1. Between November 27 to December 13, 2019, a Bank Team led by Jaya Sharma carried out the implementation review of the Integrated Platform for Gender Based Violence (GBV) for Prevention and Response Project (TF A2451). The main objectives of the review were to:

   (i) Assess progress against stated objectives and results indicators, challenges and issues related to the Project.
   (ii) Retrospect Project objectives and sustainability of results achieved.
   (iii) Prepare client for Project closure and meet the Project completion requirements.

2. The findings and agreed actions are described in the attached Aide-Mémoire (AM). The review findings and recommendations were discussed in a wrap-up meeting with the Secretary Mr. Dee endra Kafle and Project Management Team in the National Women Commission (NWC) on December 13, 2019. As discussed, and agreed at the meeting, this AM will be classified as a public document as per the World Bank’s Access to Information Policy.

3. NWC and the World Bank staff visited Nuwakot in Province 3 to monitor the progress on service referrals and the quality of services provided by service providers. The team also participated and observed the stakeholder consultation on GBV prevention and response with key partners such as the police, local governments, and district coordination committees including women’s networks and cooperatives.

4. The list of persons that the review team met is in Annex 2.

**OVERALL STATUS AND KEY PROJECT DATA**

5. Through restructuring in March 2019, the closing date was extended by 14 months to July 15, 2020. The Project Development Objective (PDO) is to raise awareness about and improve responses to GBV in Nepal through (i) improving the quality and reach of services for GBV survivors through a 24 hour toll-free helpline, “Khabar Garaun 1145” (Let them know); (ii) promoting greater awareness among key stakeholders; and (iii) strengthening the capacity of the National Women Commission (NWC).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Project Data</th>
<th>Project Performance Rating</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Approval Date</td>
<td>April 8, 2016</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Effectiveness Date</td>
<td>May 10, 2016</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Closing Date (Revised)</td>
<td>July 15, 2020</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total Grant Amount A 2451</td>
<td>USD 1.30 million</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Amount Disbursed (as of December 13, 2019) TF A2451</td>
<td>USD 875,126.33 (or 67.32%)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Ratings: HS= Highly Satisfactory, S= Satisfactory; MS= Moderately Satisfactory; MU= Moderately Unsatisfactory; U= Unsatisfactory; HU= Highly Unsatisfactory; NA= Not Applicable; NR= Not Rated

1 The team consisted of Hiska Noemi Reyes (Senior Social Development Specialist and Regional Gender Coordinator for SAR and part of the original team that started this initiative), Deepa Rai (Coordination and Communications Consultant), Timila Shrestha (Financial Management Specialist), Chandra Kishore Mishra (Procurement Specialist), Susan Scott (Consultant) and Kristi Maskey (Consultant).
6. The review team found that the Project is currently on track to meet its development objective. The most important achievement to date is the establishment of the GBV referral platform, including the first 24-hour GBV Helpline that provides an entry point for survivors seeking support services. The Helpline has provided 9,801 integrated services to 15,404 clients, well above the target articulated in the Results Framework. Information and referral services have been provided to 12,578 clients from across Nepal.

7. The review team identified areas that needed to be strengthened such as Central Management System (CMS), capacity building and outreach of helpline given the proximity of the Project closing date, reflect lessons learned, and incorporate suggestions from service providers and GBV partners in achieving the Project related outcomes by end of the closing date.

8. The review team reiterated the concern on the absence of NWC Commissioners for a prolonged time period as it has seriously impacted the implementation of the NWC Act including the activities under the Project.

**KEY POINTS DISCUSSED AND ACTIONS AGREED**

**Component 1: Operating and Expanding the GBV Helpline to Improve Access to Support Services for Survivors**

9. The Helpline is operational and has been playing an important role in providing GBV response service to the survivors. The review team met with the Helpline operators, case manager, legal officers, psychosocial counselors, and service providers - Civil Society Organizations (CSOs), and assessed Central Management System (CMS) operation. The review team confirmed that the CMS has been upgraded and changed as per its review in March 2019 and has improved functionality as a case management and a data management tool. The review team advised NWC and the CSO service providers that the CMS needs to be updated on a monthly basis as it helps in tracking the types of services provided as well as outcome data of these services. It was agreed that both NWC and the CSO service providers will be updating all pending data on CMS by January 7, 2020.

