



TECSES
NEPAL

INCEPTION REPORT

TECSES 2024-2029



Co-funded by
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SUOMI
FINLAND

TECSES 2024–2029

Inception Report

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List of Abbreviations

ADB	Asian Development Bank
ASIP	Annual Strategic Implementation Plan
B.Ed.	Bachelor of Education
CDC	Curriculum Development Centre
CEHRD	Centre for Education and Human Resource Development
CTA	Chief Technical Advisor
DACS	Development Assistance Coordination Section
ECD	Early Childhood Development
ECE/PPE	Early Childhood Education/Pre-Primary Education
EDD	Education Development Directorate
EI	Equity Index
EMIS	Education Management Information System
ERO	Education Review Office
EU	European Union
FCA	Finn Church Aid
FGD	Focus Group Discussion
GIEN	Girls and Inclusive Education Network
HEI	Higher Education Institutions
HRBA	Human Rights-Based Approach
HRDC	Human Resource Development Centre
ICT	Information and Communication Technology
JICA	Japan International Cooperation Agency
JPO	Junior Professional Officer
KPI	Key Performance Indicator

LG	Local Government
M.Ed.	Master of Education
M&E	Monitoring and Evaluation
MFA	Ministry for Foreign Affairs of Finland
MoEST	Ministry of Education, Science, and Technology in Nepal
MoSD	Ministry of Social Development
MOU	Memorandum of Understanding
NASA	National Assessment of Student Achievement
NER	Net Enrolment Rate
PETC	Provincial Education Training Centre
PIM	Project Implementation Manual
PSU	Project Support Unit
R/Municipality	Rural Municipality
RBM	Results-Based Management
SESP	School Education Sector Plan
SMC	School Management Committee
ST	Short-Term
TA	Technical Assistance
TECSES	Technical Support Cooperation to School Education Sector in Nepal
TESSP	Technical Assistance for Technical Education and Vocational Training Development
TGD	Teacher Guidance Development
TPD	Teacher Professional Development
TOR	Terms of Reference
TSC	Teacher Service Commission
UGC	University Grants Commission
UNICEF	United Nations International Children's Emergency Fund

USAID	United States Agency for International Development
WB	World Bank
WFP	World Food Programme

Summary

Technical Cooperation Support to School Education Sector (TECSES) is a bilateral five-year Technical Assistance (TA) project implemented by the governments of Nepal and Finland from June 2024 to June 2029¹ and funded by the Ministry for Foreign Affairs of Finland and the European Union. TECSES supports Nepal's education reform agenda based on the School Education Sector Plan (SESP), the federalization process, and Nepal's ambition to move towards becoming a middle-income country.

TECSES focuses on strengthening Nepal's teacher education with the overall objective of improving the quality of the teacher education system both at the level of policy and practice. Hence, TECSES aims to build a coherent national teacher education system across Nepal's Ministry of Education, Science, and Technology (MoEST) and its agencies, the faculties of education at participating universities, Provincial Education Training Centers (PETCs), local governments, and schools. The TECSES contributes to achieving objectives of the School Education Sector Plan 2022/23-2031/32.

TECSES activities extend to all three levels of governance in Nepal: federal, provincial, and local. At the federal level, TECSES cooperates with and brings together MoEST, its agencies, and the faculties of education at participating universities to focus on developing both pre-service and in-service teacher training; comprehensive teacher competency framework and revision of teacher education curriculum.

TECSES activities will be implemented in Nepal's three provinces: Karnali, Madhesh, and Sudurpaschim. At the provincial and local levels, TECSES aims to develop and model teacher education, teaching practices, teacher professional development, and support systems. Additionally, it focuses on strengthening the skills of Local Governments (LGs) in educational leadership and management to enhance quality, equity, and inclusion.

TECSES TA support is provided as expert support, including financial support for trainings, workshops, and expert committee working meetings as described in the annual work plan. In addition, TECSES provides financial support to local governments for pedagogical resource teachers within the policy provisions of provincial governments and through the arrangement of a signed MoU among the provincial government, local government and TECSES.

TECSES continues Finland's bilateral development cooperation in Nepal's education sector, building on previous initiatives such as the Technical Assistance for Technical Education and Vocational Training Development under the School Sector Reform Plan (TSSP, 2012–2016), the Technical Assistance for Competence-Based Soft Skills Development in School Education

¹ EU financing for the period of December 15, 2023 to September 14, 2028.

(TASS, 2016–2019) under the School Education Development Plan, and partnerships between Finnish and Nepalese Higher Education Institutions (HEI).

The final evaluation of the MFA-funded TASS project (2016–2019) recommended that the next phase of technical assistance focus on developing alternative models for professional development in teacher education, including the integration of practical skills.

TECSES is implemented within the framework of the SESP, aligning with its objectives:

- i. to ensure equitable access to and participation in a full school education cycle for all children and those with disabilities and economically vulnerable situation and;
- ii. to enhance the quality and relevance of overall school education by ensuring school readiness, foundational learning and quality learning achievements of each child.

Intervention of the TECSES project also aligns with key strategies such as:

- i. implement inclusive education road map to ensure that the children with functional limitations are supported to engage inclusive learning activities and schools' capacity is strengthened;
- ii. upgrade teacher competency framework and coordinate with universities for development and implementation of a teacher preparation and pre-service training programs;
- iii. develop and implement a comprehensive teacher professional development system, establish a teacher support system, and streamline the system in order to improve the motivation of and accountability of teachers. (SESP, p. x, xi.)

TECSES supports the implementation of the SESP by contributing to the quality of education through improved teacher preparation and training, as well as enhanced inclusiveness in education. Additionally, TECSES aligns with the results framework of the SESP and Finland's Country Programme for Development Cooperation in Nepal 2021–2024.

The inception period of TECSES lasted from June 3rd to December 31st 2024. During this period, TECSES established its Project Support Unit (PSU) offices in Kathmandu and Karnali, recruited key staff, and introduced them to their roles. Administrative and financial structures were also developed to support operations at federal, provincial, and local levels. Cooperation with MoEST agencies, provincial and local governments and faculties of education of the participating universities were established. Federal, provincial and local level consultations informed the development and finalization of the project work plan. In addition, the targeted municipalities and schools were selected in Karnali province. The project's results framework and risk matrix were updated, and cooperation with other development partners was established.

Based on the situation analysis, there is a need to harmonize, institutionalize, and systematize policies and frameworks within Nepal's teacher education system. This includes supporting coordination and collaboration among different levels of government and strengthening capacities at all levels, particularly at the provincial and local levels.

Nepal must harmonize teacher competency standards, teacher selection criteria, and teacher education curricula to ensure consistency and quality. At a strategic level, there is also a need to clarify the road map and approach for inclusive education, along with steps toward creating a more inclusive education system and inclusive teaching and learning practices. TECSES is well placed to support Nepal in these reforms.

With regard to teacher pre-service education, a critical priority is to harmonize and strengthen basic teacher education and to develop a diploma for basic education teachers in cooperation with the participating universities. This is a fundamental priority if Nepal is to improve the quality and inclusiveness of learning at the basic level of education.

The main strategy of TECSES is to strengthen the capacities of different stakeholders to build a coherent and harmonized teacher education system in close cooperation at all levels of education governance in Nepal. Hence, TECSES will work with the universities and the agencies of MoEST in order to provide inputs on the development of the national level teacher competency framework as well as other key frameworks which guide the development and implementation of teacher education in Nepal. TECSES also brings different stakeholders to work together and build systems to cooperate in the development of Nepal's education in the future. Moreover, to strengthen the teacher professional development practices, TECSES will provide inputs into the development and review of existing curricula and training packages, as well as build the capacities of teacher trainers at universities, teacher training centers, and local municipalities. In addition, through its capacity-building support, TECSES will train teachers, as well as build the capacities of teacher trainers at universities, teacher training centers, and local municipalities. The modelling interventions carried out at the provincial and local levels during TECSES will be expanded across the entire province under the leadership of the local government.

The indicators of the TECSES project are aligned with key indicators of SESP and Annual Strategic Implementation Plan 202/25 (ASIP). The project sets targets based on the baseline data available in the EMIS Flash Report 2024. For indicators without existing secondary data, a baseline survey will be conducted at the beginning of the project's implementation. Project interventions are planned based on the key implementation strategies of SESP and ASIP, as well as stakeholder consultation findings at the federal, provincial, and local levels.

1. Background

Short background of the project

TECSES aims to enhance the quality of teacher training in Nepal at both the policy and practice levels. At the policy level, the project seeks to strengthen teacher education by uniting Ministry of Education, Science and Technology (MoEST), Centre for Education and Human Resource Development (CEHRD), Curriculum Development Centre (CDC), Teacher Service Commission (TSC) and Education Review Office (ERO), and Faculty of Education of Tribhuvan University, Nepal Open University, Mid-West University, Kathmandu University, Far-West University and Madhesh University to create a coherent system for pre-service and in-service teacher education. At the practical level, in provinces, selected Local Governments (LGs), and schools, TECSES will support the development and piloting of teacher training programs, teaching practices, and teacher management systems to improve quality, equity, and inclusion across the three provinces.

The TECSES Project is jointly funded by the Ministry for Foreign Affairs of Finland (MFA) and the European Union (EU), with each contributing five million euros, thus making the total value of the Project 10 million euros. The Project began in June 2024 with a six-month inception phase, followed by a five years implementation period, estimated to continue until 2029². The final year is dedicated to consolidating the project's outcomes. The Technical Assistance (TA) includes considerable funding for developing pre-service and in-service teacher training. These include support for teacher training courses and materials, teacher support programs, educational research, and online resources. Throughout the project, particular focus is given to promoting equity and inclusion in education.

Overview of the work carried out during the inception phase

The inception period of TECSES lasted from June 3rd to December 31st, 2024.

During this period, Helsinki University HY+ established TECSES established its Project Support Unit (PSU) offices in Kathmandu and Karnali, recruited key staffs such as Chief Technical Advisor (CTA), Karnali Provincial Coordinator, Communication Officer and Finance Manager and provided basic induction training to them. In addition, FCANepal (the project's consortium partner) also recruited Project Implementation Advisor and Inclusion and Teachers Training Advisor and deployed them at PSU office in Kathmandu. Administrative and financial structures were developed to support operations at federal, provincial, and local levels and were documented in the TECSES Project Implementation Manual (PIM). Cooperation with MoEST agencies, provincial and local governments and faculties of education of the participating universities were established. Federal, provincial and local level consultations

² EU financing for the period from December 15, 2023, to September 14, 2028.

informed the development and finalization of the project work plan. In addition, the targeted municipalities and schools were selected in Karnali province. The project's results framework and risk matrix were updated, and cooperation with other development partners was established. **(Annex 1: TECSES Plan Inception Phase)**

2. Progress during the inception period

2.1 Office and Key Staff Set-ups in Kathmandu and Karnali PSUs

During the inception period, the Project Support Units (PSUs) were established and fully furnished in Thapathali Heights, Kathmandu, and in the city of Surkhet, Karnali Province. Also, procurement for vehicles for Kathmandu and Karnali PSU offices was processed.

