

## REVITALIZING AGRICULTURE IN NEPAL'S TERAI PLAIN: A MODEL FOR SUSTAINABLE IRRIGATION MANAGEMENT

In the fertile plains of Nepal's Terai region, agriculture is more than just an occupation—it's a lifeline. With approximately two-thirds of the population engaged in farming, agriculture contributes 25% to the nation's GDP. However, challenges such as poverty and food insecurity persist, especially 20.27% of the population in Nepal lives below the poverty line according to the Nepal Living Standards Survey (NLSS) 2022/23 who rely heavily on agricultural income. To combat these issues, the Nepalese government, in partnership with the Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA), has embarked on the Project for Promotion of Irrigated Agriculture in the Terai Plain, aiming to create a sustainable model for irrigation management and agricultural productivity.

### THE TERAI PLAIN: A BREADBASKET WITH POTENTIAL

The Terai Plain, stretching from east to west in southern Nepal, is blessed with rich soil and ample water resources. It represents 53% of the total cultivated area and 81% of the irrigated land in the country. The region produces significant proportions of national crops—70% of rice, 58% of wheat, and 59% of vegetables. Enhancing agricultural productivity in this area is crucial not only for local farmers but also for national food security, as these products are vital to both southern and northern regions of Nepal.

Despite the Terai's agricultural potential, effective irrigation management remains a challenge. The Nepalese government has invested in irrigation infrastructure for years, supported by various donors. However, issues such as the operation and maintenance of irrigation facilities, equitable water distribution, and low farmer incomes continue to hinder progress. A lack of technical capacity within water user associations (WUAs) further complicates effective water management.

Commenced in February 2019 and set to conclude by February 2025, the "Promotion of Irrigated Agriculture (PIAT)"

project is a collaborative initiative involving federal, provincial, and local governments, along with Water User Associations (WUAs). The project's primary goals are to improve irrigation infrastructure, promote sustainable agricultural practices, and enhance water management across the region. One of its key components focuses on the operation and maintenance of irrigation facilities, particularly within the Kankai irrigation scheme, to ensure equitable water distribution and efficient upkeep. In addition, the project targets on-farm development and the promotion of market-oriented agriculture by working with selected secondary canals in four local governments within Jhapa district. This effort aims to enhance agricultural productivity and introduce modern farming techniques to local farmers. Another significant aspect of the project is the preparation and dissemination of best practices for irrigated agriculture. By documenting its experiences, the project seeks to create a model that can be shared with other irrigation systems across Nepal's Terai region, helping to improve agricultural productivity and water management on a broader scale.



*An improved condition of water distribution from main canal of Kankai Irrigation System.*

Since the project's inception, significant progress has been made. A comprehensive Water Distribution Plan has been prepared and implemented, resulting in increased farmer's income and technical capacity. Most field channels have been constructed, and facility maintenance plans are in place. Guidelines and manuals for irrigated agriculture are under development, ensuring that the knowledge gained is shared with various stakeholders and other irrigation systems throughout Nepal.

One of the project's major innovations has been shifting mindsets for promoting market-oriented agriculture. Traditionally, farmers in the Terai have followed a "grow and sell" approach, producing crops without considering market demand. The project encourages a shift to "grow to sell," where farmers conduct market surveys to determine what crops are in demand, allowing them to tailor their production accordingly. This approach not only ensures fair prices for their products but also enables farmers to cover irrigation service fees, contributing to the sustainability of irrigation facilities.

A key factor in the success of the PIAT project has been the seamless coordination among the different tiers of government—federal, provincial, and local. Each level plays a critical role, ensuring that the project runs smoothly and effectively. The federal government holds the overall responsibility for project management and facilitates the necessary resources, guiding the project on a national level. At the provincial level, the government is responsible for the day-to-day management, overseeing the implementation and allocation of financial resources. Local governments, meanwhile, play a crucial role in the direct implementation of agricultural components, working closely with local communities to carry out project activities and manage the budgeting for specific initiatives. This multi-tiered coordination ensures that each aspect of the project is handled efficiently, with all stakeholders contributing to its success. Further, this project proved that all the stakeholders come together if we formulate a project to address common issues. This collaborative framework has proven effective in mobilizing human and financial resources, ensuring the project's objectives are met efficiently.

The project has created a strong emphasis on replicating the developed model across other irrigation systems in Nepal. The Nepalese government acknowledges its responsibility to disseminate these best practices, and continued technical support from JICA is sought to facilitate this replication. By creating comprehensive guidelines and manuals for irrigated agriculture, the project lays the groundwork for similar initiatives nationwide.

JICA has played a vital role in supporting Nepal's agricultural development, having previously contributed to various irrigation projects. With a commitment to expanding its cooperation, JICA's involvement encompasses both hardware (infrastructure) and software (capacity building and training) aspects of irrigation development. Potential areas for future collaboration include the expansion, rehabilitation, and modernization of irrigation systems, ensuring that agriculture continues to thrive as a key industry in Nepal.