10. As agreed with the review team in March 2019, the vacant positions for Helpline Manager, Legal Officer, Monitoring and Evaluation Manager, Communications Manager, and Helpline Operator have been filled. The review team and the NWC Project team confirmed the need to provide orientation and capacity building trainings to the newly recruited staff members on helpline operation and related services as per the Standard Operating Procedures (SOP). It was agreed that the recently developed capacity building plan for the Helpline, and CMS team members by the Project will be operationalized and training completed by March 15, 2020. The plan focuses on strengthening the quality of response services provided for different kinds of survivors, and on the competency and quality of services provided by both NWC and service providers.

11. As agreed in the last review of March 2019, the SOP for the Helpline was revisited jointly by the NWC Project team and the Bank team. The review identified areas that need to be further developed and included in the SOP such as safety plans for survivors, protocols for dealing with clients threatening suicide, updating the scripts and checklist for operators and GBV sensitive mediation guidelines. It was agreed that the Helpline Manager take the lead in finalizing and operationalizing the revised SOP by January 15, 2020 and support in related trainings to helpline operators, case manager, psychosocial counselor, legal officer, and the service providers on the SOP by March 15, 2020.

12. The review team and NWC Project team discussed the importance of effective self-care measures for staff working with GBV survivors to ensure their mental health is not affected by ongoing contact with survivors of trauma. It was agreed that the training on additional stress-relieving activities will be carried out by March 15, 2020.

13. The CSOs are monitored by the NWC Project team on a quarterly basis. As per the most recent CSO monitoring report of September 2019 the performance of CSOs are satisfactory. The
review team noted that for sustained collaboration regular follow-ups, quarterly monitoring and capacity building training events need continuation. Considering the emerging need for additional mental health CSO services, the NWC Project team was recommended to explore partnership with a CSO with such expertise.

14. The Project developed online GBV service directory is linked with the CMS and contains around 450 services for GBV survivors in 77 districts across Nepal. The Helpline operators are responsible for updating the service directory on a regular basis. Services include shelter, psychosocial, health, legal, para-legal, mediation and child protection run by both Government and civil society organizations. To ensure the efficiency, effectiveness and quality of helpline the service directory needs updating on a monthly basis by the helpline operators.

15. The discussion with development partners stressed the need for urgent and deeper coordination among organizations working on GBV. Need for service mapping was identified to detect gaps as well as opportunities for future collaboration and sustainability of the Project.

Component 2: Preventing GBV through Public Dialogues and Awareness Campaigns across Nepal

16. In order to align with NWC’s mandate of public education and dialogue, the outreach and prevention part of the Project was expanded to focus on broader GBV initiatives, including public hearings and school-based awareness campaigns and province and municipal level consultations. However, the need to strategize and strengthen the activities to address out-of-reach communities both geographically and socially was felt by the review team; hence it was agreed that a more robust and targeted communication and outreach strategy for the remaining Project period will be developed and implemented. The existing communication materials under the Project will also be revisited for its relevancy, and as guided by the strategy, new materials on a need basis will be developed. The impact will be monitored and measured through increased number of cases accessing helpline and service referrals.

Component 3: Tracking Impact

17. Some data inconsistency in both internal and external reports was noted. The Project M&E Manager was reminded to take the lead in ensuring that the data at the NWC and data coming from service providers are consistent and well reflected in the fact sheet and annual reports of NWC.

18. The review team identified the need to carry out Helpline effectiveness assessment to ensure that the Project meets its development objectives as well as sustainability of the Project results. The need for an assessment was also raised by development partners in the meeting held on December 11, 2019. It was agreed between the review team and the NWC Project team that the study will commence by January 31, 2020.

19. The third-party Annual Monitoring Client Survey will be commissioned by the NWC by March 31, 2020. The survey will be instrumental in providing evidence on the quality of the helpline service as well as other referral services provided to the survivors. The survey will keep into consideration the confidentiality and survivor centered approach during the implementation of the survey.

Component 4: Project Management

20. The Project was successfully mainstreamed within the NWC’s new structure under four broad divisions and Project activities are being implemented under different divisions with full ownership. However, the capacity building of NWC staff on GBV sensitivity and responsiveness needs to be given priority considering the entry of staff members from various backgrounds. The Bank will provide technical support to NWC in delivering capacity building activities to the staff.

