Hardware, and Solution Hub are significant providers of goods and services that facilitate and complement Focus Nepal's program operations. The major strengths and weaknesses of these suppliers are outlined below:

Table 2: Supporting industries and services strong aspects and areas of opportunities for improvement

Supporting industries and services	Strong points	Areas of opportunities for improvement	Areas of strategic fit
Hotel Janajibika	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Availability of a training hall • Availability of parking • Good hygiene practices • Effective communication management • Good facilities for food and lodging 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Vulnerable structure to earthquakes • Parking facilities despite big buildings • Comparatively expensive services • Quality service delivery • Furniture quality 	Hospitality services for events, staff, and consultants
Laxmi Hardware	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Capacity to store materials • Flexible credit period • Delivery of quality materials • Good coordination • Ability to deliver required materials 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Able to make technology-friendly transactions • Capacity in identifying materials as per the purchase order • Manages HR to deliver materials to the field • Arranges own vehicles and HR to deliver • Manages temper during drudgery 	Hardware supplies to deliver WASH business of Focus Nepal
Solution Hub	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Competitive and negotiable prices • Flexible credit period • Strong network • Quality delivery 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Scalability • Delivery capacity • Capacity to be a single sector-focused supplier 	Software services

5 Demand condition

In this section, we will explore the pros and cons of the demand conditions that affect the production and delivery of Focus Nepal's main businesses, namely livelihoods, WASH, and resilient capacity development. These factors were analyzed in section 2, in conjunction with the conditions examined in section 3 and supplier capacity in section 4. Let us take a closer look at the primary strengths and weaknesses of these demand conditions.

Table 3: Demand condition strengths and areas of opportunities for improvement

Demand conditions for services	Clients	Strong points	Areas of opportunities for improvement	Areas of strategic fit
Livelihoods	Funding partner	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increased demand for multidimensional livelihood sector • Readiness of government to implement livelihood programs • Livelihood support demand based on local resources • The willingness of donor agencies to implement livelihood programs. • The willingness of farmers to implement livelihood activities in cost-sharing • Increased demand of target beneficiaries for vegetable and animal products 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Availability of youth in the community, • Availing skilled human resources • Avoidance of unexpected conditions of funding partners • Seeking a large magnitude of change in short-term intervention by funding partner • The funding partner's attraction shifted to Madesh and Karnali Province • Grants offer as per network connection instead of local capacity 	Most of the donors committed funds to achieve SDGs 8, and 3 see Figure 2 in the past
	Beneficiary partner	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • High demand for livelihood support activities • The community is looking for adequate knowledge, skills, and technology for livelihood enhancement. • Active participation in livelihood-based training and orientation. • Access to different communication channels 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Seeking multiple help (both cash and kind) • Service demand in a blanket approach • Allegation on project activities (unequal and unfair distribution of support) • Dissatisfied nature of beneficiaries 	SDG 1 focuses on livelihood for poverty eradication.
WASH	Funding partner	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Utilization of technology for water supply • Institutionalization and Good Governance on water supply management • Impact measurement at the household level • SDG-focused intervention • Funding flexibility based on the ground reality 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Paying capacity of local government and beneficiaries for cost collaboration • Funding partners' focus on construction activities • Geographical coverage 	SDG 3 focuses on funding partners and government, FOCUS experience field

Demand conditions for services	Clients	Strong points	Areas of opportunities for improvement	Areas of strategic fit
			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Avoidance of micromanagement 	
	Beneficiary partner	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Acceptance of planned activities (hardware) Inclusive participation Readiness for labour contribution Voluntary mobilization management of field activities 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Seeking multiple help (both cash and kind) Service demand in a blanket approach Allegation on project activities (unequal distribution and financial transaction) Discontented nature 	Community-based ownership
Governance and resiliency, DRR	Funding partner	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Prepared in advance Action-oriented Policy development and institutional strengthening Use of emergency fund Cross-sectoral collaboration 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Focus more than emergency demand Priority on capacity development of service provider Provision of situational data availability Priority on risk reduction and preparedness 	Funding partner commitment on SDG 9, 17 see Figure 2
	Beneficiary partner	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> High demand for mitigation activities The community is looking for knowledge, skills, and technology Voluntary involvement in risk reduction activities Active participation in training and orientation Access to different communication channels 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Knowledge of disaster risk and associated aspects, Realization of risk-prone zones and so not interested in migration, Priority on personal safety and security Avoidance-seeking response in a blanket approach 	SDG 9, and 17 commitments of different levels of governments

6 Competitors and access to funds in Bagmati province

In this section, we will explore the pros and cons of the competitors and market penetration that affect the production and delivery of Focus Nepal's main businesses, namely livelihoods, WASH, governance, and resilient capacity development. Let us take a closer look at the primary strengths and weaknesses of the key five competitors in the Bagmati province NGO service market.

