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## FACT SHEET

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Democracy and Governance Program

# Inclusive Resource Management Initiative (IRMI) Project

USAID Nepal's Inclusive Resource Management Initiative project will enhance stability through natural resource conflict resolution and inclusive natural resource management, benefiting 237,000 community members, particularly youth and women.



*Self-group capacity assessment task at Miteri CFUG, Kohalpur, Banke, March 30, 2014*

In communities in the western Terai, issues of inclusivity and equity frequently manifest themselves as conflict over natural resources— notably land, forests, and water—which form the foundation of most people's livelihoods. Most of these conflicts are the result of illegal occupation of land and settlements, taxation by competing identity-based groups and government authorities, theft of forest resources, destruction of crops and household property, occasional outbreaks of violence, and persistent exclusion of particular groups, leading to high levels of vulnerability and a multitude of grievances. Resource-based conflicts in the Terai have their root in a number of causes, including increased resource competition among a growing population, limited economic opportunities, the perpetuation of identity politics, lack of inclusive decision-making, and manipulation by political parties. While preventing resource conflicts ultimately requires national action, IRMI will support local communities and government to manage such conflicts, helping maintain local stability and meeting real needs as Nepal moves through its political transition.

## PROJECT OVERVIEW

The Inclusive Resource Management Initiative is a two-year, \$1.16 million project designed to reduce tensions over natural resource use and management as well as to establish more inclusive management in 20 VDCs of Kailali, Bardiya, Banke, and Dang districts. Their specific objectives include:

- Strengthen the ability of key stakeholders to resolve community-level natural resource conflicts in an inclusive, sustainable manner
- Increase inclusive and participatory resource-related decision making among community and government bodies
- Enhance the sustainability of negotiated agreements by engaging communities in joint environmental and economic initiatives

## SNAPSHOT

**Life of Project:** June 2013 to May 2015

**Goal:** Enhance stability through natural resource conflict resolution and inclusive natural resource management

**Implementing Partner:** Mercy Corps

**Geographic Focus:** Mid- and Far-West Development Regions

In partnership with local partners Backward Education Society and Shakarmi Samaj, IRMI will benefit 237,000 community members, particularly youth and women, in these four districts that experience natural resources pressures. The project will bring participants together in multiple fora, helping to break down barriers in and between divided communities through repeated interactions and collaborative problem solving.

## PROGRAM ACTIVITIES

The project will facilitate natural resource-based conflict resolution, promote inclusive management, and reduce natural resource competition through joint environmental and economic initiatives.

- Map natural resource conflicts
- Conduct joint training for key stakeholders in conflict analysis
- Facilitate the development of conflict resolution agreements
- Strengthen community user groups' internal governance
- Raise awareness on natural resources rights and responsibilities
- Support community participation in local government
- Facilitate community peace building forums
- Create joint natural resource management initiatives
- Support environmentally sustainable economic initiatives

## KEY RESULTS

The project will improve the relationship among conflicting groups, communities and local authorities, and increase the ability of key stakeholders to effectively address conflict at the local level. Overview of achievements to date:

- Training of Trainers (ToTs) on Interest-based Community Mediation skills to 31 IRMI partner staff and executive committee members
- 401 key stakeholders were trained on Interest-based Community Mediation skills by ToTs.
- Environmentally sustainable economic activities selection tool is developed and a participatory market analysis study is being conducted to support CFUGs in identifying their activities.
- Baseline survey completed and results analyzed and areas prioritized.

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