

EXCHANGE YEAR 2022!

CELEBRATING 120 YEARS SINCE STUDENTS FROM NEPAL TRAVELLED TO JAPAN FOR EDUCATIONAL PURPOSE.



Nepal has had friendly relationship with Japan for a long time. The diplomatic relations between Japan and Nepal was established in 1956. To further strengthen the alliance between the two countries Japan has been providing Official Development Assistance (ODA) programs in several sectors in Nepal to support its development. It has helped foster human resources, technology transfer and infrastructure development through various technical cooperation projects.

As part of its cooperation in the capacity-building segment, Japan supports in dispatching Nepalese students to Japan for further education courses such as masters, doctorate etc. So far, many Nepalese students have undertaken various courses, pursued degrees in various fields, and have benefitted immensely.

Mr. Ekai Kawaguchi was the first Japanese to visit Nepal. He had visited Nepal in 1899 at the age of 34 on the way to Tibet. The cultural ties between Nepal and Japan began from 1899 when people-to-people contact started. However, the history of Nepalese students in Japan dates back to 1902



Eight pioneer Nepalese students in Japan

when 8 Nepalese students went to Japan for study. Since then, Nepalese students started going to Japan for higher study.



When we think of Japan, we think of discipline, courteous nature, and hard work, innovative and advanced technology etc. Japan was able to grow economically and become a leading country in manufacturing precisely because of the advanced

knowledge and technology fostered by its excellent education system. Using its state-of-the-art science, technology and medicine, Japan has introduced many products to the world, including electric vehicles, digital cameras, optical fibers etc. The practice of transforming innovative ideas into creative products goes far back into Japanese history. Japanese schools focus not only on academic achievements but also on the development of human quality. This aspect of Japanese schools is highly appreciated by international students who think the studying experience in Japan helps them immensely after they start working.

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Mr. Nirmal Pariyar, Secretariat at the National Natural Resources and Fiscal Commission posing with other fellow Nepalese students in Japan. (former student of Graduate School of Governance Studies, Meiji University, Japan). (Top Centre)

Japanese universities are well reputed and world-renowned which is why any international student who gets an opportunity to study in Japan considers it a great achievement. Aside from the high-quality education system, the number of excellent universities, and the multiple opportunities after graduating, the biggest benefit of studying in Japan is getting to live in Japan. It's known as a good place to live providing conducive living environment with safe and secure infrastructures. Any foreigner living in Japan will tell you great things about living in the Land of the Rising Sun. Even

international students who feel anxious after leaving their home country can find some peace of mind while staying in Japan. Japanese people are known to be hardworking and attach importance to discipline. The attitude of caring for guests by giving them the highest priority is second nature to Japanese people, and thus international students are always welcomed warmly.

"I was able to make many friends from Japan and other countries, actively communicate, participate in lots of extracurricular activities, and enjoyed a full lifestyle."

"I was able to engage in fulfilling research activities surrounded by fantastic professors as exceptional guides and in an outstanding university environment!"
- Excerpt from a previous international student in Japan.

Studying in Japan has been quite a popular choice among many aspiring students who want to study abroad or overseas. The number of foreign students

from Nepal is increasing year after year, with approximately 18,500 Nepali foreign students coming to Japan in 2021 making it 3rd globally. The Japanese government has also been encouraging foreigners to seize opportunities in the country.

Japan is always known for its excellent quality of education. The country has appeared in the top-tier list of the best education system in the world for the past several years. Considering how great the education is in Japan, it will not be surprising to see them continue to be one of the world's best when it comes to the academics aspect.



Ms. Bidhya Pokhrel, Associate Program Manager, JICA Nepal office posing with her professors in Japan. (Former student in Ehime University, Japan).

HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT SCHOLARSHIP (JDS)

The Japanese Grant Aid for "The project for Human Resource Development Scholarship (JDS)" to Nepal began from 2016. Currently, JDS offers 20 seats for 2-year Master's degree and 2 seats for Doctoral degree for government officials of Nepal to study in renowned universities in Japan, with an objective to resolve development challenges in Nepal. The selected participants enhance their expertise in respective professional areas ranging widely from judicial sectors, economic policy, industrialization, to infrastructure, and develop broad network at the global level. The project enables the young leaders to catalyse development agenda back in Nepal.

Objectives of the JDS is to strengthen the government's administrative capacities in Nepal for the young and capable government employees who are expected to engage in formulating and implementing social and economic development plans and thus play leadership roles to contribute to the development of the country.

JDS has built its wide alumni network amounting to more than 80 JDS fellows across key ministries. JICA always have and always will aim to contribute to strengthening human resource in Nepal, which is indispensable for delivering better public services to the people.

This year, 2022, is the 120th anniversary of International Student Exchange between Nepal and Japan, and Japan celebrates this anniversary as one of "Japan-South Asia Exchange Year".

To commemorate the occasion JICA Nepal has produced a promotional video highlighting the experience of studying in Japan focusing on the implementation strategy applicable in workplace and the impact it has had on the career of various Nepalese individuals.

To view the video please click in the Youtube link below:
A Century of Education Study in Japan: Student Exchange Program Video - YouTube
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=GHTtAh0Nui8>

**- Ms. Brinda Singh
Public Relations Officer, JICA Nepal**

EFFECTIVE ON SITE TRAININGS UNDERTAKEN FOR WATER USERS GROUP



The training helped impart knowledge, skill and techniques on operation and maintenance procedure for effective service delivery via lectures, video presentation & on-site trainings method. Demonstration at site for preventive maintenance technique, identifying leakage, reading meter, keeping record as such proved helpful for WUSCs in practical learning.

The Project supports functionality improvement by capacity development of water utilities, which is the key factor for fulfilling the national Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) targets in water sector.

Water Supply Management Improvement Project (WASMIP) is a technical cooperation project for supporting Department of Water Supply and Sewerage Department (DWSSM) in developing technical and managerial capacity of Water Users and Sanitation Committees (WUSCs) for effective service delivery.

As part of the project activities, basic onsite training to 42 members of 16 semi urban WUSCs was held in Morang District from January 5 to 9, 2022. So far, 68 semi urban WUSCs from 13 districts have benefitted from this Project.



IMPROVING HAND HYGIENE BEHAVIORS IN SCHOOLS & HEALTH CARE FACILITIES

JICA has been continuously supporting the development of the water, sanitation and hygiene (WASH) sector of Nepal. As a response to the recent outbreak of COVID-19, and realizing the importance of hand hygiene, JICA initiated activity to improve WASH sector, especially on hygiene behaviour improvement in Nepal via emergency project research approach.

The Project Research aims to conduct pilot activities in three countries viz.

Nepal, Tanzania and Madagascar. In Nepal, pilot activities are concentrated in 15 schools and 15 health care facilities of Siraha district. The project targets three outputs viz. improvement of WASH infrastructure in selected schools and HCFs, promotion of hygiene centric behaviour and evidence based learning document on hygiene centric behaviour.

As part of the Project activities, three days creative workshop was conducted from 2-4 March 2022 in Kathmandu following the National Launch of the Project. Representatives from Ministry of Health & population (MoHP), Ministry of Water Supply (MOWS), three municipalities of Siraha district and JICA Nepal attended the Project Launch event organized by Water Aid Nepal, implementing agency of the Project.

DISSEMINATION ON ASSESSMENT OF VULNERABILITY OF FORESTRY AND WATERSHED SECTOR IN CLIMATE CHANGE



Field Observation

Climate Change is a real phenomenon and local communities of Nepal are witnessing it in their daily lives. Nepal ranks fourth in the global climate risk index 2019 and calls for urgent mitigation and adaptation measures to deal with impacts of climate change.