As part of the requirements for the inception phase, the recruitment process of the key national staffs both in Kathmandu and Karnali PSUs were finalized. In the Kathmandu PSU, the Financial Manager, Finance Assistant, Administrative Assistant, Monitoring and Evaluation Officer, and Office Helper were recruited and began their duties. In the Karnali PSU, the Provincial Coordinator, Finance Assistant, Local Coordinator for Equity and Inclusion, Local Coordinator for Education Planning and Budgeting, and Office Helper were recruited and began working during the inception period. The recruitment process was conducted with the support of a local recruitment company.

The CTA of the project visited Nepal in June 2024 and began working full-time at the Kathmandu PSU on August 1, 2024. The International Communications Officer (JPO) started her role in Kathmandu on August 30, 2024. Additionally, the Teacher Professional Development (TPD) Expert made an initial visit to Nepal in June 2024 and began working in Kathmandu in September 2024.

During the inception period, the Kathmandu PSU, in collaboration with the finance department of the Service Provider (HY+), developed and finalized the financial and administrative structures for the project. The guidelines for the project's administrative and financial management were documented in the Project Implementation Manual (PIM). Moreover, PIM includes guidelines for staff and organizational management, monitoring and evaluation and communications.

2.2 Cooperation with the Embassy of Finland

The representatives of the Embassy of Finland, Counselor Tuovi Leppänen and Education Specialist Indra Gurung, attended the first provincial level visit to Karnali province together with TECSES team in June 2024. The representatives of the Embassy also attended joint meetings with TECSES CTA to MoEST Planning section in August, September, October and November 2024. Counselor Tuovi Leppänen participated the TECSES consultation meetings with the MoEST federal level agencies (CEHRD, CDC, UGC) and the faculties of education of Tribhuvan University, Kathmandu, and Nepal Open Universities. The representatives of the Embassy also made visits to both Kathmandu and Karnali PSU offices. The Ambassador of Finland, Riina-Riikka Heikka, hosted a reception to facilitate networking between TECSES, MoEST, and other development partners in the education sector.

2.3 Meetings with federal, province and local level agencies of MoEST

In June 2024, the TECSES team, including the CTA, HY+ Home Office Coordinator (HOC), and the Teacher Professional Development Expert, held an introductory meeting with representatives of MoEST to present the TECSES project. The meeting also included representatives from four universities – Tribhuvan university, Kathmandu university, Open university of Nepal and Mid-West university – who were present and consulted.

The TECSES team conducted its first consultation visit to Karnali Province to gather information on the needs for developing teacher training at the provincial and local levels. The visit also aimed to identify existing technical assistance initiatives in the education sector within Karnali Province and its local municipalities. During the visit, the TECSES team met with representatives from the Provincial Ministry of Social Development, Birendranagar Municipal Education Office, Mid-Western University, and Tribhuvan University. The team also conducted a visit to one school.

From August onward, the CTA regularly met with representatives of MoEST/DACS to provide updates on the progress of TECSES activities during the inception phase and to discuss further cooperation with MoEST, as well as provincial and local governments. MoEST Planning Section prepared a letter to the provincial and local agencies of the Karnali province, giving permission to start formal cooperation with TECSES. MoEST DACS office also played a key role in organizing the consultation visits to MoEST federal agencies (CEHRD, CDC, ERO, TSC, UGC) and Tribhuvan, Kathmandu and Nepal Open universities.

At the provincial level, the Karnali Provincial Coordinator of TECSES engaged with Karnali provincial government authorities at the Human Resource Development Centre (HRDC), Teacher Training Section the Provincial Education Development Directorate (EDD), the Ministry of Social Development (MoSD), the Education Development and Coordination Unit (EDCU), and LGs to introduce the TECSES project and establish strong working relationships. Official letters from the MoEST were distributed to the relevant provincial government authorities. At the request of the TECSES team, the MoSD organized a meeting, selected the targeted municipalities for TECSES, and formed a coordination committee led by the Education Division Chief of the MoSD.

In October 2024, a new Joint Secretary was appointed as the head of the Planning and Monitoring Division of MoEST which was conducted due to changes in the government. The new Joint Secretary was introduced to the TECSES project, and the TECSES team presented the findings from federal, provincial, and local-level consultations. In addition, the Embassy of Finland facilitated a meeting with the new Joint Secretary, the EU representative, and the TECSES PSU team. The agenda of the meeting was the formation of the project's Steering Committee, Supervisory Board and nominations of National Project Director and Liaison Officer. Following the meeting the Embassy of Finland sent an official letter to the Secretary to

request the nomination of National Project Director, the Liaison Officer and the formation of the Steering Committee and Supervisory Board.

2.4 TECSES Kick-Off

The TECSES Kick-off event was held at Hotel Himalaya on November 28th, 2024. The Embassy of Finland organized the event as part of the program for the high-level visit of Finland's Minister for Foreign Trade and Development, Ville Tavio, and the Minister's delegation. Nepal's Minister for Education, Science, and Technology, Bidhya Bhattarai, also participated in the event. The event brought together distinguished other participants, including the Ambassador of Finland to Nepal, Riina-Riikka Heikka; the Ambassador of the European Union to Nepal, Veronique Lorenzo; representatives of the governments of Nepal and Finland; development partners; the TECSES team; and the media. All the speeches held at the event highlighted the importance of quality education and teachers in shaping Nepal's development and future.

2.5 TECSES communications

During the inception phase, TECSES established its communication and visibility efforts. The communication activities aim to enhance awareness of the project, its values, and its impact while ensuring accessibility and inclusivity.

The Communications Officer wrote the Strategic Communication Plan for TECSES. The plan explains TECSES's narrative, key messages, target audiences, and communication goals. It also details the activities and methods used for communication, including languages, platforms and approaches. Additionally, the plan includes guidelines on the use of TECSES and partner logos, monitoring progress and the communication budget. It also identifies potential communication risks and ways to mitigate them. The Strategic Communication Plan is an annex of the Project Implementation Manual.

TECSES's brand colours were selected during the inception phase to reflect the organization's mission and work. Some updates were made to the TECSES logo in order to create consistency across all communication platforms and reinforce the project's professional and recognizable presence.

The TECSES website (TECSES.org) was successfully developed and launched in collaboration with Diverse Patterns, a consulting company specializing in accessibility and disability inclusion. Given its extensive experience in education-related projects in Nepal, Diverse Patterns played a crucial role in ensuring that the website meets accessibility standards and serves as an inclusive platform for information dissemination. Additionally, the development of the Nepali version of the website started in the inception phase and is currently in progress.

All TECSES social media platforms were launched during the inception phase. Initial content included:

- Posts covering consultation trips, highlighting key discussions and findings.
- A small series of posts introducing TECSES's values, including expertise and research-based development, human rights, and sustainable cooperation.
- Information about collaboration with the EU, MFA and Government of Nepal.
- Promotion of TECSES's Kick-off Event, which featured high-level participation from Finland's Minister for Foreign Trade and Development, Ville Tavio, Nepal's Minister for Education, Science, and Technology, Bidhya Bhattarai, and the European Union's Ambassador to Nepal, Veronique Lorenzo. The event was widely promoted across all social media channels, the TECSES website, and HY+ website.

Additionally, TECSES initiated cooperation with the Ministry for Foreign Affairs communication department to plan future social media posts and strengthen communications efforts.

To further enhance engagement, TECSES launched a newsletter subscription, providing stakeholders with regular updates on project activities and progress. The first TECSES newsletter is to be sent out in the first quarter of 2025.

The first set of visibility materials, including standees, were also produced to support events and outreach activities.

2.5.1 Communications working group

The TECSES Communications Officer established an internal communications working group to utilise the expertise of national staff in communication-related matters.

The group meets once a week and currently includes the Communications Officer, Monitoring and Evaluation Officer, Karnali Province Coordinator, and the Liaison Officer. Once staff for the Madhesh and Sudurpaschim Provinces are recruited, some of them will also join the group.

Participation in the working group is open to all TECSES staff members, including short-term and long-term international staff. The group is designed to be flexible, considering everyone's availability and workload. Members can choose to participate throughout the entire project or join meetings on a monthly basis.

The working group supports TECSES's province-specific communication approach. It is meant to assist the Communications Officer by ensuring the use of clear and accessible Nepali in materials, identifying opportunities to incorporate minority languages, and promoting the use of culturally relevant examples and imagery in communications. Additionally, the group helps

generate new ideas to engage TECSES's target audiences and therefore supports the overall communications objectives of the project.

2.6 Consultations meetings with MoEST Agencies, Faculties of Education of the participating universities, and provincial and local level agencies

Summary of federal level consultations

The Kathmandu PSU team of experts conducted federal-level consultations in coordination with MoEST DACS from September 23rd to November 15th, 2024. These consultations engaged central-level agencies of MoEST, including CEHRD, CDC, TSC, ERO, and UGC, as well as three participating universities: Tribhuvan University, Nepal Open University, and Kathmandu University. The Counselor of the Embassy of Finland, Tuovi Leppänen, along with representatives from the MoEST DACS, participated in most of the consultation sessions.

The purpose of consultations was to explore the existing context of teacher education, identify existing capacities and cooperation gaps, and highlight key areas requiring priority interventions by TECSES. In the beginning of each consultation session the objectives, scope and key result areas of TECSES were introduced and the participants were given the opportunity to ask clarifying questions. After that, the discussion covered the needs of the participating agencies and universities to cooperate with and gain support from and cooperate with TECSES.

TECSES conducted a consultation meeting at the Center for CEHRD on September 23rd. The meeting was chaired by the Director General and attended by five representatives from CEHRD. On the same day, a consultation meeting was also held at the Curriculum Development Center (CDC), chaired by the Director General and attended by five representatives from the center.

On September 24th, a consultation was held at the Teachers' Service Commission (TSC). The meeting was chaired by the Chief of Administration and attended by two other representatives from the agency. On the same day, another consultation was conducted at the Education Review Office (ERO), chaired by the Director General and attended by eleven representatives from ERO (**Detailed report: Annex 2: Report on Consultations of MoEST central level agencies**)

To identify the role and needs of the University Grants Commission (UGC) in TECSES, a consultation meeting was held at the UGC on October 16th. The meeting was led by the Chairperson of the UGC and attended by two professors. Following this, the TECSES team continued consultations with three participating universities. The first meeting was held at Tribhuvan University on October 27th, chaired by the Dean of the Faculty of Education and attended by three other faculty members. The next consultation took place at Nepal Open University on October 1st. This meeting was chaired by the Vice-Chancellor Dr. Shilu

Manandhar and attended by three other staff members. The final consultation was conducted at Kathmandu University on November 15th. Prof. Bal Chandra Luitel, Dean of the School of Education at Kathmandu University, chaired the discussion, with five additional faculty representatives present (**Detailed report: Annex 3: Report on Consultations of Universities**)

Summary of provincial and local level consultations

University of Helsinki, HY+, and Embassy of Finland visited Karnali Province and had an initial consultation meeting with provincial authorities and Mid-West University in June 2024. Later, the TECSES team from Kathmandu PSU conducted Karnali provincial, municipal and school level consultations dated on October 16th – 18th, 2024. The purpose of consultations was to explore the existing context of teacher education, identify capacity gaps, and highlight key areas requiring priority interventions. Consultations also focused on determining specific geographic areas within the province that need targeted support from rural municipalities and municipalities. (R/Municipalities and schools). To identify needs and establish networks, the TECSES team conducted its first provincial visits to Madhesh 8th – 11th January and Sudurpaschim 7th – 12th January 2025.