Table 4: Strong and weak points of Focus Nepal competitors and co-opetition

Competitors Strong points	Areas of opportunities for improvement	Coopetition
Updates regularly the organizational policies	Arranging skilled human resources	Advocacy
Coordination and collaboration with different donor agencies	Managing conflict among the internal management team	Watershed management
Involvement of youth and technical experts in the executive committee	Coordination with community and politicization	Making transparency
The organization's building and land	Transparency of project activities (complaints at public audit)	Sharing space
Availability of regular funding from the donor agencies.	Prioritization to faith-based project intervention	None

From 2019 to 2023, donors have committed to providing funds for Bagmati province. Of the total fund of 500 million USD, FOCUS Nepal has only accessed 0.5% of it. However, there are many funding opportunities available for FOCUS Nepal to access if they strategically and actively perform in a specialized manner. FOCUS Nepal's key competitors have several weaknesses that can be easily fulfilled by Focus Nepal utilizing its strategic value propositions.

7 Driving factor analysis

The review of the national and provincial plan reveals the external and internal drivers of Focus Nepal. As stated in the 15th national plan and considered by the stakeholders' consultation meetings, Focus Nepal's external drivers are:

- The high-quality and integrated transport system, information technology and communication infrastructure, and massive networking
- Quality human capital and entrepreneurial work culture and full utilization of potential
- Growth in hydroelectricity production and promotion of a green economy,
- Productivity and competitiveness
- Quality of tourism services
- Modern, sustainable, and systemic urbanization,
- Informal sector expansion
- Guarantee to social protection and social security
- Governance reform and good governance
- Political commitment to the constitution, democracy, and development
- Natural diversity and abundance of natural resources
- Fiscal federalization
- Goodwill of friendly nation and the international community

7.1 Critical driving factor analysis for future scenario

The above-mentioned external drivers develop synergies and help utilize development potential, stimulating the driving forces of Focus Nepal's development initiatives, as discussed during the stakeholders' consultation and scenario workshop (see also Figure 4). The key driving forces are grouped into critical uncertainties (most important and most uncertain) and critical certainties (most important but relatively certain).

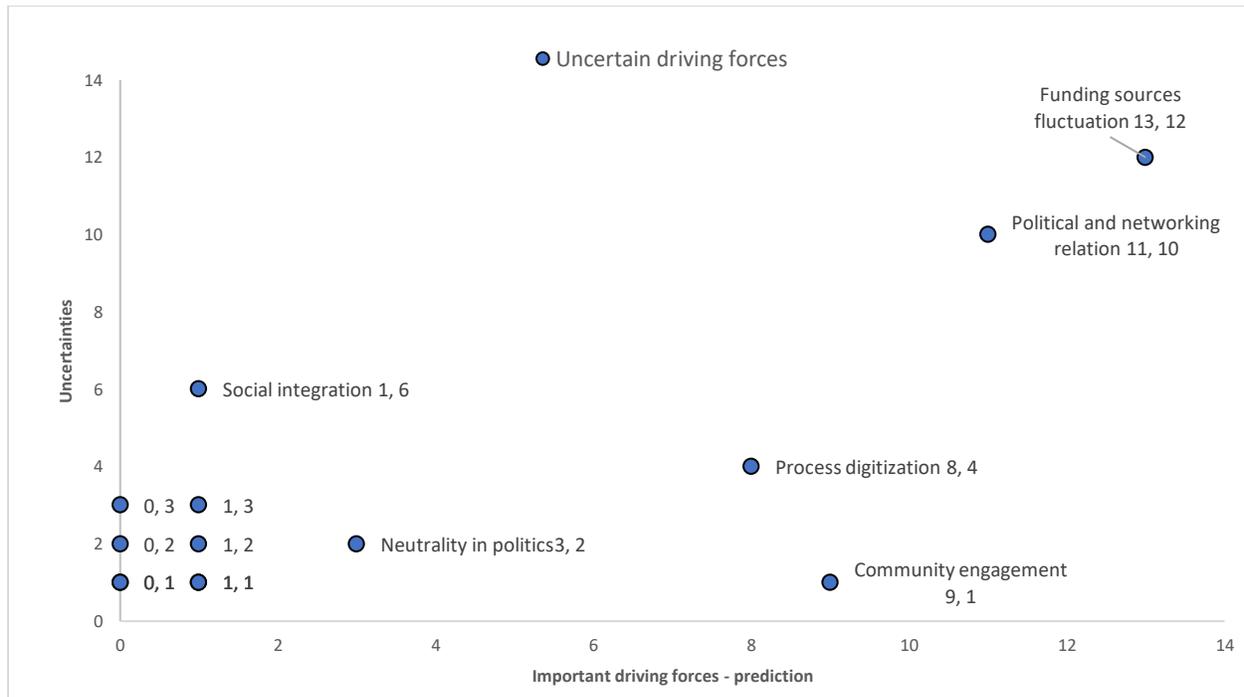
Critical uncertainties: The critical uncertainties for future growth and consolidation of Focus Nepal services delivery capacities are influenced by the NGO business environment and political, and technological factors as listed below.