21. The need for improved GBV coordination with key agencies such as the police, Ministry of Health and Population, Ministry of Women, Children and Senior Citizen, local and provincial
governments was identified as crucial for scaling and sustainability of the Project. This is also needed to ensure smooth referral pathways and avoid duplication related to data management and service directory. The Project will continue to focus on collaboration to ensure effective links with key government and non-government GBV initiatives.

22. There are two police officers stationed at NWC during the day. However, the review team noted that the security concerns of the helpline operators during the night time were not met. There is a need for 24-hour security at the center as the Helpline operates 24/7.

23. The review team observed that out of the 10 Helpline operators’ positions, one has resigned and the other is on maternity leave. To ensure smooth operation of the Helpline, the current gap of two operators need to be filled at the earliest to manage the operation of the Helpline in a sustainable manner.

24. As agreed in the last review, the Project Grievance Redress Mechanism was drafted and shared with the Bank team. This is currently being reviewed by the Bank team.

25. The review team also felt the need for a separate supervised, child-friendly space within NWC premise while survivors are in consultations. Most survivors come with their children and are obliged to take them into these sessions. The sensitive subject matter discussed with survivors is not appropriate for their children, hence may further aggravate their trauma.

FIDUCIARY COMPLIANCE

26. Procurement Management: The review team has assessed procurement implementation status and found that among all 33 activities in approved procurement plan, 10 contracts are signed and implemented but 19 activities are pending implementation. Four activities among approved procurement activities are under implementation process status on the Bank’s online Systematic Tracking of Exchanges in Procurement (STEP) system. The team also found that a procurement expert has not been selected yet, as agreed in the last Aide-Mémoire of March 2019, therefore NWC was reminded to expedite the process of hiring by January 10, 2020.

27. The implementing agencies are required to update the procurement plan in the first week of each month and upload procurement documents i.e. bidding documents/request for proposal, evaluation report, contract documents etc. using STEP. A qualified procurement consultant should be selected to support the implementing agencies in procurement management by January 10, 2020. Procurement performance is rated as “Moderately Satisfactory”.

28. Financial Management: The team identified need for thorough review of contract terms and conditions to ensure compliance by the Project. It was noted that performance guarantees were not obtained as per contract. It has been agreed with the Project team to ensure all terms and conditions are met before making payments. It was also noted that some of the consulting contracts could be beneficiary contracts in nature. This needs to be clarified and if needed, contract changed accordingly.

29. The preliminary external audit report for FY19 has raised questions on one of the outputs, of making mobile app compatible for iOS, which has not been met. It was noted that this was agreed as not required. This basis needs to be substantiated with required documents to settle the audit observation. The auditors have also raised issues such as tax not deducted from payments on consulting, evidence of conducting skill development training not obtained, expenses incurred for training, seminar and interaction programs including office expenses (e.g. lunch and other allowances) not incurred in line with Operating Guidelines of the Government (while no standards developed for any deviations from such guidelines), outstanding advances not settled in time and other internal control issues.

30. Internal auditors have also reported similar observations. The Project team has agreed to settle the audit observations at the earliest. To support in establishing and maintaining effective controls system, it was also agreed to hire FM consultant no later than January 15, 2020. The review team has
been reminding the Project to ensure only reasonable operating expenses under the Project scope as defined in the Grant Agreement (as others will not be considered eligible).

31. The timeliness of the financial report needs to be improved. The Project team was reminded on external audit report due date of January 15, 2020.

32. The expenditures incurred by NWC for the Project for FY19 up to mid-December 2019 is NPR 7.14 million, which is only 10.2% of the total annual budget of NPR 70 million. The expenditures are expected to improve in the subsequent trimesters as momentum has gained in many of the planned activities, mostly related to advocacy and awareness-raising. Given the Project closing date of July 15, 2020, the NWC Project team was reminded that the expenditures incurred only by that date will be eligible.

33. **Disbursement:** Total disbursement as of December 13, 2019 was USD 875,126.33 including advance of USD 196,000 which is 67.32% of the total allocation of USD 1.30 million. It is projected that all the committed amount will be disbursed by the disbursement end date.

34. **Next Steps:** The review team and NWC Project team agreed that the next implementation review will take place in March 2020.