Before conducting the consultation, the PSU team members had a discussion with the Joint-Secretary, Planning Division and MoEST, and agreed to proceed with the consultation as planned by the PSU team. In addition, the Development Assistant Coordination Section (DACS) Chief (Under Secretary) also provided official letters to facilitate the consultation meetings.

The consultation meetings started with a courtesy call with Ghanashyam Bhandari, Minister of the Ministry of Social Development (MoSD), Karnali Province. This was followed by a brief presentation and discussion on TECSES key areas of support and the expectations of MoSD in the education sector. Subsequent consultations were held with various groups, including high-level officials from the MoSD, Human Resource Development Center, the Provincial Education Development Directorate, prominent academic figures from the Faculty of Education at Mid-Western University and Constituent Campus of Tribhuvan University, as well as representatives from LEUs, including chiefs of 11 rural municipalities and municipalities. Detailed results for the consultation are presented in the consultation's summary report. (**Detailed report: Annex 4: Report on consultations of provincial and local government agencies**)

2.7 Meetings with other development partners

In June 2024, the TECSES team met with five key development partners providing the Technical Assistance (ADB, WB, UNICEF, USAID, JICA) support to SESP. The meetings were held to identify potential overlapping activities and explore opportunities for further coordination and collaboration. During the inception period, the TECSES team also consulted with EU representatives, as well as representatives from the World Food Programme, UNICEF, and Plan International, agreeing on areas of cooperation.

2.8 Formation of TECSES Steering committee and Supervisory Board

On October 29th, 2024, the TECSES CTA, representatives from the Embassy of Finland and the EU, the MoEST Joint Secretary of the Planning and Monitoring Division, and the DACS Under Secretary held a joint meeting in which was agreed that the MoEST Planning Division would nominate representatives for the TECSES Supervisory Board and Steering Committee. Following this meeting and upon MoEST's suggestion, the Embassy sent a formal request letter the next day. The Embassy also included nominees from the Embassy and the EU for representation in the Supervisory Board and Steering Committee and communicated this in writing along with the request letter. According to the TECSES project document, the Supervisory Board is the project's highest decision-making body, while the Steering Committee is responsible for overall steering of the project implementation, including systematic risk monitoring and mitigation.

In addition to these Committee meetings, the TECSES Kathmandu PSU maintains regular communication with all participating MoEST federal-level agencies (CEHRD, CDC, ERO, TSC, UGC) and holds one-on-one meetings to specify work activities and develop a work plan. Similarly, the TECSES Karnali PSU holds regular meetings with provincial and local agencies with the purpose to define work activities and update the ongoing activities.

2.9 Selection of municipalities and schools in Karnali province

Since TECSES plans to begin provincial-level activities in Karnali during the project's first year, MoEST prepared and sent official letters to government authorities in Karnali Province. These letters were addressed to MoSD, PETC, and PEDD Office. The letters instructed provincial authorities to begin preparations for TECSES activities in Karnali. **(Annex 5: Circulation letters from MoEST)**

During the inception period, the TECSES Provincial Coordinator in Karnali facilitated and organized consultations with provincial authorities and supported the selection of municipalities for TECSES activities across Karnali Province.

During the consultation meetings, provincial government agencies provided suggestions for selecting municipalities, and the Minister of MoSD recommended that TECSES include one municipality from each district of Karnali Province. Following this, the TECSES project team requested a meeting for a municipality selection with key stakeholders, including PETC and PEDD. The meeting took place on September 26, 2024, at MoSD.

The meeting was chaired by the Minister of MoSD, with the Secretary of MoSD and representatives from other key agencies in attendance. During the meeting, Bakhat Bhandari, the Provincial Coordinator of TECSES in Karnali, presented an overview of the project, the meeting agenda, and the criteria for selecting municipalities (palikas).

The following criteria were set for the selection of municipalities selection by TECSES team:

1. EMIS Data analysis for the high number of children from ethnic minorities or high number of girls;
2. Avoid duplication with other development partners;
3. Adopt some of the provincial government selected schools as a model school concept developed by MoEST;
4. Use the Equity index ranking within the district;
5. Use resource schools' data- high number of resource schools exist;
6. Possible area for training hub in the district in future;
7. Commitment to collaborate with provincial government and local government (see EMIS data analysis report below);
8. Rural Municipality or municipality remoteness within a district.

EMIS Data analysis report

District	Municipality/RM	Other	Girls	Boys	Total	Reason for selection
Dailekh	Dullu Municipality	0	5104	4894	9998	High number of students among Districts
Rukumwest	Musikot Municipality	0	4642	5114	9756	High number of students among Districts
Jajarkot	Nalagad Municipality	1	4487	4022	8509	The second largest number of students among the District, Save the children, is working in the first Palika.
Salyan	Sharada Municipality	2	3820	4110	7930	High number of students among Districts
Kalikot	Khandachakra Municipality	2	3435	3447	6882	High number of students among Districts
Surkhet	Simta Rural Municipality	0	2774	2722	5496	Remoteness in the District
Mugu	Khatyad Rural Municipality	1	2525	2469	4994	The second largest number of students among the District, UNICEF, is working in the first palika.
Jumla	Kanakasundari Rural Municipality	0	1776	1591	3367	It is a MoSD focused Palika, Plan International, Save the Children, Unicef and British Council are working in other 5 Municipalities.
Dolpa	Tripurasundari Municipality	0	1665	1637	3302	Center point of District, it can be the training hub in the future.
Humla	Adanchuli Rural Municipality	0	1353	1307	2660	MoSD focused Palika and Center point of District, it can be the training hub in the future.

Development agencies working in the Karnali Province in the education sector

The TECSES team identified development agencies working in education in Karnali Province and recorded their activities in an Excel sheet. This sheet was shared during the meeting with the Ministry of Social Development (MoSD) and key agencies to ensure the TECSES project complements rather than duplicates existing efforts in the province.

Adopting MoSD's selected municipalities and model schools

During the TECSES consultations, provincial government agencies recommended adopting the model school approach in selected municipalities. The TECSES team reviewed the pros and cons of including model schools in the selection of municipalities and schools. The team realized that focusing only on model schools in this selection would be risky, as the model school approach has not yet been proven or tested as effective. Therefore, the TECSES team proposed selecting only two model schools out of 13 in Karnali Province. As a result, two municipalities, Kanakasundari and Adanchuli, were chosen from the list of municipalities with existing model schools.

Ministry of Social Development (MoSD) Karnali Province Selected Model schools

Ministry of Social Development (MoSD) Karnali Province Selected Model schools list			
District	Name of Schools	Address	Recommended Schools
Surkhet	Shree Aadarsha Secondary School	Lekhbesh-1, Lekhparsa, Surkhet	
Dailekh	Janajyoti Secondary school	Aathabis Municipality-4, Rakam, Dailekh	
Jajarkot	Narayani Secondary School	Chhedagad Municipality-12, Karkigau, Jajarkot	Earthquake affected
	Indrajyoti Secondary School	Shivalaya RM-6, thalaraikar, Jajarkot	Earthquake affected
Salyan	Nepal Rastriya Secondary school	Kapurkot RM-4, Kimuchaur Salyan	Earthquake affected
	Janajyoti Secondary school	Darma RM-3, Pharulachaur, Salyan	Earthquake affected
Rukum west	Shree Sital Secondary School	Chaurjahari Mun-02, nayabazar, Rukum west	Earthquake affected
	Shree yamunananda Secondary School	Musikot-5, Serigau, Rukum west	Earthquake affected
Dolpa	Shree Saraswoti Secondary School	Thulibheri-03, Dunai Dolpa	
Jumla	Shree Kanakasundari Secondary School	Kanakasundary RM-5, Jumla	Yes
Kalikot	Nandadevi Secondary School	Naraharinath-01, Kalikot	

Mugu	Nepal Rastriya Aabasiya Secondary School	Mugum Karmarong-03, Mugu	
Humla	Sallaghari Secondary School	Adanchuli RM-05, Humla	Yes

Based on the Equity Index (EI) Report 2080, the following municipalities were identified as the least developed in Karnali. Therefore, the TECSES project decided to prioritize these municipalities for selection.

Equity Index (EI) of selected rural municipalities

Province	District	Palikas	EI (Participation)	EI (Access)	EI (Learning)	EI (P+A+L)	Ran king	Reason for selection
Karnali	Dolpa	Tripurasundari Municipality	15.8%	93.3 %	27.3%	45.5 %	622	It was middle palika as per the equity index and this is a high potentiality of digital learning hub in the district. Due to the highly remoteness, we could not target the chharkatangsong RM which is the least 32% as per the equity index.
Karnali	Jumla	Kanakasundari Rural Municipality	26.7%	95.8 %	10.8%	44.4 %	645	Lowest in the equity index in the district and MoSD also focused as a model school in the Palika
Karnali	Salyan	Sharada Municipality	40.8%	97.0 %	15.7%	51.2 %	409	There is no other development partners' presence in the Palika and potential training hub area.
Karnali	Surkhet	Simta Rural Municipality	38.3%	94.4 %	2.0%	44.9 %	636	Lowest in the equity index in the district and MoSD focused on digital learning hub in the Palika. Remote area of Surkhet District.
Karnali	Dailekh	Dullu Municipality	36.2%	97.5 %	3.2%	45.6 %	619	The second lowest Palika in the equity index among the districts. Chamunda was 36.2%, first one but there is presence of a Save the Children project.
Karnali	Mugu	Khatyad Rural Municipality	51.3%	95.5 %	6.1%	51.0 %	419	There is no presence of other development partners for the education sector
Karnali	Humla	Adanchuli Rural Municipality	63.1%	93.3 %	33.0%	63.1 %	113	It is a center point in the district. And MoSD also focused Palika for the training and Digital hub
Karnali	Jajarkot	Nalagad Municipality	60.3%	94.3 %	4.2%	52.9 %	344	Earthquake affected Palika and Suswa working area. It is also middle of equity index
Karnali	Kalikot	Khandachakra Municipality	71.0%	92.2 %	12.4%	58.5 %	184	There is no other development partners presence in the Palika in the education sector.

Karnali	Rukum Paschim	Musikot Municipality	76.1%	96.4 %	14.7%	62.4 %	122	There is no other development partners presence in the Palika
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2.10 Mobilization of the short-term experts

TECSES plans the involvement of international and national short-term experts in Technical Assistance (TA) annually, based on the specific activities outlined in the annual plan. During the inception period, the plan and timeline for involving experts in the 2025 project activities were finalized. **(Annex 6: Plan of short-term experts)**

The international short-term experts are assigned to work in pairs with short-term national experts. This approach diminishes the language barriers in field activities and enables the transfer of knowledge and skills between counterparts.

At the request of the TECSES Kathmandu PSU, the Service Provider (HY+) identifies and recruits potential international short-term experts from its existing expert pool. During the inception phase, the Kathmandu PSU established a pool of national experts. To ensure smooth recruitment, the PSU will continuously collect and evaluate CVs for inclusion in the expert pool.