- Funding source fluctuation
- Political relations and networking
- Community engagement
- Process digitization

Critical certainties: The critical certainties are related to the mix of economic, socio-cultural, political technological, NGO business environment, and ecological environments, which are identified below.

- Promotion of local products
- Modernization in agriculture
- Neutrality in politics
- Promotion and protection of traditional ethnic culture
- Religious harmony
- Social integration
- Communication mechanism
- The regulatory environment of government (funding regulation)
- Natural resources management
- Climate change

Figure 3: Critical uncertainties



Source: Stakeholders consultation workshop, 2023

The stakeholder workshop participants selected the two most important and, at the same time, most uncertain driving forces to design the scenario matrix. They are:

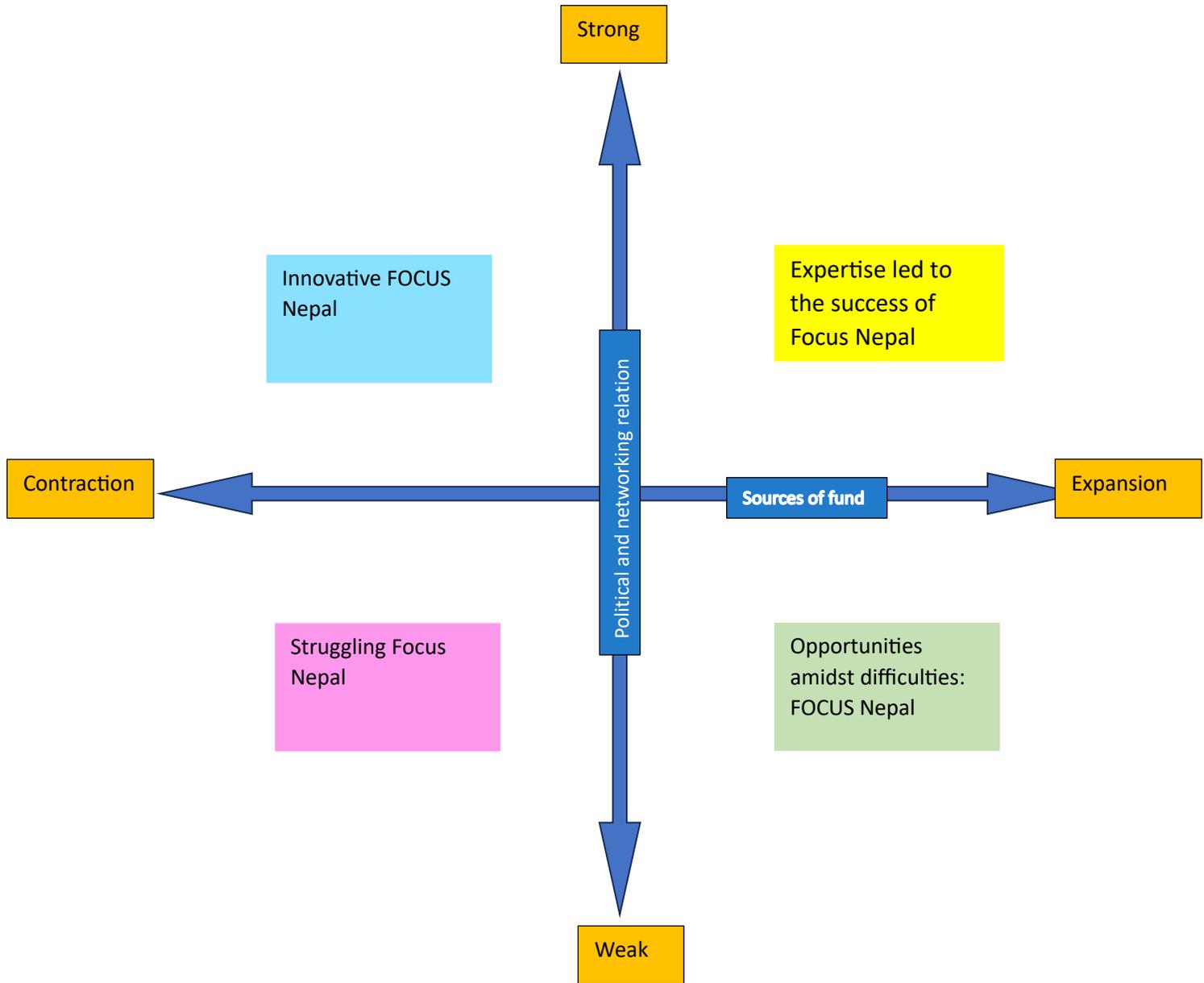
- Political and networking relations
- Source of fund

To write the future scenarios within the logic of the scenario matrix (see Figure .), Focus Nepal scenario exercise participants looked at the future development of the Focus Nepal program for the next 5 years. The positive and negative expressions of the two driving forces are identified below.

- Political and networking relation: strong vs weak presented on the vertical axis (Figure 4)
- A source of funds: expansion vs contraction presented on the horizontal axis (Figure 4)

The scenario workshop participants developed four different scenarios, as named in the scenario matrix in Figure 4.