The Project for Promotion of Irrigated Agriculture in the Terai Plain is a significant step towards revitalizing Nepal's agricultural sector. By addressing irrigation challenges and promoting sustainable practices, the project not only enhances the livelihoods of farmers but also contributes to national food security. As stakeholders work together to implement and replicate this model, the hope is to create a resilient agricultural landscape that can withstand future challenges and ensure prosperity for generations to come.

## Key Achievements of JICA's PIAT Project for Irrigated Agriculture in Terai Plains

The PIAT project organized a seminar in January 2025 to share its achievements and progress. The event highlighted key accomplishments and unveiled guidelines and manuals for replicating the project's successful model in other areas.

The project's expected output was:

1. Equitable and efficient water distribution system is established at the Kankai irrigation scheme. Income and technical capacity of farmers in target scheme are increased through the practice of market-oriented agriculture.
2. The Activity Execution Cooperation System for improvement of irrigated agriculture among stakeholders of Kankai Irrigation Scheme is established, and the results of the cooperation activities are diffused to other irrigation schemes in Terai area through the training.

Some project achievements in figures:

1. Increase of annual Irrigated area by 37 %
2. Increase of Income of farmers through practice of Market oriented agriculture by 266% in model sites
3. 93% of target farmers prepared business plan in model sites

It is expected the government of Nepal will replicate the Irrigated Agriculture Model that developed by the project to other irrigation system in Nepal to improve irrigation systems and to promote the market-oriented agriculture in Terai.

### Beneficiaries Voices:

*"I worked with TCP-PIAT experts for almost 3 years. Since then, my service delivery approach has changed. I have learnt that providing opportunities for farmers to undertake market survey, meet and interact with other successful farmers and understand market needs and demands is very important."* – Ms. Bhima Rai, Junior Technician, Agriculture Development Section, Gauriganj Rural Municipality.

*"Being involved with TCP-PIAT our group is exposed to market oriented commercial agriculture. We are confident about increasing our income from farming and fulfill the needs of our families."* – Ms. Goma Devi Parajuli, Chairman, Indreni Mahila Krishak Samuha, Gauriganj Rural Municipality ward no. 1.

In the long run, PIAT aims to stabilize Nepal's food supply, boost farm competitiveness, and support the country's economic growth.

## Brief News

## STRENGTHENING MARKET-ORIENTED AGRICULTURE IN GANDAKI PROVINCE: JICA LAUNCHES NEW PROJECT TO PROMOTE HIGH VALUE PRODUCTS IN GANDAKI

On July 7, 2025, a significant milestone was achieved with the signing of the Record of Discussion for JICA's new technical cooperation project: "The Promotion of High Value Products through the SHEP Approach in Gandaki Province (GANDAKI-SHEP)." This 3.5-year initiative, led by the Ministry of Agriculture and Livestock Development (MoALD) at federal level and Ministry of Agriculture, Land Management and Cooperatives (MoALMC) at province level aims to empower smallholder farmers in Kaski, Tanahun, Lamjung and Gorkha districts in Gandaki by enhancing market-oriented agricultural services.

The project's goal is to promote high value agricultural products by adopting the SHEP approach, which emphasizes participatory and market-driven extension services. Upon completion, more farmer groups will benefit from enhanced extension support, and government staff will be better equipped with technical knowledge and skills. Additionally,

the Provincial Ministry plans to integrate SHEP into its annual programs, ensuring sustainability.

Building on the successes of previous JICA projects in Sindhuli corridor and Koshi province, which laid the foundation for market-oriented agriculture in Nepal, Gandaki-SHEP promises to further boost agricultural development in the region. JICA is proud to continue supporting Nepal's journey toward sustainable, market-driven agriculture.

## SHEP BACKGROUND

The SHEP approach, which stands for "Smallholder Horticulture Empowerment & Promotion," is a strategic framework that emphasizes market-oriented agricultural extension services. By implementing this approach, we aim to empower smallholder farmers and agricultural communities, enabling them to produce and distribute high-value products effectively.



## JICA EXTENDS SCHOLARSHIP FOR GOVERNMENTAL OFFICIALS THROUGH GRANT ASSISTANCE IN “THE PROJECT FOR HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT SCHOLARSHIP (JDS)”

Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA) and the Government of Nepal (GoN) have signed the Grant Agreement for “The Project for Human Resource Development Scholarship (JDS)” for Fiscal Year 2025. The agreement, valued at 572 million Japanese Yen (JPY 572,000,000), was signed on July 09, 2025, reaffirming the commitment of both governments for enhancing the capacity of Nepal's civil service through advanced education. Government of Japan (GoJ) has been providing this scholarship continuously since 2016.