2.11 Revisit to the Results Chain and Project Results Framework

The Results Framework is a key tool that guides the project toward achieving its intended impact. The project team conducted a thorough review of the Results Chain and Project Results Framework to align it with the current context and stakeholder needs. This review ensured that lessons from initial assessments and consultations with key stakeholders were incorporated. The review identified gaps in the original framework, particularly in key performance and output indicators. These gaps were addressed to enhance the framework's relevance and practicality. The revised framework now includes SMART (Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Relevant, and Time-bound) indicators to effectively measure progress. The Impact, Outcome, and Output statements (Output 1 and Output 2) have been revised for clarity and stronger alignment with the SESP outcome.

- The Impact statement has been adjusted to better connect with the SESP outcome.
- The Outcome statement now emphasizes teacher pedagogical skills and professionalism to strengthen its link to the Impact.
- Output 1 and Output 2 have been revised to be clearer and more results-driven.

The assumptions remain unchanged from the original project document. The updated Results Framework and Monitoring and Evaluation plan is annexed **(Annex 7: Results Framework and**

M&E Plan), and the table below compares the Impact, Outcome, and Output statements and indicators with those in the original document.

Results Framework: Original and Revised Statements and Indicators

Level	Revised Statement	Original Indicators	Revised indicator
IMPACT: To enhance the overall quality and relevance of education; to ensure minimum learning achievement of each child; to ensure equitable access to and participation of all children, especially those who are socially and economically disadvantaged, children from marginalized groups, and children with disabilities.	IMPACT: Enhanced quality, relevance and equity of education and improved learning outcomes and participation of all children in education; especially those who are socially and economically in disadvantaged situations, those who are from marginalized groups and children with disabilities; through improved professionalism and pedagogical skills of teachers. (aligned with SESP (2022/23-2031/32), objectives 1-2 that the project will contribute to, together with other agencies)	KPI 1: Increased percentage of students who have benefited of quality and inclusive education and improved learning achievements as a result of teachers' in-service training/TPD (disaggregated by sex, disability and disadvantaged groups) <u>in the selected ECED/PPE and basic schools.</u>	KPI 1: Enhanced pedagogical practices and more inclusive teaching and learning in target schools ³ .
		KPI 2: Increased net school enrolment rate (NER), reduced drop-out rates and improved inclusion of children with disabilities in (disaggregated by sex, disability and disadvantaged groups) in the selected basic schools.	KPI 2: % of grade 3 and 5 students achieving minimum proficiency in reading/numeracy (NARN/NASA).
		KPI 3: Decreased percentage of out-of-school children <u>in selected basic schools</u> (ages 5-12) (disaggregated by sex, disability and disadvantaged groups).	KPI 3: Share (%) of students with disabilities in total enrolment in basic education.
			KPI 4: Share (%) of Dalit students in total enrolment in basic education.
			KPI 5: Repetition rate (%) of students in Basic level
			KPI 6: Dropout rate (%) of students in Basic level
OUTCOME: Improved and coherent teacher training at MoEST and its agencies, the faculties of	OUTCOME: Improved and coherent teacher training at MoEST and its agencies, the faculties of	KPI 4: Percentage (%) of selected institutions and schools who have benefited from quality, equity, and inclusion of	KPI 7: % of targeted teachers demonstrating minimum competency in inclusive, effective and learner centred teaching

³ Tools will be developed in consultation with international experts, focusing on classroom observation of inclusive pedagogical practices.

Level	Revised Statement	Original Indicators	Revised indicator
education of the participating universities, PETCs LS and schools to enhance teachers' professional development, ensure quality and inclusion in education and increase attractiveness of teaching profession.	education of the participating universities, PETCs LG's and schools to enhance teachers' professional development, professionalism and pedagogical skills.	teaching practice including: a. % among total selected institutions and schools with improved teaching practices b. inclusive education pedagogy according to the updated teachers' competency framework, active learner-centred methodologies, teachers' 21st century skills; c. % among total schools with improved teaching and learning conditions (teaching and learning materials, SEN materials, student-teacher ratios), d. % among schools with 50% and more disadvantaged students (Dalit, disability, out-of-school, other disadvantaged students) e. % of schools that apply Individual Education Plans (IEP) for Special Educational Needs (SEN).	practices in line with the teacher's competency framework
		KPI 5: Percentage (%) of teacher trainers with improved teaching/training practices in:	KPI8: % of targeted teacher trainers demonstrating minimum understanding of inclusive, effective and learner centred practices in teacher training and support in line with the teacher's competency framework
		KPI 6: Number of teacher training institutions supported (7) and updated in-service teacher training courses provided through PETCs.	KPI9: # of local governments, universities, MoEST agencies and schools benefitting from the project support for improved teacher training and professional development systems
		KPI 7: Number of teacher trainers and teachers who have been supported with the updated in-service	KPI10: # of teacher trainers and teachers who have been supported with the updated in-service

Level	Revised Statement	Original Indicators	Revised indicator
		teacher training. (This is a MFA aggregate indicator and will be reported in the Project reports.)	teacher training (MFA aggregate)
			KPI 11: % of disability inclusive schools
OUTPUT 1: Enhanced capacity of participating universities to develop and implement state-of-the-art pre-service teacher preparation (qualifications, curricula, learning outcomes of teacher competences etc.) incorporating elements of: a) coherent and quality pre-service and in-service teacher training, b) inclusive education, c) active learner-centred methodologies, d) teachers' 21st century teaching skills, e) teachers' reflective practice and accountability, f) classroom teacher and student assessment, g) teachers' management system addressing the regional and local needs.	OUTPUT 1: Enhanced capacity of participating universities to develop and implement state-of-the-art pre-service teacher education curriculum.	1.1. Updated and approved state-of-art Bachelor and Master level teacher preparation curricula	1.1 # of Updated and approved Bachelors and master's level education curricula in line with the Teachers' Competency Framework in target Universities.
		1.2. New 3-semester state-of-the-art pedagogical postgraduate degree curriculum	1.2 # of developed and approved new 3-semester pedagogical postgraduate degree curriculum in target Universities.
		1.3. New 3-semester state-of-the-art pedagogical (diploma in education) curriculum for ECD/PPE and basic education pre-service teacher training	1.3 #A Developed & approved pedagogical Diploma in Education for Basic education teachers in target Universities.
		1.5. Online teacher training and assessment systems in place in Nepal Open University	1.4 Strengthened online teacher training and assessments system in place at Nepal Open University ⁴ .
		1.4. Increased number of education faculty teachers (disaggregated by gender and Dalit) oriented on the a. updated teacher preparation curricula for Bachelor and Master levels, b. postgraduate degree curriculum, and c. Diploma in education curriculum	1.5 # of education faculty teachers of target universities capacitated to develop and implement improved teacher education programmes.
OUTPUT 2: Enhanced capacity of federal education (MoEST and its agencies CEHRD, CDC and ERO) to effectively carry out their mandates in teacher training in terms of teacher training policy, curriculum	OUTPUT 2: Enhanced capacity of federal education agencies (MoEST and its agencies CEHRD, TSC, CDC and ERO) to effectively carry out their mandates in teacher training policy, quality of, and	2.1. Enhanced capacity of to i. Design in-service teacher training (coherent with pre-service, teachers' competency framework); ii. Analyse data and carry out assessments on quality of teaching and learning.	2.1 A Harmonised teacher competency framework and policy in place aligned with the national curriculum framework (National teachers competency framework/policy, national curriculum framework, Teacher

⁴ An initial assessment of the current system will be carried out to identify gaps and strengthen it.

Level	Revised Statement	Original Indicators	Revised indicator
development, quality and accountability.	accountability for teacher professional development and inclusive education.		Selection Curriculum developed/revised/updated and approved at CEHRD, CDC, ERO and TSC level)
		2.3 Increased number of training packages (curriculum, materials, and training guide) prepared for training teachers	2.2. # of Comprehensive teachers in-service training package developed on inclusive education, in line with the Teacher Professional Development Framework, the Teacher Professional Development Guidelines and based on best practices and evidence of effective continuous professional development programmes
		2.2. Increased number of CEHRD teacher trainers (disaggregated) who have completed practice-oriented master trainers on inclusive education and pedagogy.	2.3. # of CEHRD, ERO and CDC members, master trainers, and trainers in roster trained on Inclusive Pedagogy (Updated training package), coaching and supporting PETCs.
		2.4. Increased number of teachers (disaggregated) receiving practice-oriented training on inclusion;	2.4 # of CEHRD trainers, ERO and CDC staff who have benefitted from capacity development interventions through the project
OUTPUT 3: Enhanced teacher training capacity of participating PETCs and schools to provide inclusive and quality teacher training and teaching.	OUTPUT 3: Enhanced teacher training capacity of participating PETCs and schools to provide inclusive and quality teacher training and teaching. (No change)	3.1. Increased number of teacher trainers including trainers in roster (disaggregated as above) received practical coaching in pedagogy on inclusive training.	3.1 # of PETCs/HRDC members in the target provinces capacitated through a comprehensive capacity development plan
		3.2. Updated in-service teacher training packages (certificate and customized) on inclusive pedagogy in use in the PETCs	3.2 # of Comprehensive training package (developed in output 2) on inclusive pedagogy for resource teachers and basic education teachers rolled out at PETCs.
		3.3 Increased number of trainers, including trainers in roster (disaggregated as above) trained on inclusive	3.3 # of teacher trainers including trainers in roster trained on inclusive education using updated (developed in

Level	Revised Statement	Original Indicators	Revised indicator
		education and piloted in practice in schools	output 2) training package
			3.4 # of teachers receiving practice-oriented training on inclusive education using updated (developed in output 2) training package.
OUTPUT 4: Enhanced capacity of participating LGs and schools to plan and implement educational activities including teacher professional support and management.	OUTPUT 4: Enhanced capacity of participating LGs and schools to plan and implement educational activities including teacher professional support and management. (No change)	4.1 Number of local governments (LGs) in project areas that have a pool of competent teacher coaches to support and supervise schoolteachers.	4.1 # of LG supervisors, pedagogical resource teachers and head teachers oriented/trained to support teachers through coaching and mentoring based on the mentoring manual.
		4.2 Number of competent teacher-coaches (desegregated by gender and Dalit) available with the participating LGs.	4.2 # of local levels that have established and implemented teacher professional support system.
		4.3. Number of self-learning teacher groups formed and supported in the project areas.	4.3 # of self-learning teacher groups formed and supported in the project areas (ToR developed and approved at LG level)
		4.4. Number of pilot teacher support systems in selected municipalities with on-line facilitation and pedagogical resources.	4.4 # of Pedagogical tools developed and used for supportive supervision, coaching and mentoring for assessing teaching practices, inclusive school environments, learning support and student learning in ECE/PPE, resource classes and basic education.
		4.5 Number of participating LGs that have developed capacity for inclusive education planning and budgeting with project support	4.5 #of participating LGs and schools that have considered inclusive education in their annual work plan and budget /school development plan

2.12 Project Activity Plan

Based on the situational analysis and consultations at all levels, the TECSES team developed project activity plans covering the entire project cycle, along with detailed plans for the first year. The detailed activity plan is included in annexes 8 and 9, however the summary of the activity plan is presented below. **(Annex 8: Annual Activity Plan 2025; Annex 9: Output-wise activity detail)**

TECSES TA support is provided as expert support, including financial support for trainings, workshops, and expert committee working meetings as described in the annual work plan. In addition, TECSES provides financial support to local governments for pedagogical resource teachers within the policy provisions of provincial governments and through the arrangement of a signed MOU among the provincial government, local government and TECSES.