**Table 2: Summary of Agreed Actions**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>S. No.</th>
<th>Actions</th>
<th>Responsibility</th>
<th>Timeline</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.</td>
<td>CMS update of pending data by NWC and by the Project CSO partners</td>
<td>NWC</td>
<td>January 7, 2020</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.</td>
<td>Increase police attendance during night time at the Helpline centre to ensure security of the operators</td>
<td>NWC</td>
<td>January 7, 2020</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.</td>
<td>Hire a procurement specialist (outstanding action from March review)</td>
<td>NWC</td>
<td>January 10, 2020</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.</td>
<td>Operationalize the revised SOP</td>
<td>NWC</td>
<td>January 15, 2020</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.</td>
<td>Submit audit report for FY19</td>
<td>NWC</td>
<td>January 15, 2020</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6.</td>
<td>Develop a communications and outreach strategy of the Helpline and its services.</td>
<td>NWC</td>
<td>January 15, 2020</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7.</td>
<td>Hire a finance specialist</td>
<td>NWC</td>
<td>January 15, 2020</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8.</td>
<td>Hire two extra helpline operators from the existing NWC roster</td>
<td>NWC</td>
<td>January 30, 2020</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9.</td>
<td>Conduct Helpline Effectiveness Survey</td>
<td>WB</td>
<td>February 29, 2020</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10.</td>
<td>Organize capacity building trainings for Project staff on SOP, overall GBV sensitivity issues and self-care (for those working directly with GBV survivors)</td>
<td>NWC</td>
<td>March 15, 2020</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11.</td>
<td>Conduct Annual Monitoring Client Survey</td>
<td>NWC</td>
<td>March 30, 2020</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Annex 1
List of People Met

Ministry of Finance
Mr. Tek Bahadur Khatri, Under Secretary

National Women Commission
Mr. Deependra Kafle, Secretary
Ms. Laxmi Pandey, Under Secretary
Ms. Kalpana Khatiwada, Under Secretary, Legal Division
Mr. Prakash K.C, Finance Officer
Ms. Bimala Khadka, Case Manager
Ms. Palita Thapa, Technical Advisor
Ms. Parbati Subedi, Psychosocial Counselor
Ms. Bijaya KC, Helpline Manager
Mr. Sanjaya Dhakal, Monitoring and Evaluation Manager
Ms. Sachi Mulmi, Communications Manager
Ms. Urmila Roka, Legal Officer
Mr. Ram Sundar Sapkota, IT Officer
Ms. Bhawana Mainali, Helpline Operator
Ms. Durga Acharya, Helpline Operator

Development Partners
Ms. Lubna Baqi, Representative, UNFPA
Ms. Sudha Pant, Programme Officer, UNFPA
Ms. Ingrid Buli, Counsellor, Norwegian Embassy
Ms. Dagyn Mjos, Minister Counsellor, Norwegian Embassy
Mr. Mathew Knowles, Head of Development Cooperation, Australian Embassy
Ms. Kamakshi Yakthumba, Program Manager, Australian Embassy
Ms. Karuna Onta, Social Development Advisor, DFID Nepal
Ms. Mette Nielsen, Conflict and Peace Building Advisor, DFID Nepal
Ms. Sama Shrestha, UN Women
Ms. Petra Sigrist, Program Manager, SDC
Ms. Sarita Moktan, GESI Focal point, SDC
Ms. Sangita Yadav, Program Officer, SDC

NGOs
Ms. Uma Shah, President, SAATHI
Ms. Sapana Maharjan, Program Coordinator, SAATHI
Mr. Madhav Pradhan, President, CWIN
Ms. Sharada Rijal, Program Coordinator, CWIN
Mr. Bharat Adhikari, Program Manager, CWIN
Ms. Anita Neupane Thapaliya, Chairperson, LACC
Dr. Kamal Gautam, Executive Manager, TPO-Nepal
Ms. Rupa Rai, Psycho Social Counsellor, TPO-Nepal
Ms. Garima Pandey, Legal Advisor, TPO-Nepal
Mr. Suraj Koirala, Technical Advisor, TPO-Nepal
Ms. Ratna Maya Lama, Project Focal Person, TPO-Nepal
Mr. Pitambar Koirala, Program Coordinator, TPO-Nepal