The Exchange of Notes regarding the assistance was signed by Mr. Ghanashyam Upadhaya, Secretary, Ministry of Finance on behalf of the GoN and His Excellency Mr. MAEDA Toru, Ambassador of Japan to Nepal on behalf of the GoJ. Similarly, the Grant Agreement was signed by Mr. Dhani Ram Sharma, Joint Secretary, International Economic Cooperation Coordination Division (IECCD), Ministry of Finance on behalf of GoN and Mr. MATSUZAKI Mizuki, Chief Representative of JICA Nepal Office.

Each year, the scholarship offers 20 seats for two-year master's degree course (since 2016) and 2 seats for three-year Doctoral

level course (since 2019) to in the reputed universities of Japan. These scholarships enable participants to study at prestigious Japanese universities, enhancing their expertise in fields such as judiciary, economic policy etc., while also expanding their global professional networks. Since 2016, 209 civil servants have been awarded scholarship through the JDS Grant Aid program with 163 having returned to Nepal to contribute to their communities and strengthen the JDS alumni network.

The JDS program aims to bolster the administrative capacities of young and promising civil servants with advanced skills to become future leaders. They are expected to contribute significantly to Nepal's social and economic development in the new federal structure by actively engaging in national policy formulation and implementation of social and economic development policies when they complete the program and return to their home country.

During the occasion, Mr. MATSUZAKI Mizuki, Chief Representative of JICA Nepal Office, emphasized JICA's commitment to strengthen human resource in Nepal.

## ACADEMIC ADVENTURES AWAIT: 22 JDS FELLOWS DEPART FOR JAPAN

On August 15, 2025, a group of 22 JDS fellows embarked on an exciting journey to Japan to commence their academic studies at some of the most esteemed universities in Japan. This cohort, consisting of 20 master's students and 2 doctoral students, has undergone extensive preparation for their academic pursuits. In addition to their studies, they will act as goodwill ambassadors, fostering strong ties between Japan and their home country.

Prior to their departure, a pre-departure orientation was held on July 21. Representatives from the Embassy of Japan, the Ministry of Finance, JICA Nepal Office, Japan Alumni Association Nepal (JAAN), and JDS Alumni Association Nepal (JDSAAN) provided valuable insights into life in Japan, Japan's support for Nepal, and the roles the fellows can play upon their return.

A special courtesy visit to the Ministry of Federal Affairs and General Administration (MoFAGA) offered additional guidance, highlighting the significance of embracing Japanese work

culture. The send-off party at the Japanese Ambassador's residence was a memorable event, filled with well wishes and marking the culmination of their preparation.

*We extend our best wishes to all JDS fellows for a successful and enriching experience in Japan !*



JDS fellows upon their arrival in Japan

## REGIONAL TRAINING PROGRAM ON ACCOUNTING WORK HELD AT JICA NEPAL OFFICE

From June 26 to 27, 2025, the JICA Nepal Office proudly hosted a Regional Training Program on Accounting Work, bringing together almost 20 finance and accounting professionals from 8 JICA overseas offices—Bhutan, India, Kyrgyz Republic, Mongolia, Sri Lanka, Pakistan, Bangladesh, and Nepal.

The training was led by experienced professionals from JICA's finance team from Japan and Thailand.

The 2-day session aimed to enhance financial operations and align accounting practices across JICA offices on topics such as daily accounting procedures, coordination with agencies and inspection teams, system operations during fiscal transition, reporting etc. Participants left the program with enhanced clarity on their individual roles and responsibilities, a better understanding of accounting workflows, and improved coordination across country offices. This training program will result in more streamlined and consistent financial management practices across the region.

This training program exemplified JICA's commitment to continuous improvement and collaboration, ensuring that all offices are equipped with the knowledge and tools necessary to excel in their accounting responsibilities. We thank all the participants and trainers for their active engagement and look forward to applying these learnings for better financial governance.



## ADDRESSING TRAFFIC CONGESTION AND ROAD SAFETY IN KATHMANDU

Traffic congestion during morning and evening rush hours has become a daily challenge in Kathmandu. With the city's population growing rapidly, it has become increasingly important to address traffic congestion and promote road safety.

As per the request from the Government of Nepal, JICA initiated a technical cooperation project titled "The Project for Introduction of Urban Transport Management in Kathmandu Valley" in February 2022 primarily for tackling these issues. This project focused on developing a comprehensive urban transport management plan — particularly for road traffic — and included efforts such as improving intersections, optimizing traffic signal operations, and conducting traffic safety awareness campaigns.

intersection improvement guidelines for the broader Kathmandu metropolitan area, providing a roadmap for future urban mobility projects.

Overall, the project marked a positive shift toward safer and more efficient urban transport in Kathmandu.