Output 1

Enhanced capacity of participating universities to develop and implement state-of-the-art pre-service teacher education curriculum.

The TECSES PSU Kathmandu will coordinate and facilitate the formation of an expert committee/group under the leadership of the faculties of education at participating universities. TECSES national and international experts will collaborate with the expert team to revise the existing B.Ed. and M.Ed. curricula and provide necessary support. This support includes part-time expert engagement, as well as funding for meetings and workshops⁵. The revision process will be led by the faculties of education at the participating universities, with the TECSES project team offering additional support as needed.

To develop a new 3-semester state-of-the-art pedagogical postgraduate degree curriculum for inclusive education and a 3-semester state-of-the-art pedagogical diploma in education curriculum for basic education, the TECSES team will first coordinate with the MoEST and facilitate the formation of a joint expert team under the leadership of the faculties of education at participating universities. TECSES experts will work as members of this team. The team will review existing curricula, organize a series of expert consultation sessions, and engage in discussions with teachers and local education authorities. Based on these consultations, the expert team will prepare a final draft of the new curriculum. At the end of the process, TECSES will support the implementation of the new curriculum by facilitating capacity-building for the teachers in the faculties of education.

⁵ Output 1 support includes expert assistance provided by international and national experts, as well as financial support for implementing committee meetings and identified workshops in line with the project activity plan.

Output 2

Enhanced capacity of federal education agencies (MoEST and its agencies CEHRD, TSC, CDC and ERO) to effectively carry out their mandates in teacher training policy, quality of, and accountability for teacher professional development and inclusive education.

TECSES will work closely with the MoEST Development Assistance Coordination Section to establish a unified review system under the leadership of CEHRD. This process involves forming an expert team that includes representatives from TSC, ERO, CDC, CEHRD, universities' faculties of education, and teacher education experts. The expert team will begin by reviewing the existing teacher competency framework and other relevant documents. Additionally, the team will lead the revision process of the teacher competency framework. This process will include teacher consultation workshops, expert meetings, a national-level framework revision workshop, and the drafting of the revised framework.

For other frameworks, such as the teacher selection competency framework and selection curriculum, TECSES experts will collaborate directly with Teacher Service Commission officials, providing expert support for revising the teacher selection curriculum.

TECSES will work with the CEHRD to develop or review and implement a comprehensive teachers in-service training package on inclusive education, in line with the Teacher Professional Development Framework, the Teacher Professional Development Guidelines and based on best practices and evidence of effective continuous professional development programme as well as the inclusive education policy.⁶ CEHRD is responsible for developing training packages and providing support for Training of Trainers to roster trainers. Its main role is to roll out the training packages. PETCs will be responsible for implementing teacher training. They will oversee the delivery of training packages at the provincial and local levels under Output 3. TECSES TA support is provided as expert support, including financial assistance for trainings, workshops, and expert committee meetings.

The Education Review Office has its own plan for periodic reviews, studies, research, and large-scale assessments of student learning outcomes (which refers to the National Assessment of Student Achievement – NASA). TECSES will offer partial support to implement ERO's plan in selected activities that closely link to the improvement of the teacher education system and its capacities. As partial support, the TECSES project will contribute to assessment strategies for inclusion, focusing particularly on assessments related to disability inclusion, and will conduct studies on disability-inclusive education practices in schools.⁷

⁶ Output 2 support includes expert assistance provided jointly by international and national experts, as well as financial support for implementing expert meetings and identified workshops in line with the project activity plan.

⁷ Support to ERO includes expert assistance (international and national) and financial support for implementing the required workshops aligned with the project activity plan.

Output 3

Enhanced teacher training capacity of participating PETCs and schools to provide inclusive and quality teacher training and teaching.

The TECSES Provincial offices will coordinate and work with different government institutions such as the HRDC, PETC, and the Education Development Directorate through MoSD. A coordination and collaboration approach will be adopted to enhance the teacher training capacity of the participating PETCs and schools, promoting inclusive and quality teaching in schools. The TECSES provincial coordinators and local coordinators will provide expertise and guidance while executing TECSES activities that align with the provincial school education sector plan, annual work plan, and budget. The TECSES PSU and Provincial teams work together to provide technical assistance to implement teacher training as per the plan of the PETCs. TECSES has included capacity development support to PETCs to help them implement teacher training more effectively. Successful practices can be replicated to other provinces as well. The TECSES PSU Kathmandu office will provide necessary support to the TECSES provincial teams in implementing provincial and local-level activities, focusing on Karnali in the first year and expanding to Madhesh and Sudurpaschim from the second year onward.

The TECSES team will support the rollout of the inclusive education in-service training program across three provinces, beginning with Karnali Province. In the first year, after completing the training package in collaboration with CEHRD, PETC trainers will be prepared to deliver the program to teachers. In the second year, the program will be implemented for resource teachers and basic education teachers in Karnali Province. Based on the implementation experience and any necessary revisions, the program will then be expanded to Sudurpashim and Madhesh Provinces.⁸

The TECSES Provincial team in Karnali will support the HRDC to establish a Provincial Digital Training Center which aims to extend its capacity in 10 lead schools in Karnali province.⁹ In addition, TECSES provincial team in Karnali will also build the capacities of the officials of the Education Development Directorate to build a system of teacher career development as well as gender sensitive and inclusive teaching learning environment through GIEN network.

Output 4

Enhanced capacity of participating LGs and schools to plan and implement educational activities including teacher professional support and management.

The Kathmandu PSU and Provincial PSU teams will work jointly with selected municipalities to sustain project activities. The provincial staff of TECSES (Coordinators and Officers) will collaborate with the respective LEUs of the selected rural municipalities and municipalities, building their capacities to develop local school education sector plans, annual work plans,

⁸ Output 3 support includes expert assistance in developing teacher training and financial support for implementing meetings and training aligned with the project activity plan.

⁹ Support for developing a digital training center includes expert support.

and budgets, including annual appraisals of these plans. To support the localization of TECSES activities, the activities under Output 4 will be included in the local annual plans. In this effort, TECSES works in close collaboration with other development partners operating in the region. In addition, TECSES will facilitate the promotion of pedagogical resource teachers in targeted rural municipalities and municipalities by utilizing provincial and municipal resources. The TECSES project can provide partial support for the first three years only.¹⁰ However, this is conditional and will be implemented only if the provincial and municipal governments demonstrate their commitment by signing a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU). The practicality of implementing this support will be explored during the first part of the project's first year.

TECSES will also support LEUs in developing regular mentoring and teacher support systems at the municipal and school levels. This support includes updated training for roster-trained teachers and subject expert teachers, the formation of teacher circles, and assistance in building networks for sharing knowledge and skills.

In target schools, TECSES will pilot and institutionalize teacher support systems and inclusive education practices. This includes developing and using pedagogical tools for supportive supervision, coaching, and mentoring to assess teaching practices, create inclusive school environments, provide learning support, and enhance student learning in basic education. Training will also be provided to SMC and PTA members to promote inclusive, quality education. The TECSES Provincial PSU will advocate for scaling up and replicating the piloted teacher support system in other schools. The team will also promote inclusive education practices in schools not directly involved in TECSES. Additionally, TECSES encourages LEUs and schools to utilize available resources to enhance teachers' skills and create inclusive, student-centered classroom environments.

A detailed situation assessment will be conducted in year one in Madhesh and Sudurpashim provinces to analyze the context before TECSES expands into these provinces in year two. In Karnali province, capacity development for SMC, PTA, and LEU has been included in year one. TECSES will support pedagogical resource persons within the LEU to enhance the capacity of local governments in mentoring and coaching for classroom-based pedagogical improvements.

2.13 Collection of Baseline information

The baseline data represents the current state before the project's activities begin, serving as a reference point to measure progress and evaluate changes throughout the project's duration. It plays a crucial role in planning and demonstrating results by setting realistic goals, focusing on the project's actual needs, and benchmarking progress toward achieving objectives.

¹⁰ In Output 4, support for a Pedagogical Resource Person includes covering 60% of their salary in the first year, 40% in the second year, and 25% in the third year. The practicality of this support will be further explored during the first year of project implementation.

The indicators of the TECSES project are aligned with key indicators of SESP. As a result, baseline data for these indicators is already available from the CEHRD Flash Report (2023/24) and is used as the baseline for the project. For key indicators lacking secondary data, a baseline survey will be carried out.

The baseline data will be conducted using a mixed-method approach that incorporates both qualitative and quantitative data. Quantitative data will be collected through surveys using offline tools such as Kobo Toolbox. For qualitative data, methods such as Focus Group Discussions (FGDs), Key Informant Interviews (KIIs), and direct observations will provide in-depth insights into target groups. The survey questionnaire will be developed in consultation with international experts to ensure accuracy and relevance.

The baseline survey will be conducted in two phases. The first phase will take place from January to March 2025 in Karnali Province. The second phase will occur from January to March 2026, focusing on Madhesh and Sudurpaschim Provinces. The project baseline for all three provinces will be established after the completion of data collection in both phases.

This approach will provide TECSES with a comprehensive understanding of the baseline in relation to the indicators. The baseline data will serve as a foundation to measure the impact of interventions and facilitate informed decision-making throughout the project. The table below presents the indicators and their corresponding baseline data.

Baseline Data

No	Level	Indicators	Baseline
	IMPACT	KPI 1: Enhanced pedagogical practices and more inclusive teaching and learning in target schools.	TBD (Tools to be developed and baseline determined)
		KPI 2: % of grade 3 and 5 students achieving minimum proficiency in reading and numeracy (NARN/NASA)	National level (flash report 2023/24) grade 3 reading: 47.7%; grade 3 numeracy 61.3%
		KPI 3: Share (%) of students with disabilities in total enrolment in basic education	Flash report 2023/2024: Total: 0.42% (Girls = 0.18%, Boys = 0.24%)
		KPI 4: Share (%) of Dalit students in total enrolment in basic education	Flash report 2023/2024: Total 17.7% (Girls: 18.0% and Boys: 17.3%)
		KPI 5: Repetition rate (%) of students in Basic level	National Level (Flash Report 2023/24 Total: 7% (Girls: 7% and Boys: 7%)
		KPI 6: Dropout rate (%) of students in Basic level	National level (flash report 2023/24) Total: 3% (Girls: 2.9% and Boys: 3.2%)
	OUTCOME	KPI7: % of targeted teachers demonstrating minimum competency in inclusive, effective and learner centred teaching practices in line with the teacher's competency framework	TBD (tools to be developed to measure the teachers demonstrating minimum competency in inclusive, effective and learner centred teaching practices in line with the teacher's competency framework)
		KPI8: % of targeted teacher trainers demonstrating minimum understanding of inclusive, effective and learner centred practices in teacher training and support in line with the teacher's competency framework	TBD (tools to be developed to measure the teachers demonstrating minimum competency in inclusive, effective and learner centred teaching practices in line with the teacher's competency framework)
		KPI9: # of local governments, universities, MoEST agencies and schools benefitting from the project support for improved teacher training and professional development systems	LGs: 0 Universities: 0 MoEST agencies: 0 Schools: 0
		KPI10: # of teacher trainers and teachers who have been supported with the updated in-service teacher training (MFA aggregate)	0