Figure 4: Scenario matrix for future 2028



7.2 Moving towards the desired future scenario of Focus Nepal

The scenario writing team of Focus Nepal recommends the “expertise led to the success of Focus Nepal” as the desired future scenario for the development intervention delivery of Focus Nepal. The desired scenario reads as follows:

FOCUS Nepal will have its presence at least in 15 municipalities out of 22 municipalities in Bagmati province. Through development interventions like income growth, quality use of resources, and governance capacity development, a total of 5500 HHs will have an improved quality of life, prosperity and equitable growth. Almost all political parties will

appreciate the professional expertise and will count itself amongst the top 3 NGOs in Bagmati province in terms of total fund mobilization within the coming 5-year period. Within this period, FOCUS Nepal will have implemented 10 WASH projects, 6 livelihood projects, 2 governance projects, and 2 cross-cutting like resiliency, climate change, and GESI-related projects within its provincial working territory. Running 20 projects, nearly annual 35 million funds will be mobilized. Governments and non-government entities from within and beyond Bagmati province will seek the experience and expertise of competent project staff to use under consultant services. Progressing towards income growth, natural resource management, governance capacity building, agro-enterprise development and, agro-tourism FOCUS Nepal will contribute at least 7% of the funds earned from its entrepreneurship to its total portfolio for the next 5 years.

Based on the desired scenario for the future development of the Focus Nepal program in Bagmati province, the stakeholders and the expert team recommend development priorities for Focus Nepal. The recommended development priorities are:

- **Income growth** of marginalized, poor, vulnerable, women and deprived communities in the targeted areas in Bagmati province through livelihood, and commercial enterprise development in agriculture and tourism sub-sectors.
- **Quality use of resources** specifically distribution and use of drinking water through fund mobilization, community participation, and watershed management.
- **Governance** capacity development of targeted beneficiary groups, individual women, and community-based organizations, and institutional infrastructure development of Focus Nepal. The cross-cutting issues like GESI, resilience, disaster risk reduction management, and climate change adaptation that affect the Focus Nepal priorities will be addressed across the three development priorities in Bagmati province.

8 Defining identity, features, and values

FOCUS Nepal has established its identity based on its values, which involve all board members, general members, and staff in project funding and activity delivery processes as provincial and professional NGOs.

FOCUS Nepal's role is to support poor, vulnerable, and marginalized people in Bagmati province, who require sustainable and measurable change. The organization aims to help communities and local governments plan their economic and social development initiatives, with a focus on women-led enterprises and resource utilization. It also mobilizes resources from development partners, private sectors, and the government of Nepal to implement planned projects. Additionally, FOCUS Nepal provides technical assistance for income growth, natural resource use, and improving governance and institutional capacities in Bagmati province, bridging the gap between markets and targeted beneficiary partners' products and services.

Features. FOCUS Nepal works in remote and excluded regions where other organizations do not reach. The organization utilizes its institutional inclusive culture and locational diversity to operate programs professionally with modest resources. FOCUS Nepal acts as the facilitator and technical expert between funding and beneficiary partners to enable the poorest to live with dignity in Bagmati province.

FOCUS Nepal's guiding values are profound compassion for those in need, an approach grounded in humanity, and leaving no one behind. It respects rights holders' rights, culture, beliefs, and voice, and consolidates income growth, quality use of resources, and governance. The organization also focuses on ecological, social, and economic consolidation for the sustainability of interventions, sensitivity in social inclusion and economic resiliency during project planning and delivery, and equitable growth sharing.

FOCUS Nepal is committed to adopting the most professional standards and methods, enhancing its horizon, competencies, and efficiencies, and improving the lives of the people in Bagmati province. We believe that value is not only a statement it is collectively repeated practices and shared behaviour as the culture of the organization.