"The Project for Introduction of Urban Transport Management in Kathmandu Valley" worked in coordination with Ministry of Physical Infrastructure and Transport, Department of Roads, Department of Transport Management and other important stakeholders like the Kathmandu Valley Development Authority, Kathmandu Valley Traffic Police office, Municipalities in Kathmandu Valley for assisting to enhance capacity for planning, coordination, and implementation of urban transport policy and to support the development of urban transport network aligned with urban planning.

The project commenced in February 2022 and completed in August 2025.

### Key highlights of the seminar included:

- ▶ Pilot Projects in Naya Baneshwor and Lainchaur: Improvements at these intersections resulted in significant behavioral changes among both pedestrians and drivers. These changes contributed to reduced congestion and enhanced road safety.
- ▶ Traffic Simulation in Gaushala: A demonstration of simulated traffic flows further illustrated the effectiveness of the interventions.
- ▶ Guidelines for the Future: The seminar also introduced

## ENHANCING NEPAL'S WATER FUTURE: JICA'S STRATEGIC WORKSHOP AND KEY INSIGHTS

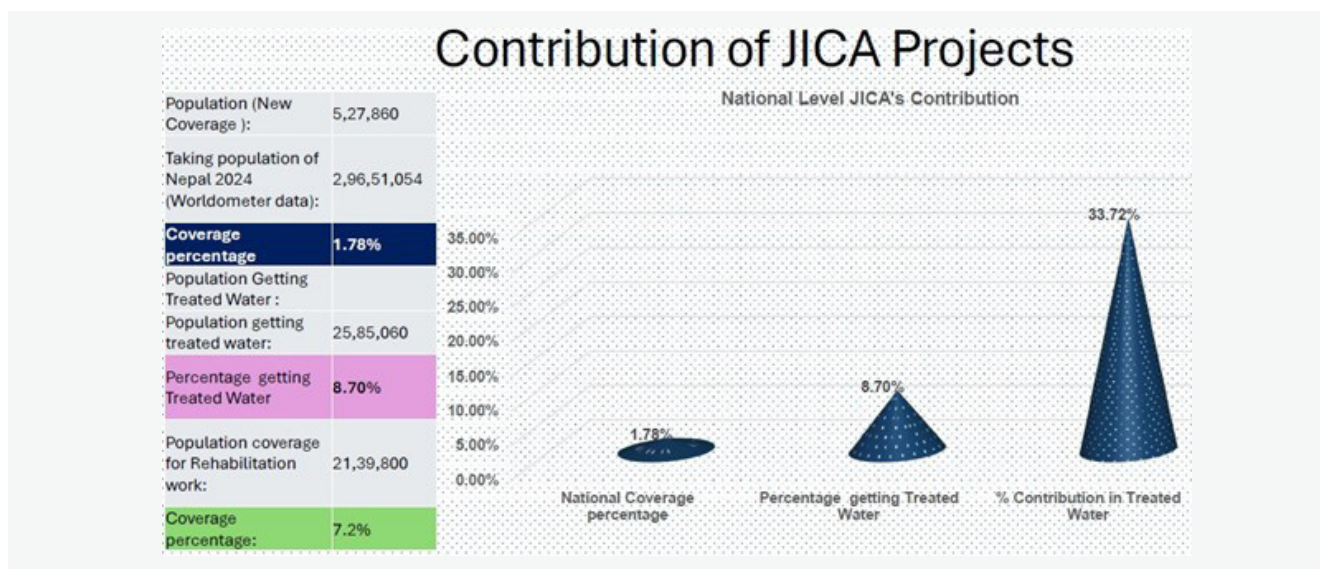
JICA held a Dissemination Workshop on July 11, 2025, to share findings from a survey assessing the functionality of major water supply facilities supported under Japanese Official Development Assistance (ODA). The workshop provided a platform to discuss key findings, propose improvement plans for urban water supply systems, and reflect on lessons learned to enhance future interventions in Nepal's water supply sector.

The improvement plan derived from the survey is expected to be utilized by the respective counterpart agency to ensure effective functioning of the urban water supply systems constructed under JICA assistance.

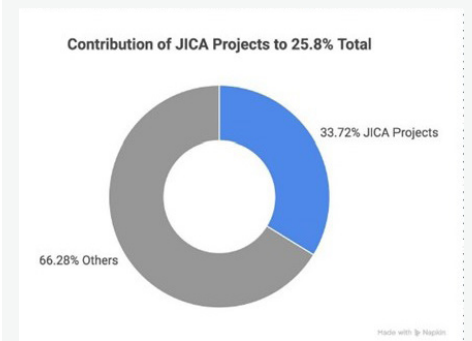
The survey also highlights the significant impact of JICA's contributions to Nepal's water supply sector since last five decades. Through JICA-supported projects,

- ▶ Approximately 2,585,060 people now have access to treated water, representing 8.7% of the population receiving such services.
- ▶ Notably, JICA contributed 33.72% of the total treated water available, underscoring their vital role in enhancing water accessibility.