No	Level	Indicators	Baseline
		KPI 11: % of disability inclusive schools	Disability inclusive schools is calculated Based on five criteria as determined in the SESP (access, teacher training, early screening, curriculum and instruction differentiation and individual education plans). The project will pilot a tool and guidance for collecting data on these criteria and support MoET to roll out this tool. National level data is derived from the SESP report/flash report, For project LGs data will be collected by the project based on tool developed.
1	OUTPUT	1.1 # of Updated and approved Bachelors and master's level education curricula in line with the Teachers' Competency Framework in target Universities.	0
		1.2 # of developed and approved new 3-semester pedagogical postgraduate degree curriculum in target Universities.	0
		1.3 #A Developed & approved pedagogical Diploma in Education for Basic education teachers in target Universities.	0
		1.4 Strengthened online teacher training and assessments system in place at Nepal Open University.	TBD (To be defined after initial assessment)
		1.5 # of education faculty teachers of target universities capacitated to develop and implement improved teacher education programmes.	0
2	OUTPUT	2.1 A Harmonised teacher competency framework and policy in place aligned with the national curriculum framework (National teachers competency framework/policy, national curriculum framework, Teacher Selection Curriculum developed/revised/updated and approved at CEHRD, CDC, ERO and TSC level)	0
		2.2. # of Comprehensive teachers in-service training package	0

No	Level	Indicators	Baseline
		developed on inclusive education, in line with the Teacher Professional Development Framework, the Teacher Professional Development Guidelines and based on best practices and evidence of effective continuous professional development programmes.	
		2.3. # of CEHRD, ERO and CDC members, master trainers, and trainers in roster trained on Inclusive Pedagogy (Updated training package), coaching and supporting PETCs.	0
		2.4 # of CEHRD trainers, ERO and CDC staff who have benefitted from capacity development interventions through the project	0
3	OUTPUT	3.1 # of PETCs/HRDC members in the target provinces capacitated through a comprehensive capacity development plan.	0
		3.2 # of Comprehensive training package (developed in output 2) on inclusive pedagogy for resource teachers and basic education teachers rolled out at PETCs.	0
		3.3 # of teacher trainers including trainers in roster trained on inclusive education using updated (developed in output 2) training package	0
		3.4 # of teachers receiving practice-oriented training on inclusive education using updated (developed in output 2) training package.	0
4	OUTPUT	4.1 # of LG supervisors, pedagogical resource teachers and head teachers oriented/trained to support teachers through coaching and mentoring based on the mentoring manual	0

No	Level	Indicators	Baseline
		4.2 # of local levels that have established and implemented teacher professional support system.	TBD (What the support system means and tools to be developed to measure this indicator have to be discussed with MoEST as this is a SESP indicator)
		4.3 # of self-learning teacher groups formed and supported in the project areas (ToR developed and approved at LG level)	TBD (baseline to be determined on no. of self-formed teachers' group)
		4.4 # of Pedagogical tools developed and used for supportive supervision, coaching and mentoring for assessing teaching practices, inclusive school environments, learning support and student learning in ECE/PPE, resource classes and basic education.	TBD (baseline to determine)
		4.5 #of participating LGs and schools that have considered inclusive education in their annual work plan and budget /school development plan	TBD (baseline to determine)

3. Situation update, including updates to background information and analysis

The situation analysis is informed by a review of documentation, studies and analysis on teacher education and inclusive education in Nepal as well as a series of consultation meetings. The consultation meetings with different stakeholders at federal, provincial and municipal levels revealed that some best practices in teacher education have been initiated but have not been scaled up due to the capacity and resource gaps. Good examples are for instance the ongoing process of developing the Teacher competency framework, the revision of universities' course curricula to better correspond with the National Curriculum Framework and a plan to develop a digital teacher training centre at Karnali Province. Similarly, some rural municipalities and schools have taken the initiative to support teachers by organizing meetings, workshops, and creating self-initiated teacher circles. While these efforts have been launched using local resources, they have yet to achieve systemic change due to a lack of proper guidance, capacity, and resources. TECSSES can enhance these initiatives by offering support through consultations and capacity building for key stakeholders.

Regarding continuous professional development, the essential components of a strengthened professional development and support system for teachers have been outlined in the recently approved Teacher Professional Development Framework (2023) and the Teacher Mentoring Manual. There is a need to roll out and institutionalize teacher professional support systems and in-service training programs based on these frameworks and guidelines. Furthermore, there is a need to strengthen the capacity of PETCs and enhance the role of CEHRD in supporting PETCs to build their capacities. TECSSES can support these processes.

Nepal is committed to take steps towards a more inclusive education system. This requires strengthened efforts to support schools in inclusive education including a strong, well established teacher development programme on inclusive education, rolled out at scale and capacity development efforts at the school level for inclusive education implementation. The TECSSES project is well positioned to support inclusive education both through:

- a. Strengthening the implementation of inclusive education at the local level by supporting schools and LGs in planning, budgeting and supervision for inclusive education and through building teacher support systems and mentoring models including through regular teacher learning circles and coaching.
- b. Supporting CEHRD and PETCs to develop and roll out a comprehensive system wide teacher in-service programme on inclusive education for resource teachers and basic education teachers.

3.1 Situation update – Output One level

Universities differ a lot when comparing their capacities to develop teacher education. Currently there are several different teacher education programs in Nepal. A general teacher education strategy developed together with MoEST, universities and other policymakers could serve as a tool to unify the existing programs. The strategy could be broad, offering guidelines for university-level planning while emphasizing the importance of university autonomy. A common structure at a national level could give universities help to plan their own guidelines to develop teacher training. Universities often seek assistance in developing the capacities of their own teacher trainers, but perhaps the capacity building should start from planning common structures and make everybody an active agent in this process. Participation and involvement can be a tool to enhance capacity of teacher trainers, and TECSES can support these efforts.

Universities' teacher training programs, Ministry agencies for curriculum development, and local level actors (including universities and local governments) all require a unified framework for developing teacher education. This framework could be the Teacher Competency Framework, which is currently under development in Nepal but has not yet been adopted as an official tool for advancement.¹¹

In regards of preparation of teacher education, large number of students have chosen education or teaching pedagogy as their major subject in Grades 11 and 12. Additionally, universities are offering B.Ed. and M.Ed. courses, which have enrolled many students. As there are currently different paths to become a teacher there is a need to develop a more comprehensive system for teacher training. The consultation meeting with federal-level MoEST agencies, such as CEHRD, CDC, TSC, and ERO, as well as the University Grants Commission, Tribhuvan University, Kathmandu University, Nepal Open University, and Mid-West University, identified key developmental needs related to teacher education including development, recruitment, and career progression:

- A coordination mechanism between MoEST and university faculties needs to be established to harmonize teacher education.
- The Teacher Competency Framework and Teacher Education Policy need further development to better serve all stakeholders in the education sector.
- Course and curriculum design, revision, and updates are required.
- The revision and modification of in-service teacher training curricula, TG, TRM, etc., need to be aligned with university teacher training for basic education teachers.

¹¹ In Output 1, TECSES supports the coordination of expert teams, provides expertise in curriculum review and development, and builds the capacity of teacher trainers in participating universities.

- A common accreditation system in teacher education (MoEST and university faculties) needs to be established to better align course development at universities with the licensing process at the Teacher Service Commission.
- A framework for a University Faculty Development Program linking to "Work for World" (internships and labor market-driven projects) is one of the main missions of the University Grants Commission.

3.2 Situation analysis - Output Two level

CEHRD has begun working with Nepal Open University to offer a one-year B.Ed. program focused on training teachers and instructors for technical stream schools. However, there is limited coordination between faculties of education and CEHRD in designing teacher education programs. The current Teacher Competency Framework remains unrevised. Significant disparities in ICT-knowledge and skills among TPD-trained teachers have been observed, largely due to unequal access to training and insufficient hands-on practice during training.

CEHRD has strengthened the continuous professional development and support system for teachers by developing the currently approved Teacher Professional Development Framework and the Teacher Mentoring Manual. Teacher Professional Development Framework includes ten training packages such as job induction, certification, and customized teacher training. However, CEHRD lacks resources and capacity gaps to implement methodologies such as action research-based teaching, peer observation, learning networks, practice of teaching and lesson studies. There is a need to implement and institutionalize teacher professional support systems and in-service training programs based on the established frameworks and guidelines. Additionally, it is essential to enhance the capacity of PETCs and strengthen the role of CEHRD in supporting PETCs to build their capabilities.¹²

The Curriculum Development Center (CDC) faces capacity and resource challenges in inclusive learning materials for children with disabilities under the updated curriculum. CDC plans to review and update the National Curriculum Framework while identifying resource gaps to complete the process. Teacher Service Commission has designed the teacher selection competency framework which needs revision based on changes in the national curriculum framework. This process has not been done yet as there has been a lack of resources to revise it. Teacher Service Commission also aims to develop the teacher performance assessment tool and resources to disseminate it.

The Education Review Office has recognized limited capacity to develop assessment tools for inclusive pedagogy and education. These gaps highlight the need for additional support to enhance inclusive and effective teaching and learning practices and assessment.

¹² In Output 2, TECSES provides expert support for TCF and other identified frameworks, as well as for the teacher training package in inclusive education.

3.3 Situation analysis - Output Three level

Provincial level consultation meetings highlighted a shortage of qualified faculty teachers at provincial universities and rostered teacher trainers of PETC. As a result, the teacher training conducted by existing rostered teacher trainers of PETC have a little impact in the improvement of teachers' classroom teaching. In addition, there is a lack of institutional coordination mechanisms between Mid-West University's Faculty of Education and MoSD, HRDC, and PETC to harmonize teacher education programs for both pre-service and in-service trainings. The PETC has limited staff, with its training section under HRDC having just two employees. Similarly, the Provincial Education Development Directorate has limited capacity to manage teacher performance evaluations and promotions. Furthermore, PETC's training programs, such as job induction and certification, are only offered to permanent teachers, and therefore excluding temporary teachers from these opportunities in Karnali Province.¹³

MoSD at the Karnali Province has a plan to establish a provincial digital teacher training center, along with extending such centers to 10 proposed lead/resource/model schools across all 10 districts. However, this plan has not been implemented due to a lack of resources.

3.4 Situation analysis – Output Four level

At the local level, in rural municipalities' and municipalities' Education Committees and School Management Committees are established and functioning, but they have very limited capacity for inclusive education planning and budgeting. Both committees face significant challenges in addressing resource gaps needed to implement their developed plans.

Schools also lack knowledge and resources to promote appropriate learning environments and an inclusive teaching environment to children with disabilities.¹⁴ Some rural municipalities, municipalities, and schools have created teacher circles with the aim of supporting each other through informal sharing and discussions. However, these initiatives are yet to be institutionalized to support teacher education. Similarly, some rural municipalities and municipalities, such as Kapurkot (Salyan District), have established a system of using teachers as rostered trainers in their LEUs, but this practice has not been implemented across all LEUs. Additionally, some schools have initiated "learn-to-earn" vocational activities as a part of teaching.