Under Urban environment program of JICA Nepal, climate change is one of the prioritized sector for the development assistance. Upon request of Ministry of Forest and Environment JICA is formalizing technical cooperation program on

climate change adaptation through sustainable forest management in Gandaki province, one of the highly vulnerable areas listed under Climate change.

To facilitate the program design as well as to fill in the data gap, JICA Nepal conducted Assessment of Vulnerability of Forestry and Watershed sector to climate change and identification of mitigation and adaptation measures for sustainable forest and water shed management in Gandaki Province of Nepal. Dissemination and

validation of the assessment findings was presented to key stakeholders of the province

ranging from province ministry of environment, Pokhara metro-politan city, DFOs, DSSCOs, agricultural and irrigation offices and academia on 20 February in support of Climate Change Management Division of MOFE and Provincial Ministry of Forest and Environment.

Some of the key highlights of the findings are Vulnerability mapping of all 11 districts of the province in terms of climate change, major four triggers of climate induced disaster in forestry sector viz. forest fire, soil erosion, invasive species, pest and pathogens. The results will further be utilized for designing future climate change related projects.



Household Survey

IMPROVING ACCESS TO CLEAN AND SAFE WATER IN BIRATNAGAR

The Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA) signed a grant agreement with the Government of Nepal on March 10, 2022, to provide grant aid of up to 2.541 billion yen for "The Project for the Improvement of Water Supply in Biratnagar."

The project intends to upgrade and expand water supply facilities in the Biratnagar Metropolitan City contributing to the development of social and economic infrastructure.

Despite being the densely populated industrial city and the capital of Province

1, the city lacks adequate and potable water supply largely due to low quantity of water and dilapidated pipelines. The project envisions to ensure adequate access to safe water for around 100,000 people in Biratnagar City by constructing and upgrading facilities like water treatment plants, clear water reservoirs, distribution main pipelines to name a few.

In addition, serving as a countermeasure against infectious diseases, including COVID-19, this Project aims to contribute not only to the achievement of SDGs Goal 6 (clean water and sanitation) but also to Goal 3 (good health and well-being).

The signing marks another step of consistent support of Japanese assistance to the Government of Nepal in water supply sector, one of the fundamental sectors for socio economic development.



Planning Site for Constructing the Water Treatment Plant

JICA in History (Between 2010-2016)

COMMUNITY ACCESS BRIDGES IN SINDHULIMADI !



Jirgha bridge

Altogether 3 bridges Dhamile (50.8m), Bessare (21.7m) and Jirgha (70.8m) were constructed on the Sindhulimadi Bhimsthan Road in Sindhuli District by the Department of Local Infrastructure Development and Agricultural Roads (Now Department of Local Infrastructure) under the Japanese Grant Aid Project "The Project for the Improvement of Community Access in Nepal" from 2010 to 2016 as a token of friendship between Nepal and Japan.



Dhamile bridge



Bessare bridge

As per the information from the local people, the accessibility of the North-Eastern part of the Sindhuli District, namely Bhimsthan, Chakmake and other areas adjoining the Udaypur district has not been disrupted even during rainy season due to the three bridges. It has facilitated for providing efficient services to the commuters thereby contributing to the improvement of local accessibility, economic development and service delivery.

MR. OKUBO AKIMITSU HAS BEEN ASSIGNED AS THE NEW CHIEF REPRESENTATIVE OF JICA NEPAL OFFICE



Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA) appoints Mr. OKUBO Akimitsu as its new Chief Representative for JICA Nepal Office.

Mr. Okubo took over Ms. ASAKUMA Yumiko on February 15, 2022 after the completion of her tenure in Nepal. Prior to this assignment Mr. Okubo was working

as the Senior Representative of JICA Nepal Office since Aug 2021. He began his career in JICA from 1998, mainly working in the governance sector handling international cooperation.