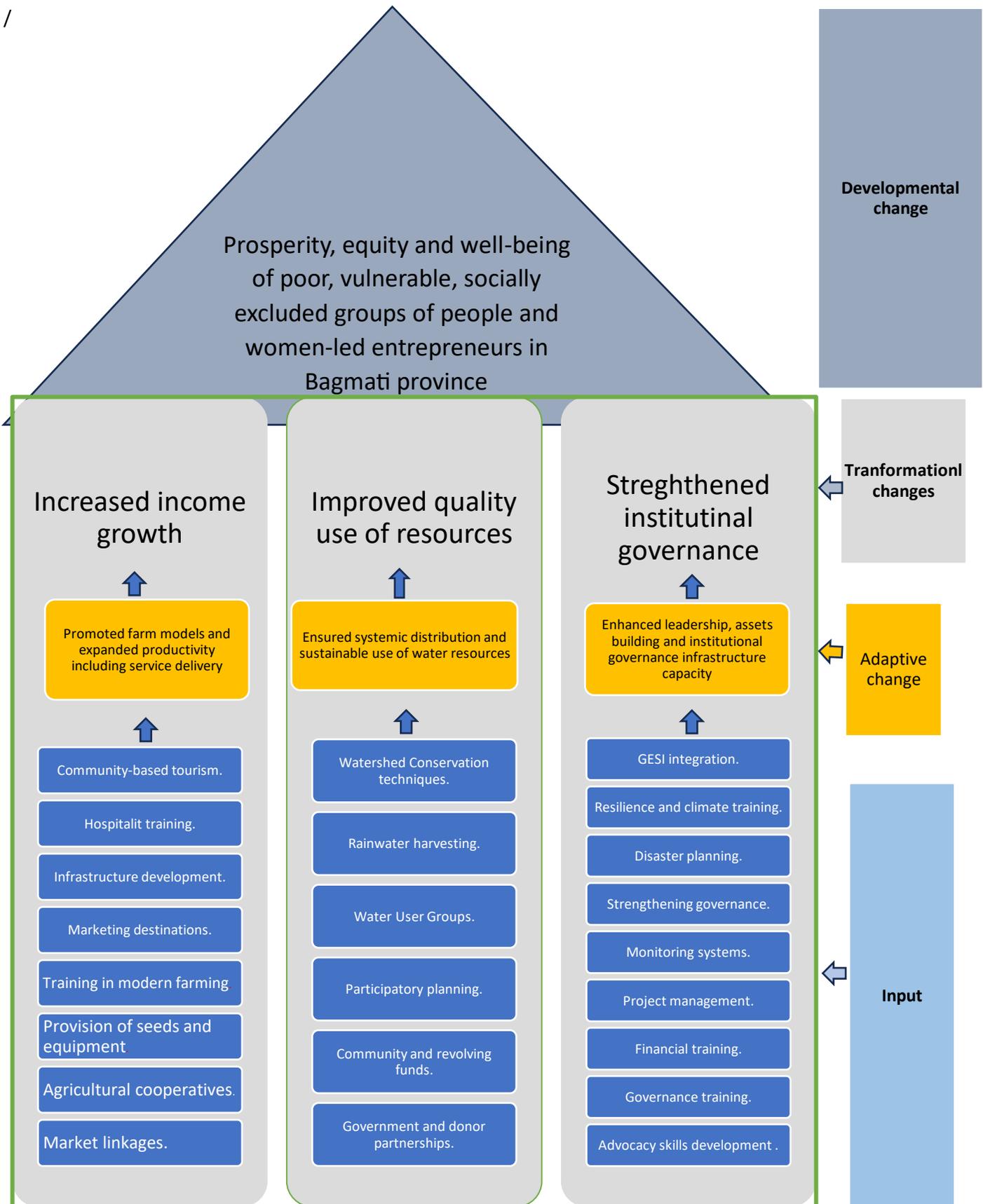
9 Ideal future 2028

9.1 Vision and mission for Focus Nepal's development programs

On November 29 -30, 2023 and January 19-20, 2024, a stakeholders' consultation and scenario workshop was conducted to discuss the **vision statement** of Focus Nepal. The statement, "**Nepal with equity and prosperity**," was agreed to be still valid for the period of the organization's strategic plan implementation. The vision statement focuses on long-term development orientation and direction for the organization and is based on five strategic development thrusts: income growth, quality use of resources, inclusion, participation, and good governance. These strategic thrusts will help accelerate the development programs towards achieving the vision and reaching milestones of income growth of targeted beneficiaries, profit of enterprises, quality use of water resources, leadership, and decision-making capacity of socially excluded groups and women, and ensure good governance of Focus Nepal.

The **mission** of Focus Nepal is to promote the prosperity and well-being of poor, vulnerable, socially excluded groups of people and women-led entrepreneurs in Bagmati province. The organization aims to achieve this by mobilizing quality resources, encouraging income and enterprise profit growth, and building good governance capacity of society and institutions. Focus Nepal adopts values of sustainability, consolidation orientation, inclusiveness, resilience, and equitable growth sharing.

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9.2 Strategic goals

In January 2024, a strategy formulation workshop was conducted to establish and validate the goals necessary to achieve the vision and implement the mission statement of Focus Nepal. The workshop identified the following five goals:

1. Increase the income of 5,500 poor, vulnerable, marginalized, and women-led households in Bagmati Province by 15% by 2028, resulting in enterprise profit growth.
2. Ensure the systematic distribution and safe usage of water sources in selected municipalities to benefit a population of 22,500 by 2028.
3. Enhance the leadership capacity of 25% of active participants among 29,150 targeted beneficiaries
4. Enhance the assets-building and decision-making capacity of 2.5% of inclusive participants among 14,575 targeted beneficiaries.
5. Improve the governance and institutional infrastructure of Focus Nepal up to national standards by 2028.

9.3 Strategic direction

In January 2024, a stakeholders' consultation workshop was held to determine the strategic direction of the Focus Nepal program and organizational operation. The workshop identified seven main directions for the organization's future activities.