Several development partners in Nepal, including UNICEF, WFP, EU, USAID, Plan International, and Save the Children, are involved in developing the school education sector and contribute to teacher education through training, orientations, and workshops. However,

¹³ In Output 3, TECSES provides support to strengthen coordination between universities and MoSD, HRDC, and PETC, as well as expertise in enhancing teacher training in PETCs and rolling out inclusive education training to local levels.

¹⁴ In Output 4, TECSES provides expertise to LEUs to develop educational plans, establish a sustainable teacher development support system, and train teachers in inclusive education.

according to the consultations at provincial and local levels, there is no comprehensive data available to support aligned teacher training interventions and learning outcomes of students (who is doing what and where), nor is there an effective monitoring system to evaluate the impact of teacher training.

3.5 Summary of the activities of the development partners in Karnali province

The TECSES PSU in Karnali, in coordination with MoSD, developed a Google Form titled "Information Collecting Form for Mapping Development Partners Working in the Education Sector in Karnali Province". While data collection and analysis are still ongoing, some key information has already been gathered from development partners (table below):

Partner mapping in Karnali Province

Partner Mapping and situation analysis of Karnali Province			
Development Partners	District	Presence in the Municipalities (Palikas)	Key aspect of Project
UNICEF	Dolpa, Kalikot, Jumla, Mugu, Salyan, Jajarkot, Rukum west, Dolpa, Surkhet, Dailekh	Kanakasundari Rural Municipality, Sanni Tribeni Rural Municipality, Chhyanath Rara Municipality, Tribeni Rural Municipality, Sharada Municipality, Simta Rural Municipality, , Sinja Rural Municipality, Kuse Rural Municipality, Tribeni Rural Municipality-Rukumwest, Raskot Municipality, Narayana Municipality, Junichande Rural Municipality, Thuli Bheri Municipality, Chaurjahari Municipality, Chhedagad Municipality, Barahatal Rural Municipality, Dungeshwor Rural Municipality, Simtot Rural Municipality, Khadachakra Municipality, Musikot Municipality, Bheriganga Municipality	Support to develop local education plan
British Council	Dolpa, Kalikot, Surkhet, Dailekh, Jumla, Mugu	Sanni Tribeni Rural Municipality, Narayan Municipality, Bheriganga Municipality,	Training to teachers on Multilingual education
JICA	Dailekh	Across the District	Teacher training

People in Need	Kalikot, Dailekh, Surkhet, Rukum west	Sanni Tribeni Rural Municipality, Barahatal Rural Municipality, Dungeshwor Rural Municipality, Narayan Municipality, Chaukune Rural Municipality, Simta Rural Municipality, Raskot Municipality	Support to develop education plan, SESP support, ReAL plan support, Support GEIN
Save the children	Kalikot, Dailekh, Jajarkot, Jumla	Chamunda Bindrasaini Municipality, Gurash Rural Municipality, Tatopani Rural Municipality, suvakalika Rural Municipality, Tilagupha Municipality, Chhegad Municipality, Kuse Rural Municipality	Wholistic approach of Education (ECD, BE, Teacher training, construction etc)
Plan international	Kalikot, Jumla, Dolpa	Raskot Municipality, Naraharinath Rural Municipality, Sannitribeni Rural Municipality, Kanakasundari Rural Municipality, Sinja Rural Municipality, Hima Rural Municipality, Jagadulla Rural Municipality	EiE, ECD, Basic education, construction, inclusive education
United Mission to Nepal (UMN)	Mugu	Mugum Karmarong Rural Municipality	Multilingual education
World vision International	Dailekh, Jajarkot, Jumla	Bhagawatimai Rural Municipality, Bheri Municipality, Tatopani RM, Tila RM, Patarashi RM, Guthichaur RM, Chandannath Municipality	EGR, School safety, PMEC, CVA, inclusive education, learning limitation, ECD, child protection, livelihood, sponsorship
Street Child	Jajarkot, Salyan, Surkhet	Shibalaya Rural Municipality, Chaukune Rural Municipality, Tribeni Rural Municipality, Kapurkot Rural Municipality	Support on ReAL plan, Teacher training
USAID EGL	Dailekh, Surkhet, Dolpa, Salyan	Naumule Rural Municipality, Thatikadh Rural Municipality, Bheriganga Municipality, Chaukune Rural Municipality, Darma Rural Municipality	Integrated Curriculum rollout, School grant support, SESP support.
USAID EiE	Dolpa, Kalikot, Jumla, Mugu, Salyan, Jajarkot, Rukum west,	64 Palikas out 79 Palikas of Karnali Province	EiE, teacher training

	Dolpa, Surkhet, Dailekh		
WFP	Jumla, Dailekh, Jajarkot	Chhedagad Municipality, Kuse Rural Municipality, Tatopani Rural Municipality, Narayan Municipality	EGR, Mid-day Meal
Karkhana Samuha Nepal	Surkhet	Birendranagar Municipality, Gurdakot Municipality, Panchapuri Municipality	
Swiss contacts	Dolpa, Kalikot, Jumla, Mugu, Salyan, Jajarkot, Rukum west, Dolpa, Surkhet, Dailekh	TEVT schools of Karnali Province	TEVT, Skill test, TEVT schools
Blinknow Foundation	Surkhet/Karnali province	Birendranagar	School education, vocational training, scholarship to orphan children.
Room to Read	Salyan	Sharada Municipality	Girls' education, literacy program.

3.6 Situation analysis – Inclusive education

The access of children with disabilities to quality education in Nepal has been on a declining trend. According to the 2019 EMIS Flash Report, 79,665 children with disabilities were enrolled in schools (Grades 1-12), but this number dropped to 29,455 in 2023.¹⁵ A similar situation is observed at the provincial level, including in Karnali Province and other provinces such as Madhesh and Sudurpashim. This decline suggests that children with disabilities may be pushed out of schools due to inadequate school capacities or that their enrolment numbers are being underreported. Additionally, there lack adequate and appropriate identification system at the local municipalities and schools. According the 2021 National Population and Housing Census¹⁶, there is an increase in the population of people with disabilities to 2.2%, compared to 1.9% a decade earlier. The contrast between these two data sets highlights the large number of children with disabilities who lack access to education in Nepal.

Nepal's education policies and plans acknowledge the rights of children with disabilities, but specific measures remain insufficient to ensure that most children with disabilities can access truly inclusive education. Current obligations are largely addressed through a 'segregated' or

¹⁵ CEHRD (2079 B.S). *School level educational statistics of Nepal: Consolidated report 2018/19 – 2022/23* (p.32 & 55).

¹⁶ Government of Nepal (2021). National population and housing census report. National Statistics Office.

special education approach¹⁷. The existing system includes 36 special schools, 12 schools for the blind and deaf, 380 integrated resource classes, and only 23 so-called inclusive schools (as of 2022). Among the resource classes, 46% are for deaf students, 32% for students with intellectual disabilities, and 22% for blind students.

Consultations with teachers from resource schools confirm that current teacher training programs do not adequately prepare teachers to support children with different types of disabilities in the classroom. Additionally, schools lack essential teaching aids and materials, such as sign language resources, braille tools, and audio-visual aids. Despite the existing 428 resource schools in Nepal, which serve children with disabilities, schools continue to lack the pedagogical knowledge and practices needed for an inclusive school environment. Furthermore, physical structures, including classrooms, toilets, and playgrounds, remain inaccessible to many children, especially those with disabilities.¹⁸

The CEHRD has a Division of Inclusive Education, which oversees the inclusive education sub-sector and integrates a gender perspective into education. While it has initiated training for teachers working with deaf students and students with visual impairments, significantly more training and support are required. The current 15-day training program is widely regarded as insufficient to adequately prepare teachers to support deaf students. There is an overall need to clarify several aspects: the availability of training materials, the extent of training conducted on disability-inclusive education, the number of teacher educators and teachers trained, and how these training programs are institutionalized within the system. Additionally, there is a need to establish a structured rollout of these programs through PETCs and LGs.

According to the LEU chiefs in Karnali Province, LEUs face significant resource and capacity gaps in mentoring teachers and providing effective guidance to local schools. While some LEUs have developed inclusive education plans, these plans are rarely implemented or monitored. Local municipalities also lack the capacity to offer teacher training in areas such as inclusive pedagogy, active learner-centred methods, and 21st century teaching skills. Additionally, the teacher performance assessment system is not linked to student learning outcomes at the PETC in Karnali.¹⁹ Most financial resources (90%) are allocated to teacher salaries, leaving little for improving schools' physical infrastructure or educational quality.

The Education Development Directorate of Karnali Province aims to create a girls- and disability-friendly environment in schools through the Girls and Inclusive Education Network (GIEN). However, due to limited resources, this initiative has not been effectively implemented in local schools.

¹⁷ Evaluation of Norway's Inclusion of Persons with Disabilities in Development Cooperation: Nepal case study.

¹⁸ TECSSES provides expert support in building the capacities of LEUs, head teachers, SMCs, and PTAs in inclusive education. In addition, TECSSES offers partial financial support to LEUs to employ pedagogical resource teachers, who will play key roles in strengthening teachers' skills in inclusive pedagogy.

¹⁹ Detailed analysis will be conducted in Madhesh and Sudurpaschim provinces in Autumn 2025

Nepal is committed to take steps towards a more inclusive education system. While there are only 23 inclusive schools targeting children with disability currently in Nepal, there is an ambitious goal to increase inclusive schools to 5%²⁰ of all schools. There is a need to move towards a comprehensive support system for inclusive education that enables regular schools and teachers to apply inclusive, gender-responsive and child-friendly practices. This requires strengthened efforts to support schools in inclusive education, including a strong and well-established teacher development program on inclusive education that can be scaled up, along with capacity development initiatives at the school level to support inclusive education implementation. The TESCSE project is well positioned to support inclusive education both through:

- a) Strengthening the implementation of inclusive education at the local level by supporting schools and LGs in planning, budgeting and supervision for inclusive education and through building teacher support systems and mentoring models including regular teacher learning circles and mentoring.
- b) Supporting CEHRD and PETCs to develop and roll out a comprehensive system wide teacher in-service programme on inclusive education for resource teachers and basic education teachers. **(Annex 10: Situation analysis on Inclusive education and TPD)**

²⁰ SESP (p. 76 and 164)

4. Critical issues and revision needs

The Project Document and Project Approach Paper outline potential risks and issues to be addressed during TECSES implementation. This section highlights the key programmatic risks and corresponding mitigation measures identified during the inception period.