He particularly contributed as the Director of Law and Justice Team of Governance Group of JICA headquarters in Tokyo (2014-2018) and was responsible in formulation and management of legal projects not only in Nepal but also many other nations, including Vietnam, Cambodia, Myanmar, and West African countries. On the other hand, in order to raise awareness of legal cooperation in the public, he took the initiative in editing a publication, "Legal Cooperation in Japanese Style," in 2017. He also served as Director of Legal Affairs

Division in the headquarters of JICA in Tokyo before coming to Nepal.

Mr. Okubo holds a bachelor's degree of law from the University of Tokyo (1993) and a master's degree of law from Cornell Law School (2005).

Mr. Okubo is privileged to lead JICA Nepal Office as its new Chief Representative and expressed his commitment in providing continued support to the people of Nepal and its government together with colleagues of JICA Nepal Office in enhancing development and prosperity in Nepal by realizing JICA's vision "Leading the World with Trust".

JICA HANDS OVER BOOKS FOR JAPANESE STUDY DONATED BY THE NIPPON FOUNDATION TO CENTRE FOR NEPAL AND ASIAN STUDIES (CNAS), TRIBHUVAN UNIVERSITY

On March 2, 2022, JICA handed over books for Japanese study donated by the Nippon Foundation to Centre for Nepal and Asian Studies (CNAS), Tribhuvan University. The handover ceremony was held at CNAS, Tribhuvan University and the books were handed over from Mr. OKUBO Akimitsu, Chief Representative and Ms. ASAKUMA Yumiko, former Chief Representative of JICA Nepal office to Dr. Mrigendra Bahadur Karki, Executive Director of CNAS.

At the handover ceremony, Ms. ASAKUMA explained, "This is one of activities of JICA program for Japanese studies, what we call JICA Chair. It offers an opportunity to study Japanese studies that explore Japan's modernization and

development cooperation in light of its historical and cultural background."

Mr. OKUBO said, "We hope that these books share Japanese experiences and lessons learned through its modernization, as well as expand opportunities of such Japanese studies in Nepal".

Dr. Karki expressed, "We appreciate JICA's initiative. These books definitely benefit us. Japan achieved modernization and economic development, but at the same time, kept Japanese tradition. We have to learn from Japan a lot."

This year, 2022 is the 120th anniversary of International Student Exchange between Nepal and Japan and Japan

celebrates this anniversary as one of "Japan-South Asia Exchange Year". This handover ceremony was also organized as one of events under "Japan-South Asia Exchange Year".



Mr. OKUBO, Chief Representative and Ms. ASAKUMA, former Chief Representative of JICA Nepal office handed over the list of books to Dr. Karki, Executive Director of Centre for Nepal and Asian Studies (CNAS), Tribhuvan University

GOVERNMENT OF NEPAL AND JICA SIGNED A JPY 10 BILLION LOAN AGREEMENT TO BUILD RESILIENT SOCIETY

On January 25, 2022, the Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA) signed a loan agreement with the Government of Nepal in Kathmandu to provide Japanese ODA loan of up to JPY 10 billion (equivalent to NPR 10.39 billion) for the Policy Loan for Economic Growth and Resilience. The agreement was signed with the condition of 40 years repayment and 10 years grace period with 0.01 % interest annually.

The Exchange of Notes regarding the assistance was signed between Mr. Madhu Kumar Marasini, Secretary, Ministry of Finance on behalf of the Government of Nepal (GON) and His Excellency Mr. KIKUTA Yutaka, Ambassador of Japan to Nepal on

behalf of the Government of Japan (GOJ) in their respective offices. Similarly, the Loan Agreement was signed between Mr. Iswori Prasad Aryal, Joint Secretary, International Economic Cooperation Coordination Division (IECCD), Ministry of Finance on behalf of GON and Ms. ASAKUMA Yumiko, Chief Representative (former) of JICA Nepal Office on behalf of JICA in their respective workplaces.