Direction 1: Targeting. Focus Nepal will target poor, vulnerable, and socially excluded groups, including single women and orphan households, women-led enterprises, and people with disabilities in selected 14 municipalities of Bagmati province. It will use well-being ranking and participatory rapid appraisal tools to develop programs, projects, and partnerships aimed at reaching 5,500 households by 2028.

Direction 2: Sector focus. Focus Nepal will focus exclusively on agriculture (green vegetables, goat, poultry, dairy, horticulture, indigenous crops), agro-tourism services (including homestays), water and sanitation, and governance capacity building of societies and institutions involved in these sectors. Its programs will address issues such as disaster risk reduction, climate change, gender and social inclusion, and resiliency across the focused sectors. The organization will review its focus based on the needs expressed by the targeted beneficiaries in the intervention areas rather than the demands made by funders.

Direction 3: Enterprise-based income growth. Focus Nepal will promote market-led and local resource-based enterprises at all stages of the enterprise development process, from input supply to output marketing. It will partner with funding partners, local government, and beneficiaries to utilize market opportunities, fallow arable land, and skills of targeted people and migrant workers' investment. An inbuilt technical support services provider and Focus Nepal team will provide demand-based support for this enterprise-based income growth.

Direction 4: Quality use of resources. Focus Nepal will prioritize the quality use of water, land, and natural resources while reducing the use of chemical fertilizers. It will seek grants and funds from the government, partner organizations, and community labour contributions to support its efforts. The organization will aim to maintain soil ecology while using natural resources such as water, forests, and land, and promote sustainable use of resources with equitable distribution and sharing.

Direction 5: Beneficiary-level governance. This direction focuses on inclusive selection standards and creating economic opportunities by linking technical skills and capital with economic opportunities. It aims to trigger technical skills with appropriate technologies and establish a producer-led market management system. The use of quality seed, breed, and technology will be ensured with a skilled and efficient production process. The organization will comply with local laws and regulations throughout the process.

Direction 6: Good governance is a key focus of the organization, with a commitment to upholding institutional and field-level regulations and laws related to membership entry and exit. The organization aims to promote the representation of diverse and competitive general members on the board, as well as encourage active participation of board members in monitoring program performance and results. Additionally, a sub-committee of board members will be established to ensure their involvement and engagement in the project. Communication and interaction between the board and the project team will be prioritized. The organization also plans to establish an agro-production processing and marketing company with an investment of NPR 1 million, and the remaining NPR 9 million will be mobilized from general members and staff, and the general public.

Direction 7: Development approach. This direction will guide the organization in practising a humanitarian approach to the social and governance capacity development of beneficiary-led institutions and beneficiary selection. It will focus on a value chain and market-led approach for economic development and enterprise promotion for the targeted beneficiaries.

9.4 Strategic framework

The strategy workshop held in January 2024 validated the strategic thrusts and formulated strategies and programs based on the findings of competitiveness, driving factors, and scenario analysis in the above sections.

Strategic thrusts	Goals	Strategies	Programs
Income growth	G1: Increase individual income and enterprise profit growth by 15% from the baseline of 5,500 marginalized households in Bagmati Province by 2028.	S1: Promote integrated agro-tourism farm model	15% of investment is mobilized from farmers, 25% from local government, and 60% from donor agencies for enterprise development program
			Consider adopting a production-friendly technology extension for the cultivation of vegetables, fruits, and poultry.
		S2: Expand quality production, service delivery and marketing	Support extension services, technical assistance and financial access
			Market chain development for agriculture and tourism production, processing and services
Quality use of resources	G2: Ensure the systematic distribution and safe usage of water sources in selected municipalities to	S3: Resource exploration and appropriate distribution system design in partnership with local govt. and funding agencies (Oxfam, etc.)	Institutional capacity enhancement and expansion of market infrastructure
			Risk and barriers management support program before final consumption of the beneficiary products
			Collaboration with technically sound institutions like Oxfam DWSSM, etc. in system design and infrastructure development
			Mobilization of corporate contribution and investment through 100 water user groups (WUG)

Strategic thrusts	Goals	Strategies	Programs
	benefit a population of 22,500 by 2028.	S4: Sustainable use of water resources by tariff setting, collection and maintenance of supply system	<p>Capacity development of WUG in improving management systems</p> <p>Participatory tariff-setting mechanism development by the involvement of facilitators and WUGs</p> <p>System digitization for consumption and tariff collection</p> <p>Development of water users' paying capacity and setting Subsidy mechanisms</p>
Participation	G3: Enhance the leadership capacity of 25% of active participants among 29,150 targeted beneficiaries	S5: Promote targeted people to fully engage in local development process participation	<p>Advocacy program for women and youth leadership</p> <p>Leadership action learning</p> <p>Social mobilization and participation campaigns</p>
Inclusion	G4: Enhance the assets-building and decision-making capacity of 2.5% of inclusive participants among 14,575 targeted beneficiaries.	S7: Promote targeted people to be engaged in the local development process	<p>S6: Build partnership with local government for capacity enhancement of targeted community</p> <p>Leadership capacity development program lunch in collaboration with local and provincial government</p> <p>Leaders' peer learning and exchange/exposure visit</p> <p>Enterprise leadership coaching and leader farmer development</p> <p>Community assets building programs in collaboration with local and provincial government</p> <p>Action learning on asset building and decision-making process</p> <p>Capacity building of community-based institutions run by beneficiary partners</p>