Since the 1970s, JICA has maintained a strong partnership with Nepal, focusing on financial investment in urban water supply projects. Notable projects include the Melamchi Water Supply Project, the recently completed Pokhara Water Supply Improvement Project, and the ongoing Biratnagar Water Supply Improvement Project, to name a major few. Each investment is complemented by technical cooperation programs aimed at strengthening institutional capacity and service delivery efficiency.



**JICA contributes 33.72% of the total treated water available.**





## FIVE BRIDGES OF RESILIENCE AND FRIENDSHIP IN GORKHA (2015-2018)



Ghatte River Bridge



Rangrung River Bridge

In a significant step toward rebuilding earthquake-affected infrastructure, JICA Nepal supported construction of five bridges along the Barhakilo-Barpak road in Gorkha, near the epicenter of the devastating 2015 earthquake.

These bridges were built under Japanese grant assistance as part of a broader initiative for infrastructure reconstruction and rehabilitation. Among them, three pre-stressed concrete (PC) bridges—the Daraudi Khola Bridge, Ghatte Khola Bridge, and Rangrung Khola Bridge—were completed in July 2018 through the subproject titled “Bridge Construction along Barhakilo-Barpak Road.” This subproject, with a total investment of 930 million JPY, was one of three under the umbrella grant program “Rehabilitation and Recovery from Nepal

Earthquake.” Its goal was to ensure reliable, all-season access to the northern part of Gorkha District, accelerating reconstruction and recovery efforts.

In addition to the PC bridges, two reinforced concrete (RC) bridges—the Khahare Khola Bridge and Jhyalla Khola Bridge—were constructed under a separate JICA technical cooperation initiative, “The Project on Rehabilitation and Recovery from Nepal Earthquake.”

Completed in 2018, these five bridges have significantly improved year-round connectivity for local communities, enabling safer and more convenient access to markets, cities, and public services. Their impact has been transformative, fostering

economic activity and enhancing the quality of life in northern Gorkha.

This initiative reflects JICA’s enduring commitment to Nepal’s post-earthquake recovery, guided by the Build Back Better (BBB) principle. Beyond immediate reconstruction, the bridges have become catalysts for long-term sustainable development, bringing new energy, resources, and opportunities to the region.

Locals affectionately refer to these structures as “Japanese bridges,” recognizing not only their practical value but also the deep friendship between Nepal and Japan. These bridges stand as enduring symbols of resilience, cooperation, and hope for the future.

S.N	Name	Address
1	Khahare Khola Bridge	Siranchowk Rural Municipality
2	Jhayalla Khola Bridge	Ajirkot Rural Municipality
3	Daraudi Khola Bridge	Ajirkot Rural Municipality and Barpak -Sulikot Rural Municipality
4	Ghatte Khola Bridge	Ajirkot Rural Municipality
5	Rangrung Khola Bridge	Barpak-Sulikot Rural Municipality

## FROM SCHOOLS TO COMMUNITIES: SUSTAINING DISASTER PREPAREDNESS IN KATHMANDU



The Japanese non-profit organization Plus Arts has successfully concluded the JICA Partnership Program (JPP) titled “Promote School Club Activities on Disaster Risk

Reduction” by mid-August 2025. The closing event was attended by Mr. Matsuzaki Mizuki, Chief Representative of JICA Nepal Office. Since 2017, Plus Arts has

been implementing this initiative in Nepal, culminating in the completion of Phase III. The program’s activities were centered at the Mitra Disaster Risk Reduction Learning Center in Lalitpur Municipality, where has DRR education experts and offers various DRR training program.

In this project, Nepali teachers had developed innovative disaster education materials designed to be engaging and game-like, leading to the establishment of disaster clubs in over 50 schools within the Kathmandu Valley. Beyond the school clubs, students actively participated in community events to share their disaster knowledge and expertise. Although the JPP has officially concluded, the activities will be continued by each school and community, in collaboration with the Municipality.

## JAPANESE TEACHERS EXPLORE NEPAL: A JOURNEY OF CULTURAL EXCHANGE AND LEARNING

From July 28 to August 8, 2025, JICA Nepal Office and JICA Chubu Center hosted an overseas educational tour for nine schoolteachers from Aichi, Gifu, and Shizuoka prefectures. This unique program allowed participants to visit JICA project sites, engage with local NGOs and Japanese language institutes and experience Nepalese culture through homestays and teaching opportunities at local schools.

With a growing number of Nepalese residents in the Tokai region, there is increasing interest in multicultural coexistence and international understanding in education. The participating teachers were eager to creatively integrate their experiences from Nepal into their classrooms back in Japan. Daily reflections facilitated by a professional helped deepen their learning.