The objective of the Policy Loan is to support GON in reforming economic and financial policies and institutions, and strengthening domestic industrial base and social security for the poor and vulnerable by providing financial support. This Policy Loan will contribute to the achievement of SDGs Goals 1

(No poverty), 8 (Decent work and economic growth), and 10 (Reduced inequalities).

The Policy Loan is the first ODA Loan to be approved in six years for Nepal after Nagdhunga Tunnel Construction Project, and this is the first Program Loan provided to the country by JICA. To increase the effectiveness, the Policy Loan is co-financing with the World Bank (WB)'s 150 Million USD Policy Lending signed on June 27, 2021. In addition, JICA has provided technical assistance to promote foreign direct investment to Nepal. This Policy Loan aims for synergies with the technical assistance to give momentum to improve an environment to invite foreign investment.

ZENNANCHO-BUILDING CAPACITY OF A HARD OF HEARING ASSOCIATION THROUGH DEVELOPING A HOSPITAL WITH ACCESSIBLE COMMUNICATION

JICA's partner NGO, All Japan Association of Hard of Hearing and Late-Deafened People (ZENNANCHO), has launched the new project "Pilot Project of Accessible Communication Support for Hard of Hearing Patients in Kathmandu Hospital" under the JICA Partnership Program (JPP).

According to the Census 2011, 79,307 people of the population in Nepal have

the Hard of Hearing due to disease or accident. Such people do not seem as like those with other disabilities in terms of physical appearance, so it is difficult for them to have proper attention and face verbal communication in public facilities such as hospitals. This project aims to establish a communication support model for both patients and hospital staff at Tribhuvan University Teaching Hospital (TUTH)'s Department

of Ear, Nose and Throat (ENT) so that such patients can communicate with hospital staff in a barrier-free manner.

ZENNANCHO will implement this project in collaboration with the Nepali NGO, "National Association of Hard of Hearing and Deafened Nepal (SHRUTI)". The period of the project is January 2022 – December 2024.

7 YEARS GONE BY AND JICA STILL STANDS FIRM WITH THE CONSISTENT GOAL OF "BUILD BACK BETTER" IN NEPAL



An elderly woman gladly posing for the cameras with her newly reconstructed house built with support from JICA in Gorkha.

On April 25, 2015, Nepal experienced severe earthquake with 7.8 magnitude with its epicenter in Gorkha District. Subsequent aftershocks caused extensive damage, including nearly 9,000 casualties and more than 700,000 collapsed houses.

On the 7th anniversary of Gorkha Earthquake JICA would like to express condolences for the people who lost their lives in the earthquake and offer heartfelt sympathy for those affected by the disaster.

JICA also recalls its associations with the Government of Nepal and Nepali people throughout the reconstruction journey.

Since the earthquake, JICA has been supporting in the reconstruction of schools, houses, roads, hospitals, and other public infrastructure, as well as providing technical assistance for the reconstruction of cultural heritage sites.

Now, seven years after the Nepal earthquake, JICA's reconstruction assistance has gradually shifted its focus from earthquake reconstruction to disaster risk reduction, and is being transferred to several projects that will help build disaster-resilient communities and prepare for future disasters. We are convinced that more investment in long-term disaster risk reduction and strengthening the resilience of the country as a whole is the way forward for Nepal's long-term development as well.

SHINSHU UNIVERSITY-STRENGTHENING AGRICULTURAL EDUCATION IN HIGHER SECONDARY SCHOOLS IN NEPAL



Shinshu University's Faculty of Agriculture with Nagano Prefecture has launched the new project "Strengthen agriculture education in secondary school in Nepal" under the JICA Partnership Program (JPP). This project is Phase 2 after following "Project on Enhancement of Agricultural Education in Higher Secondary School" for 2016-2018.

Government of Nepal's policy has been promoting agricultural education in rural areas and established 99 agricultural secondary schools. Taking geographical advantage from Terai - Hill - Mountain, agricultural products in Nepal have many varieties such as Mango, Citrus, Apple, Rice, Buckwheat, etc. However, the educational structure and the human teaching materials are insufficient, and educational curricula and teaching methods have yet to materialize.