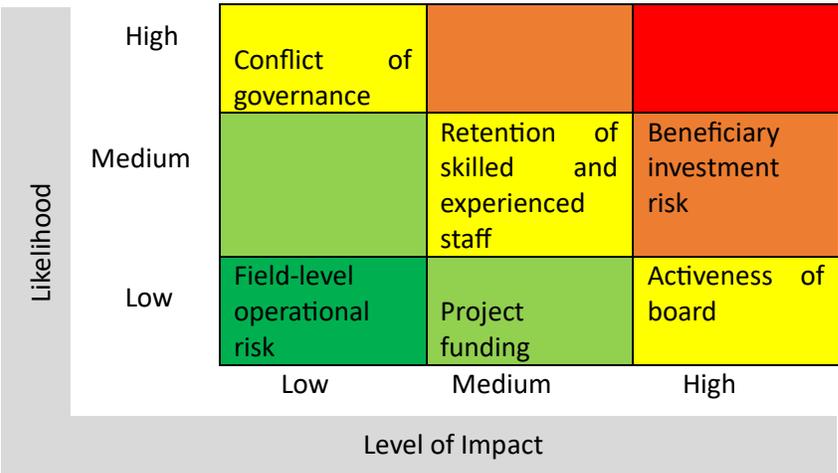
Strategic thrusts	Goals	Strategies	Programs
		S8: Creation of economic opportunities for Dalits and excluded groups	Economic literacy program in partnership with local government and development partners Economic actors' peer learning and exchange/exposure visit Producers groups' market chain development
Good governance	G5: Improve governance and institutional infrastructure up to national standards by 2028.	S9: Policy standardization and ensuring implementation	Participatory review of policy, update, and quality assurance
			Organizational management process digitization
			Knowledge curation, development, and management
		S10: Mobilization and growth of institutional reserve fund	Local fund-raising strategy development and implementation Approach to CSR funds at the national, province, and local level Retaining of core staff and core function lead benefit package

10 Key interventions and resources required

Focus Nepal aims to implement 30 programs over five years in line with its five strategic priorities. To achieve these goals, it requires financial resources amounting to NPR 186.5 million. These resources will be mobilized from supporting institutions and collaborating partners. Some of these institutions have already been analyzed in the sections above, while others will be explored during the project design phase, as per the strategic plan's guidance.

11 Risk assessment

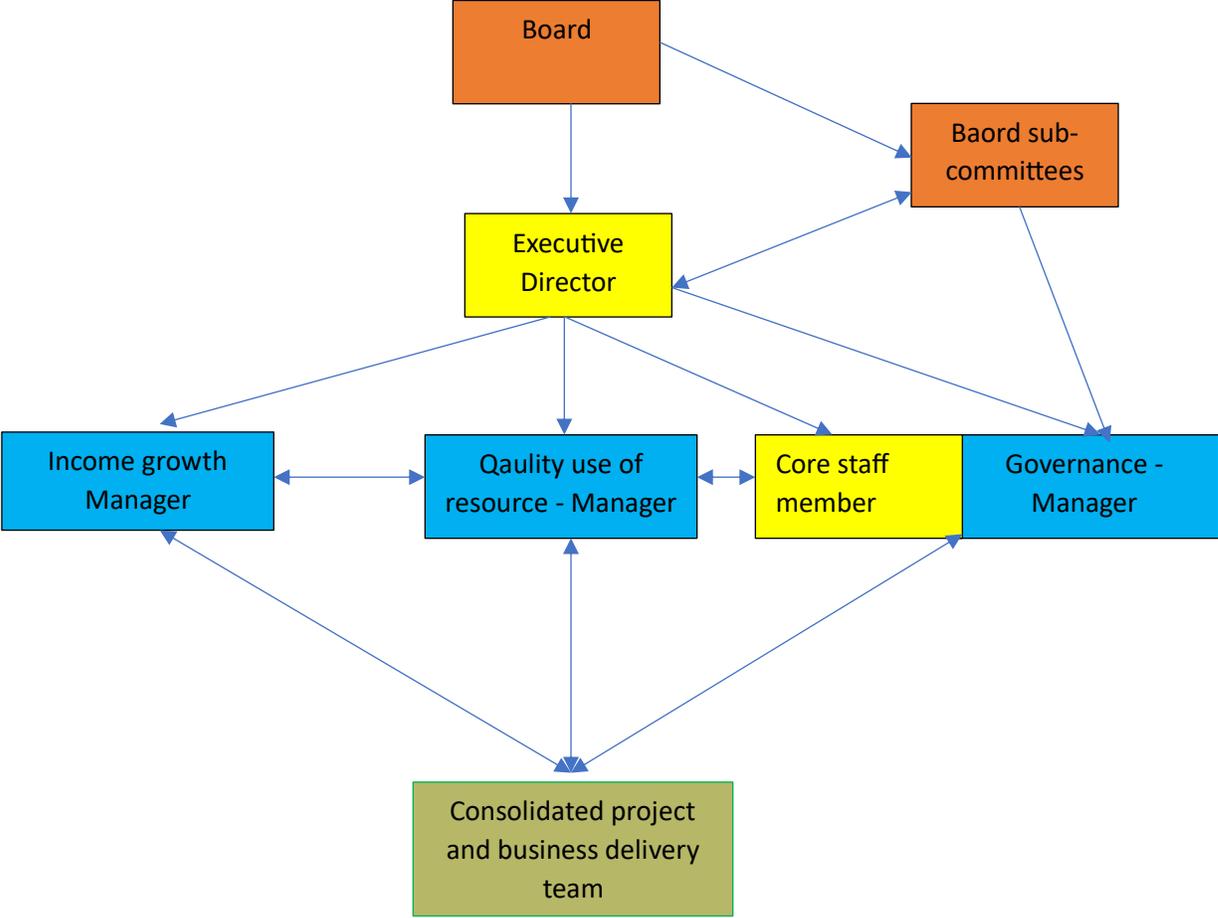
The stakeholder consultation workshop held on January 19 and 20, 2024 identified risks and level of impact for implementing the strategic plan.