Upon their return, these teachers are expected to apply their insights in their schools. A public report meeting, “Development Education and International Understanding Education Practice Report Forum,” will be held on February 22, 2026, at the JICA Chubu Center to showcase their classroom implementations.





# CAPACITY DEVELOPMENT STRATEGIES AND RECENT ACTIVITIES UNDER THE PROJECT FOR CLIMATE CHANGE ADAPTATION THROUGH SUSTAINABLE FOREST MANAGEMENT IN NEPAL (CASFOM)

## 1. Background

Nepal faces increasing threats from climate-induced disasters such as floods, landslides, forest fires, and worsening urban air pollution. The 2019 National Adaptation Plan (NAP) predicts more extreme weather, threatening agriculture and rural livelihoods. To address these challenges, the Ministry of Forests and Environment (MOFE) has developed various climate-related frameworks and policies. However, the implementation of these policies, particularly at the provincial and local levels, remains limited due to institutional, financial, and technical capacity constraints.

In response, the JICA-funded Technical Cooperation Project, “Climate Change Adaptation through Sustainable Forest Management in Nepal (CASFOM)” was launched to enhance the institutional capacity of government entities at both federal and provincial levels responsible for promoting climate change adaption (CCA) through sustainable forest management (SFM).

This project has two main components. Component 1 focuses on activities at the federal level to promote the implementation of forest management and adaptation policies by revising and updating key policy tools such as guidelines. In parallel, CASFOM supports the Forest Research and Training Center (FRTC) under MoFE in developing or updating training modules and materials, while also strengthening its institutional capacity to accelerate the implementation of CCA policies.

Component 2, on the other hand, focuses on activities at the provincial and field levels to implement climate change adaptation (CCA) practices. This component aims to create a forest-based CCA model based on good practices and lessons learned through the implementation of pilot activities with target CFUGs in Parbat, Syangja, and Tanahun districts of Gandaki province and to develop the capacity of concerned provincial government officials who are responsible for promoting such CCA measures and of the target CFUG members.

As part of both components, capacity development interventions play a central role. These interventions are designed to equip participating government officials and stakeholders with updated theoretical and practical knowledge on forest-based climate adaptation including mitigation. The training also fosters understanding of policy-practice gaps and promotes collaboration between federal and provincial levels to accelerate the effective implementation of climate-related policies within forestry administration.

## 2. Recent Activities

### A) Training Curriculum and Manual Development on Climate Change Adaptation and Mitigation

The Training Curriculum on Climate Change Adaptation and Mitigation, developed by CASFOM in collaboration with FRTC, RIC, and CCMD, consists of seven modules and twenty-four sessions. Based on this Training Curriculum and Manual, FRTC organized a seven-day long training program to the officials at federal level by applying technical lectures, group discussions, and interactive methods. As part of the learning process, participants undertook a field visit to Melamchi area in Sindhupalchok, a flood-affected area, to observe practical adaptation and mitigation interventions implemented by Practical Action and Melamchi Municipality under a USAID-supported project.

## Second Event of Third Country Training in India



### The Training Participants along with Officials with JICA Forestry Project at Himachal during the Third Country Training in India on Feb 2025

The Third Country Training in India was held from 16 to 25 February 2025, involving 9 participants (3 from federal and 6 from provincial levels), accompanied by an

Associate Program Manager from JICA Nepal and the Project Coordinator. The training aimed to enhance knowledge on sustainable forest management, soil

and water conservation, human-monkey conflict mitigation techniques, forest fire management, and forest-based livelihoods. Participants visited Delhi and Himachal Pradesh, observing on-the-ground practices under the JICA Forestry Project in Shimla and Sunder Nagar. The participants developed individual and collective action plans based on daily reflections. The training outcomes were shared in India with officials from the Ministry of External Affairs, Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change, Japanese Embassy, and JICA India. A dissemination was held in Nepal on 25 February, with participation from MOFE, JICA Nepal, CASFOM, FRTC, and other key stakeholders, both in person and online. The participants well acknowledged the training program for its usefulness and effective coordination.

### C) Training for Provincial Officials including DFOs and SWMOs GESI Training under Component 2

Based on the Gender Action Plan (GAP) of Component 2, a GESI Task Force (TF) has been established at the provincial level in December 2023. TF members consist of officials from MoFE Gandaki Province, Forest Directorate, and relevant Divisional Forest Offices (DFOs) & Soil and Water Management Offices (SWMOs). The TF members are expected to guide other officials in incorporating a GESI perspective in all project activities of Component 2. To this end, the GAP includes a series of training programs focused on gender analysis and gender mainstreaming for the TF members.

As part of this, a four-day gender analysis training program was held for the TF members in February 2025. The training consisted of lectures on the first two days,

fieldwork on the third day, and discussions and action-plan preparation based on the fieldwork results on the final day. Through lectures, the TF members learned about gender analysis tools and how to use them, as well as how to plan and conduct fieldwork. They followed their own plans to conduct a focus group interview (FGI) with a mix group of women and men involved in the project's income generation (IG) activities at each target site. The theme of the FGIs conducted was the extent to which women involved in the IG activities exercise their decision-making power.

