

a productive future. Many participants stated that the sessions motivated them to be self-reliant and that these types of sessions were very important to bring positivity in one's life.

Agency based empowerment sessions and entrepreneurship and business management sessions complemented each other. The first enhanced participant's cognitive capacities to create and focus on goals while the latter imparted technical knowledge and skills. When participants realize their goals, they become more focused and participatory during the technical sessions.

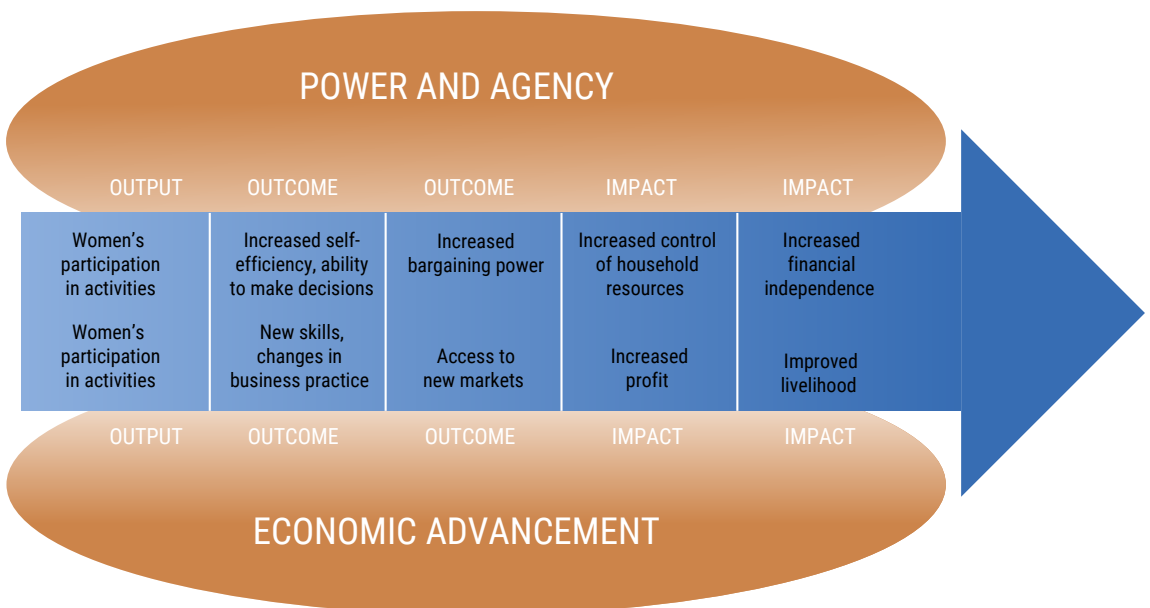
*'I left my small children at home to participate in this training. In the first two days of the training, I kept on worrying about my children and could not focus on the technical sessions. After the empowerment session, I realized I should also prioritize myself and this helps to take care of others. So, I started to focus on the training sessions'*

- Muna Nepali, Dhading

*'Previously, I did not entertain the customers who used to bring old clothes to repair. But now I handle my customers differently. I speak in a friendly tone, asking if they have clothes to repair. I repair and return them only after ironing. I even re-arranged the set-up of my tailoring shop to attract more customers. I am happy I have more customers now!'*

- Phool Maya Lama, Timal, Kavre

The figure below shows a matrix with indicators of power and agency on one side and economic advancement on the other. Both complement each other to enhance women's economic empowerment. It emphasizes that when women get trained and supported, as an



Framework to Measure Women's Economic Empowerment

immediate outcome, they have new skills, increased ability to make business decisions and then they adopt new business practice. Gradually they have increased bargaining power and can access new markets. They have increased business profits and confidence to control the profits and its investment on household necessity. As a result, women become economically empowered with improved livelihood and increased financial independence.

It takes considerable time for the final results to show up. The external factors, such as business environment, social and cultural factors determine the growth of women entrepreneurs. As immediate and intermediate outcomes of the project intervention, the entrepreneurs have started taking risks and making decisions. This resulted in setting-up new businesses or expanding existing ones, investing in business, taking loans, regularly maintaining a book of accounts, making growth in sales and registering their business with relevant government agencies.

In the project, both quantitative and qualitative methods are used to measure the final results, depending on what type of information is needed and feasible to collect.

**Baseline Survey:** A project's final achievements can be measured assessing the information gathered from the baseline survey and then comparing them with end-line information. Baseline information of all women entrepreneurs getting project support has been collected and assessed. The baseline information includes household income and its sources, business details (product, market, role in business, employment generation, yearly turnover, practice of keeping records), financial details (business investments and its source, loan status and its purpose), power and agency (voicing out opinions, making household and business decisions). The end-line survey will be conducted at the end of the project.

**Observation and verification:** Power and agency indicators, such as confidence and increased decision making, are highly qualitative. These are measured from the observations (compared with the first meet) and verifications with the family members, EUC members and the community people.

Similarly, the economic advancement indicators and changes such as record keeping, changes in business set-ups and decorations, and addition of new products are measured on the basis of field observations.

## Conclusion

The empowerment sessions enhanced the women entrepreneurs' cognitive capacities to create and focus on goals. In parallel to strengthening economic empowerment, enhancing leadership quality is equally important. The project has facilitated supported to develop leadership development of qualities in women entrepreneurs through regular counselling and cross learning opportunities only. However, it has been realized that it would be more effective to integrate these sessions on leadership qualities in the entrepreneurship and business management training package.