After analyzing various factors, it has been determined that the investment risk for the beneficiary is high, thus impacting the strategic plan implementation significantly. However, the likelihood of this risk is at a medium level. The risks related to governance conflict, retention of skilled and experienced staff, and activeness of the board are at a moderate level and will moderately influence the implementation of the strategy. On the other hand, field-level operational risks and project funding are at a low level, and their impact on the strategy implementation will be minimal. It is worth noting that there are no factors that pose a critical risk that may hinder the implementation of the strategy. Risk zones may change during the implementation of programs and projects. Therefore, it is recommended to assess them on a six-monthly basis and design mitigation measures before the start of the program implementation.

12 Application of strategy and review

Focus Nepal will review its management structure for the implementation of this strategy. It will also review management and personnel policy as per the following structure.



The strategic plan will be reviewed each year by the board and updated as per the risks and success. The management digitization process, performance tracking system of staff and engagement tracking system of board members, sub-committee members, and general members will enhance the efficiency and further competitiveness of the organization.

Annexe 1: Four scenarios of Focus Nepal – development programs

Scenario 1: Expertise Leads to Success for FOCUS Nepal

FOCUS Nepal will have a presence in at least 15 out of the 22 municipalities in Bagmati province, benefitting a total of 5500 households and improving their quality of life.

Almost all political parties appreciate the professional expertise of FOCUS Nepal, which is expected to be among the top 5 NGOs in terms of total fund mobilization within the next 5 years.

FOCUS Nepal anticipates running 10 WASH projects, 6 livelihood projects, 2 DRR projects, and 2 advocacy-based projects within the province over the next 5 years, mobilizing nearly 3.5 million in funding.

Competent project staff will be sought after for consultant services by governments and non-government entities within and beyond Bagmati province.

FOCUS Nepal will contribute at least 7% of the funds earned from its social entrepreneurship to its total portfolio for the next 5 years.

Scenario 2: Opportunities Amidst Difficulties for FOCUS Nepal

FOCUS Nepal is an organization working to promote human and socio-political development by collaborating with donor agencies, local government, and different stakeholders. It will extend its working areas to 14 RMs, targeting 2100 households with a budget of 12,00,00,000/- and employing around 70 human resources.

Despite having sufficient resources, FOCUS Nepal has a poor reputation among local levels and political parties, leading to less achievement of targeted beneficiaries, political instability, and difficulties and conflicts in implementing projects.

The organization will initiate innovative works, work on institutional development, and lobby for better relations with donor agencies and political parties.

Scenario 3: Struggling FOCUS Nepal

FOCUS Nepal has been running for 26 years and working in all local bodies of Dhading and other districts like Gorkha, Nuwakot, Makawanpur, and Sindhupalchwk. It has gained recognition from different stakeholders but has experienced difficulties due to a funding crunch, broken political networks and social relations, and a sense of mistrust among local communities.

The organization has failed to retain its staff, manage office utilities, and get support from all three levels of government, leading to difficulties in regular operation with inadequate resources, broken reliability of stakeholders and governments, and less participation from communities.

Scenario 4: Innovative FOCUS Nepal

FOCUS Nepal will target a population of 50,000, collaborating with federal/provincial/local government for access to resources. It will sell expertise to governments (except donors) for 10 LG and focus on local enterprises, partnering with local governments for 2.

It will employ 25 minimally trained human resources with limited funding of 10 million per year, aiming to increase the income of the targeted population by 25% annually.

FOCUS Nepal will start two focused social enterprises, and explore innovative/research-based funds in a global call for three.