Based on key findings from the FGIs, the TF members discussed and analyzed what kinds of interventions are necessary to improve the weakness of women and men found. It was found that many of the

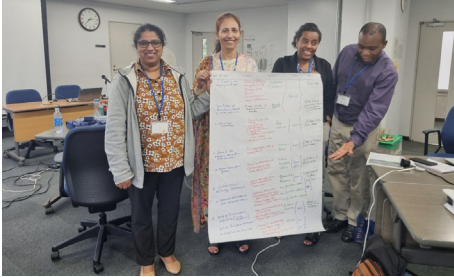
women made their own decisions about participating in the IG activities, attended training sessions, and were actively involved in the activities. However, it was also found that when problems arise, women tend to depend on men (their husbands or sons) and are often unable to resolve a problem on their own. Another critical finding was that many of the women and men did not have strong business enthusiasm or basic entrepreneurial skills such as financial management. Thus, the TF members discussed the need for supplementary technical training, entrepreneurship training, and study tours to enhance the problem solving and entrepreneurship skills of women (and men). Concrete plans for these activities were decided to be drawn up in April and May 2025.

### 3. Future activities

The project has now already reached the halfway point. The learning and experience gained through various types of training programs has played an important role in translating theoretical knowledge into real practice. We will continue to work on sustainable follow-up and integration of learning outcomes into an organizational framework in order to sustain and maximize the effects of capacity building, such as training, over the long term.

# HIGHLIGHTS FROM "ERADICATING SEXUAL AND GENDER BASED VIOLENCE PROGRAM 2024"

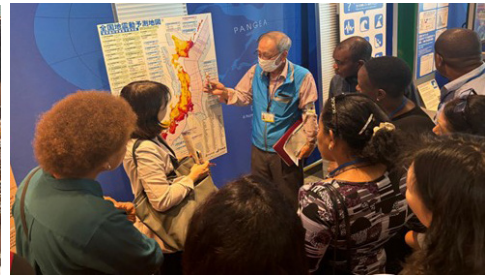
## Fighting Gender-Based Violence: A Journey of Learning and Leadership in Japan



Action Plan Preparation group work



Tour of Disaster Reduction and Human Renovation Institution



Gender Equality Promotion Center Hyogo, Kobe

-Manta Bisht  
Undersecretary (CWDO)  
JICA Training Participant

*"Domestic violence is not an individual problem, it is a social problem. Let's create good society together"*

*These quotes, among many were shared throughout the training, served as constant reminders that the fight against SGBV is both urgent and deeply personal.*

As Section Chief of the Gender-Based Violence (GBV) Elimination Section at Nepal's Ministry of Women, Children and Senior Citizens, I've spent years working to address the complex and pervasive issue of Sexual and Gender-Based Violence (SGBV). In September 2024, I had the opportunity to participate in a transformative training program in Japan, organized by JICA and the National Women's Education Center (NVEC). This experience not only deepened my professional expertise but also reshaped my personal commitment to the cause. The program, held from September 23 to October 12, brought together participants from 14 countries, each contributing unique perspectives and experiences. The training focused on enhancing our ability to prevent violence, protect survivors, and rehabilitate both victims and perpetrators through a survivor-centered, gender-sensitive, and multi-sectoral approach.

We explored Japan's advanced systems, including one-stop support centers,

women's shelters, and perpetrator counseling programs. These models offered practical insights that I believe can be adapted to Nepal's context to strengthen our GBV response mechanisms. I gained valuable skills in assessing social norms, collecting and analyzing gender-disaggregated data, and training frontline workers such as police officers and social workers. I also learned about emerging challenges like digital sexual violence and how to address them effectively.

The training emphasized not just theoretical knowledge, but also empathy and active listening. Visiting various implementing agencies—government offices, NGOs, and crisis centers—reinforced the importance of compassion in our work. Sessions highlighted the roles of healthcare workers, lawyers, and community leaders in responding to SGBV, reminding us that every sector has a shared responsibility to speak up, support survivors, and create safer spaces.

I particularly appreciated the practical tools we were given, such as safety planning, referral systems, and survivor-centered interviewing techniques. These resources will directly enhance the effectiveness, sustainability, and survivor-focused nature of my future projects. I am now more committed than ever to advocacy work, policy reform, and strengthening multi-sectoral collaboration in Nepal.

Cultural experiences in Japan also played a vital role in shaping my understanding. We

learned that cultural sensitivity is essential when developing SGBV strategies. Respecting local values while adopting international best practices ensures that interventions are both relevant and sustainable.