4.1 Programmatic risks and their mitigation

- The Project Document aims to revise and update the existing B.Ed. and M.Ed. curricula of the participating universities' faculties of education. However, since the B.Ed. program lasts four years and the M.Ed. program two years, the revision process is expected to take a significant amount of time. This may require ongoing expert support, potentially exceeding TECSES's capacity to provide technical assistance.
 - **Mitigation:** TECSES suggests focusing on reviewing and recommending changes to the existing curricula.
- The Project Document outlines TECSES's support in developing a new three-semester postgraduate curriculum in inclusive education for teachers without an academic background in education. It also includes creating a three-semester curriculum for an Early Childhood Education Development (ECED) / Pre-Primary Education (PPE), and Primary Teacher Preparation Course (Diploma in Education) aligned with the Teachers' Competency Framework. However, developing and implementing new curricula is a long process that can take several years and requires full-time engagement.
 - **Mitigation:** TECSES suggests focusing on supporting the development of the Primary Teacher Education curriculum in cooperation with Tribhuvan and Mid-Western universities from the first year and with Madhesh University from the second year, while setting aside the development of the three-semester ECED/PPE curriculum. Additionally, TECSES will support the creation of a three-semester postgraduate curriculum in inclusive education.
- Regarding the harmonization of teacher education programs and policies, it remains unclear whether MoEST intends to develop a comprehensive national teacher competency framework or policy to replace all existing frameworks, or if it plans to update the content of current frameworks (Teacher Competency Framework by CEHRD, Teacher Professional Development Framework by CEHRD, Teacher Selection Competency Framework & Curriculum by TSC) and existing teacher education curricula and courses (B.Ed., M.Ed., and Diploma).
 - **Mitigation:** TECSES supports the agencies of MoEST to establish a joint committee for framework development with TECSES as a member.
- There is currently no system in place to harmonize teacher education programs. The development of the national Teacher Competency Framework is a lengthy process, and

it might not be available in time to guide the universities' curriculum development as needed.

- **Mitigation:** TECSES will focus on process-oriented activities, including a series of consultations, consensus building, and the approval process with participating universities. This will also require an analysis to estimate the time needed for these processes.
- The Karnali Province Ministry of Social Development (MoSD), Human Resource Development Centre, Provincial Education Training Center (PETC) and Education Development Directorate (EDD) has an aim to establish teacher education in-service support system which includes support to establishment of Digital Teacher Training Center at PETC and extending the capacity to 10 schools as a resource hub in the province. The system enables virtual teacher training sessions, allowing teachers to participate remotely from annexes at 10 schools. TECSES, as a Technical Assistance project, will train PETC trainers once the PETC establishes this system. The training will focus on building skills in digital teaching methods, operating the system, and facilitating virtual training sessions.
 - **Mitigation:** TECSES will provide capacity-building training to HRDC/PETC trainers to manage and effectively utilize the digital training center for in-service teacher training. Additionally, TECSES will provide expert support to the setup of digital and technological infrastructure at the basic level.
- Rural municipalities and municipalities currently lack the capacity to provide schools with pedagogical support. In most LEUs, the Education Unit Chief is focused on administrative tasks and is unable to offer guidance to teachers on pedagogy. Consultations highlighted the need to recruit a pedagogical resource teacher for LEUs, which should be included as part of the rural municipality's education plan.
 - **Mitigation:** The TECSES project aims to sign an MoU with the respective local governments and the MoSD in Karnali Province: TECSES will cover 60% salary of a Pedagogical Resource Teacher in the first year, 40% in the second year, and 25% in the third year. The respective rural municipalities will fund the remaining salary in the first, second and third years and have full responsibility for the salary from the fourth year onward. This approach supports the establishment of a sustainable system for Pedagogical Resource Teachers in local municipalities. The practicality of the modality will be further explored during the first part of the project's first activity year.
- Karnali Province recommended for the TECSES project to select at least 20 schools and 10 rural municipalities for piloting teacher education. However, the approved project document restricts the scope to 8 rural municipalities and 20 schools.

- **Mitigation:** TECSES accepts the advice of Karnali province officials to cover 10 rural municipalities and two schools in each municipality for modelling the teacher education program. Interventions showing positive results can be expanded to the remaining schools during the project's second and third years.
- The existing teacher education curriculum of universities, the Teacher Competency Framework, the Teacher Selection Curriculum, and the TPD framework are disintegrated and inconsistent, which hinders the harmonization of teacher education in Nepal.
 - **Mitigation:** TECSES supports establishing a coordinated mechanism between MOEST and universities for teacher education and facilitates the development or revision of the National Teacher Competency Framework. The National Teacher Competency Framework will help maintain the consistency of teacher education programs in Nepal.
- Consultations with participating universities revealed that Nepal lacks a comprehensive pre-service teacher education program for primary education, negatively impacting the quality of teaching in grades 1–3 and 4–8.
 - **Mitigation:** The TECSES project will collaborate with the University Grant Commission to promote the development of a unified framework for primary teacher education programs across all participating universities. This framework will ensure that the faculties of education at each university offer a standardized primary teacher education program at the master's, bachelor's, postgraduate, or diploma level.
 - TECSES proposes starting the revision of the existing B.Ed. and M.Ed. curricula, as well as developing new curricula for postgraduate and diploma programs in teacher education, in collaboration with Mid-Western University and Tribhuvan University during the project's first year in Karnali Province, and extend to Madhesh and Far West provinces

4.2 Contextual, Institutional and operational risks

The attached Risk Matrix lists the identified contextual, institutional, and operational risks, as well as their mitigation measures. It is important to note that these risks are often interconnected; resolving one often positively affects other areas of concern. **(Annex 11: Risk Matrix)**

4.3 Cross-cutting objectives and Human Rights-Based Approach

The TECSES project aims to ensure the Human Rights-Based Approach (HRBA) by upholding every child's right to have access to and participate within and throughout the education implemented on a high-quality level. To guarantee this right, education strategies and plans

will be reviewed and adjusted to promote equal access to education for all genders, regardless of their ethnicity, disability, economic status, or place of residence.

The right to education is enabled in structures (such as governance, frameworks, curricula), processes (such as teaching methods), and in outcomes (such as individual impact).

From TECSES's perspective, it is crucial to review frameworks defining teacher competences, teacher training curricula, teacher training practices, educational management and leadership, learning environments, teaching methods, materials, and other school-related activities. This review should determine whether they foster skills and attitudes that respect the human rights of all children, including those with disabilities, while promoting fundamental freedoms, cultural and linguistic diversity, respect for natural resources, tolerance, gender equity, and peaceful living.

Consequently, teacher training will be assessed to determine whether it equips teachers to promote human rights and to include different types of learners in classroom teaching. The right to education will be evaluated by reviewing and improving teacher training curricula to promote values such as tolerance, multiculturalism, gender equality, inclusion, friendship among diverse groups, and respect for the environment.

TECSES focuses on inclusiveness and gender equity in education as integral components of the HRBA and addresses them accordingly. This focus aligns with national documents in Nepal, such as SESP. SESP aims to develop mechanisms to ensure access and learning achievements for all students throughout their school education. As a teacher training project, TECSES focuses strengthening teachers' capacities to meet the needs of children with special needs and those from the poorest or most remote families and areas.

TECSES aims to strengthen the capacity of federal, provincial and local level agencies to incorporate aspects of inclusion and gender equality in their key implementation activities. MoEST agencies (CEHRD, CDC, ERO, TSC), the participating universities, and PETCs as well as LEUs are supported in capacity development to incorporate inclusion and gender perspectives in curricula, training course contents, pedagogy and teaching and learning materials.

TECSES aims to ensure that teacher education incorporates gender-sensitive learning activities, promotes safe school environments for girls, and strengthens teachers' ability to address gender-based abuse and violence systematically within schools. Additionally, TECSES aims to develop capacities of teacher trainers to educate teachers in teaching practices that equip students with the skills and confidence needed to actively participate in society, exercise their political and civic rights, maintain good health, and earn a living.

Hence, TECSES focuses on building teachers' capacities to use children's mother tongues for teaching in the early grades. To ensure the inclusion of the most vulnerable children TECSES

collaborates with other development partners to align school-based nutrition, health, and sanitation programs with the needs of the most vulnerable children.

5. Recommendations

Summarizing chapters one through four, TECSES proposes the following adjustments to the project document.

Changes in results chain and results framework

Based on feedback from the reviews of the Results Chain and Project Results Framework, along with the current context and stakeholder needs, the project team updated both documents. The updates also included lessons learned from field assessments and consultations.

Key performance and output indicators were revised to ensure alignment with SMART principles (Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Relevant, and Time-bound). However, the statements of Impact, Outcome, and Output, as well as the assumptions, remained unchanged.

Suggestion for programmatic adjustment

TECSES will be involved in reviewing several existing curricula and developing a new curriculum for primary teacher education. As creating a completely new curriculum requires a long-term commitment, TECSES suggests focusing on supporting the development of the primary teacher education curriculum in cooperation with the participating universities while postponing the development of the three-semester ECED/PPE curriculum. The postponement of the ECED/PPE curriculum will be further discussed with other development partners.

Adjustment in line management structure

In order to establish an effective project management system, TECSES recommends readjusting the human resource management structure to align closely with project activities through a line management system. Therefore, TECSES suggests that, in addition to the TECSES CTA, the Financial Manager and Provincial Coordinators take line manager roles; with finance and admin project staff reporting directly to the Finance Manager, and provincial PSU staff reporting directly to the Provincial Coordinators. PSU Kathmandu consolidates and finalizes all federal and provincial level reports and submits them to CTA for review and decision making.

Needs in resource allocations

As TECSES will be directly implementing project activities, often without third-party involvement, it suggests that, within available resources, a Project Implementation Coordinator be hired to ensure the timely coordination of project activities.²¹ Additionally,

²¹ This will be implemented only if the project budget allows it.

TECSES requires resources to establish efficient and effective procurement processes for all activities across all levels of project implementation. The project budget is annexed (**Annex 12: Budget 2025, Annex 13: Staff plan 2025**).

Fund flows

The TECSES project will sign a MoU with respective local governments and MoSD in Karnali Province. TECSES will cover 60% of the salary of a Pedagogical Resource Teacher in the first year, 40% in the second year, and 25% in the third year. The respective rural municipalities will fund the remaining salary in the first second and third years and take full responsibility for the salary from the fourth year onward. TECSES will provide the agreed payments to the local municipalities, which will in turn pay the salaries. This will be the only direct TECSES payment to the local municipalities during the project. The practicality of this support modality will be further explored during the first months of the project's first implementation year. As the costs of this activity are included in the project budget, major changes to the support modality may impact the project budget.

Procurement process

Procurement has been identified in Project Implementation Manual (PIM). In context to the project, referring to the procurement Act of Nepal, the project will follow the process described in PIM.

Representation in decision-making bodies

As a key partner in the TECSES consortium, FCA plays a vital role in providing advisory services and expertise throughout the project's implementation and coordination. Therefore, regular representation in the Steering Committee and Management Team meetings is essential. The FCA Nepal Country Director will serve as a member of the Steering Committee, while the Project Implementation Advisor for TECSES, who is fully deployed at the Project Support Unit (PSU) in Kathmandu, will be a member of the Management Team of TECSES, PSU Kathmandu

6. Annexes

Annex 1: TECSES Plan Inception phase

Annex 2: Report on Consultations of MoEST central level agencies

Annex 3: Report on Consultations of Universities

Annex 4: Report on consultations of provincial and local government agencies

Annex 5: Circulation letters from MoEST

Annex 6: Plan of short-term experts

Annex 7: Results Framework and M&E plan

Annex 8: Annual Activity Plan 2025

Annex 9: Output-wise activity detail

Annex 10: Situation analysis on Inclusive education and TPD

Annex 11: Risk Matrix

Annex 12: TECSES Budget - YR 2025

Annex 13: Staff plan 2025