

JICA Nepal Office



Nama Raj Adhikari

Associate Program Manager

Nama Raj Adhikari joined the JICA Nepal Office in 2012 as an officer in charge of local governance and community development. He also oversees the Agriculture and Rural Development sector. He is a graduate of the Sociology Department of Tribhuvan University of Nepal, where he majored in gender studies and project management.

Adhikari heads a project that integrates the Nepalese government's Gender Equality and Social Inclusion (GESI) Policy into local planning. The project known as the Gender Mainstreaming and Social Inclusion Project (GeMSIP) was implemented in two districts: Syangja, 240 km west of capital Kathmandu, and Morang, 530 km east of the capital. When the government developed the GESI Policy, it asked all local governments to allocate 35% of their budget to implementing it; however, only a small number of local governments did so effectively.

GeMSIP has increased the participation of women and marginalized people in local planning, which has ultimately helped secure a budget for the GESI policy. Local political leaders, most of whom are men, have also begun to recognize that women can contribute to local development.

Adhikari also leads a community mediation project for access to justice, which seeks to resolve local disputes by using community mediators. Such a

project is crucially important in a country that is as multi-cultural, multi-lingual, and geographically diverse as Nepal, with people of different castes and ethnic groups living together. This project has helped maintain social harmony and peace and many women and marginalized people feel proud to be actively involved in resolving local disputes as community mediators. The government has also recognized community mediation as an important function of the local government. Adhikari said, "Of course, it was difficult to change people's mindsets. However, social mobilization is the right way to motivate people to involve women in development. Regular participation in mediation and monitoring from different stakeholders is crucial to sustain the project's achievements." Adhikari added, "Gender mainstreaming is a concern that cuts across all of our issues, and I will seek to integrate GESI into all current and future projects."

Nepal has committed to graduating from its status as a least-developed country by 2022 and to becoming a middle-income country by 2030. To do so, the achievement of Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) is crucial. So, Adhikari said, "JICA's cooperation should contribute to achieving the major SDGs by strengthening local governments, which are the true frontline service providers in Nepal's governance system."