One of the most memorable moments was hearing from a survivor and activist who shared her powerful story. Her courage and resilience reminded us why this work matters. Another standout experience was learning about Japan's multilingual hotline counseling services, which even support tourists—an inspiring example of inclusive care.

Beyond formal learning, the program fostered deep connections among participants. Through shared stories and peer-to-peer exchanges, we built a global network of professionals committed to ending SGBV. These relationships continue to be a source of collaboration, advice, and encouragement.

This training reaffirmed a fundamental truth: combating SGBV is not the responsibility of one sector alone. It requires coordinated action across healthcare, law enforcement, education, legal systems, and communities. The journey was not just educational—it was deeply practical and profoundly human.

I return to Nepal with renewed purpose, equipped with global insights and actionable strategies. Together, we can build a society where dignity, safety, and equality are not aspirations—but realities.



## 55 YEARS OF JICA VOLUNTEERS IN NEPAL: "STORIES OF SUPPORT, SERVICE & SOLIDARITY"

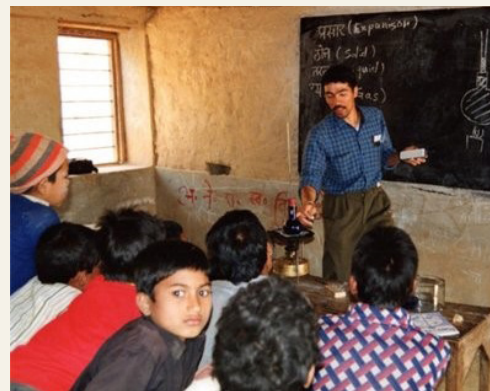
### **Mr. HANDA Yoshio, Japanese Overseas Cooperation Volunteer (JOCV).**

Service Period: July 1991 – July 1993 in Shree Bagh Bhairav Secondary School, Thokarpa, Sindhupalchowk.

Mr. HANDA Yoshio served as a JOCV at Shree Bagh Bhairav Secondary School in Thokarpa, Sindhupalchowk from July 1991 to July 1993. As a Science and Mathematics teacher, he introduced Japanese teaching methodologies, enriching the educational experience for his students. He was moved by the challenges faced by Pahari caste students, who often left school to support their families in agriculture.

To address this, Mr. Handa collaborated with local teachers to conduct nighttime literacy classes during the dry season, aiming to reduce dropout rates and improve their lives. In his second year, he contributed to curriculum development at Sanothimi in Bhaktapur while continuing to conduct literacy classes which were spread to neighboring villages as well. He had been visiting Thokarpa and other villages on weekends, despite difficult travel conditions.

After returning to Japan, Mr. Handa launched NGO named "DIYO Forum" with villagers in Nepal, providing literacy classes, vocational training, and support for the disabled to generate income, leaving a lasting impact on the community. More than three decades later, the positive impact of this initiative continues to resonate within the community, reflecting the enduring commitment and compassion of JICA volunteers like Mr. Handa. His work stands as a testament to how dedicated efforts can foster lasting change and hope.



Mr. Handa at Shree Bagh Bhairav Secondary School in Sindhupalchowk during 1991.



Mr. Handa at a School in Sindhupalchowk at present

### **Ms. ENOMOTO Miki, Japanese Overseas Cooperation Volunteer (JOCV).**



Service Period: July 2023 – July 2025 at JICA Alumni Association of JICA, working site: Lele

Lele, a village accessible from Kathmandu, is home to diverse migrant farmers who rent land to cultivate vegetables. As a JICA volunteer, I spent two years in Lele, returning to Japan in July 2025.

My journey began with exploring the mountainous terrain, engaging with villagers, and sharing meals of seasonal vegetables and rice (Dal-bhat). Through these interactions, I learned about their daily lives, cultural practices, and challenges, particularly family issues and the financial strain of children's education.

After six months, I collaborated with local farmers to grow Japanese cucumbers and melons as cash crops. Given Nepal's geographical challenges and fluctuating vegetable prices, we aimed to stabilize sales by connecting with a reliable market in Kathmandu. This strategy proved somewhat successful, allowing farmers to plan their crops more strategically.

Beyond agriculture, I engaged in agrotourism, introduced Japanese culture in schools, and participated in local festivals. I'm grateful for Lele's warm hospitality and hope its rich culture and traditions endure amid Nepal's rapid modernization.

## WELCOMING 7 NEW JICA VOLUNTEERS TO NEPAL.

On 26 August 2025 JICA Nepal welcomed 7 new JICA volunteers to Nepal.

Their arrival marks the beginning of exciting, innovative projects focused on sustainable development and enriching everyday lives. After completing their local language training in Kathmandu, the volunteers will be dispatched to their respective host organizations, where they'll begin their journey alongside Nepali counterparts.

Over the past 55 years, 1,464 volunteers have contributed to Nepal's development—and the journey continues!



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