This project will enhance practical agricultural education system, including teaching methods and materials, by incorporating regional agricultural environments through three model schools: Kobang Secondary School

(Mustang), Banepa Secondary School (Kavre) and Ratnanagar Secondary School (Chitwan).

Shinshu University's Faculty of Agriculture will implement this project with the Nepali NGO, "AST Foundation". Period of the project is February 2022 – February 2025.



INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE ON NEPAL'S RECONSTRUCTION



BACKGROUND, INTRODUCTION AND OBJECTIVE OF ICNR

The National Reconstruction Authority (NRA) led the reconstruction and recovery work after the devastating 2015 Gorkha Nepal Earthquake. Six years after the earthquake, most of the reconstruction work has been completed and the NRA's tenure was about to end. In this context, from 7th to 10th December 2021, the NRA organized the International Conference on Nepal's Reconstruction (ICNR-2021) to share experiences on Nepal's recovery and reconstruction and to set a platform to move towards a resilient Nepal. Various participants, including researchers, academics, practitioners, international and bilateral development partners, federal, provincial and local government leaders, shared knowledge and contributed to the knowledge on disaster risk management in thematic sessions.

JICA'S EQ RECOVERY WORKS

JICA's post-earthquake assistance focused on the rehabilitation and reconstruction of public infrastructure such as rural housing, schools and hospitals, based on the principle of Build Back Better (BBB) and sharing knowledge, experience and technology of Japan. In school reconstruction, JICA is supporting to construct 274 disaster resilient schools, of which 235 have already been completed. In housing reconstruction, the need to directly involve communities in the success of the project was recognized, and JICA implemented a Community Mobilization Program that resulted in the reconstruction of around 85,000 earthquake resilient houses. JICA has supported 27 different Quick Impact Projects (QIPs) contributed in addressing urgent needs along with large-scale projects such as the reconstruction of the Bir Hospital and the Paropakar Maternity Hospitals in Kathmandu. JICA has also been supporting Government of Nepal (GoN) in restoration of cultural heritage and livelihood recovery.

JICA'S PARTICIPATION IN ICNR

Against this background, to share the experiences of JICA's assistance and lesson learned from various projects, Government of Japan and JICA was invited in various session of the ICNR. At the opening ceremony, His Excellency, Mr. HONDA Taro, Parliamentarian Vice-Minister congratulated the GoN and the NRA for organizing the ICNR. He also highlighted the importance of the BBB principle followed by JICA for its support. In the thematic session of private housing, Mr. MIYANO Tomoki presented experiences and lesson learnt from the project. Similarly, Mr. NAGAMI Kozo presented on the 'Practical approaches to BBB' based on the experience of JICA supported housing reconstruction program. In the thematic session on Public Building and Infrastructure, Mr. Krishna Lamsal discussed experiences and lessons learned from JICA financed Emergency School Reconstruction Project. Senior Representative Mr. EHARA Yoshiki was invited to provide his remarks in the Round Table Discussion "Moving towards resilience: Nepal Disaster Resilience Framework".

Chief Representative Ms. ASAKUMA Yumiko illustrated JICA's support in reconstruction and recovery in the Round Table Discussion on donor's perspective in reconstruction. At the closing ceremony, Ms. Asakuma shared a Japanese proverb "Disaster occurs when everyone forgets it". She stressed the importance of continuing to be mindful and prepare for earthquakes remembering the lessons from the 2015 Gorkha Nepal Earthquake. She reaffirmed that JICA will continue its cooperation to build disaster resilient Nepal.


OVERALL TAKEAWAY FROM ICNR


The event increased a better understanding of earthquake risks amongst different stakeholders through interactions with relevant experts. The ICNR concluded with the conference declaration and the commitment of stakeholders to build a resilient Nepal.




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