

‘One Nation, a Culture of Cultures, and One Economy’: JICA’s Support for State Building continues



Nepal is engaged in a democratization process after a decade-long conflict. The economic recovery has been slow but stable. On the other hand, still facing the highest poverty rate in Asia, it is evident that Nepal requires a solid strategy for a steady economic growth and development. As a continued support to Nepal’s effort in the state building process, the Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA) implemented its third dialogue program on ‘Nepal State Building, Economic Growth and Development Strategy’ on January 25 in Kathmandu. The previous ones were held in Japan and Vietnam in 2009 and 2010. The main objective of the seminar was to provide thought provoking ideas to Nepali policy makers and government officials through knowledge enhancing presentations and discussions from Japanese and Nepali experts in the field of economic growth and development strategy.

One of the key resource persons of the program, Professor Shinji Asanuma encouraged the current political actors to develop a multi dimensional and robust vision that is achieved after discussion on various frameworks and one that is acceptable to the people of Nepal. He presented his own vision of ‘One nation, a culture of cultures and one economy’ as a broad based framework for Nepal. Professor

Asanuma notes that the idea of ‘one nation’ embodies the idea of power sharing such that power is diffused from the center to several social, regional and political groups spread over Nepal without impairing national integrity and effectively addressing the double identity of the Nepalis in the New Nepal - that of being a Nepali and that of belonging to their ethnic, social or religious group. He explained that this can be done by enabling local governments to encourage cultural, social and even political diversity, however, leaving economic strategizing to the center. He further elaborated on the idea of ‘one economy’ by encouraging the concept of open and integrated internal market across federal structures, which allow free movement of inputs and good and services and discouraging federal fragmentation of the economy.

Similarly, another key resource person, Dr. Hisanobu Shishido highlighted the importance of studying other high growth economies in the world in order to learn lessons about strategies that led to their economic development. He discussed in length about key policy ingredients that lead to high growth and gave valuable recommendations in regards to Nepal’s context. The participants of the dialogue program were further presented with insightful topics such as ‘Agriculture for Development-Options for Nepal’ by Dr. Gayatri Acharya, ‘Legal foundations for economic growth and development’ by Professor Hiroshi Matsuo, and

‘Development Potential for Nepal’s water resources for electric power’ by JICA Expert, Mr. Yuki Yoshi Ozaki.

The program also provided a platform for open discussions and Q&A session amongst the participants. The discussions covered various relevant topics such as the lack of land reform initiative in Nepal and its impact on agriculture development, legal development and its relation to the economic growth of the country, decline in budget allocated to agriculture and the persistence of subsistence farming in Nepal, etc.

This follow-up dialogue program is highly expected to make a significant contribution in influencing Nepal’s planning for economic growth and development strategy in the coming days.

Third dialogue programme





In Search of Reforms in Legal and Judicial Sectors

JICA and the Ministry of Law and Justice (MOLJ) jointly organized a *Brainstorming Workshop on Legal and Judicial Reform Agenda for Development Strategy in Nepal* on February 25. Taking on a different approach in comparison to previous such events, the main objective of this workshop was to discuss priority issues related to legal and judicial reform in line with national development strategy by means of brainstorming among participants who came from varied disciplines, playing different roles.

During the event, two papers were presented: 'Legal and Judicial Reform in Nepal' by Mr. Raju Man Singh Malla, Joint Secretary of MoLJ, and 'Basic Elements of Working Legal System as the Infrastructure for State Building' by Professor Hiroshi Matsuo, Keio University of Japan. Mr. Malla said that reformation and amendment are the need and demand of modern time. Legal reform has to be done in accordance with the people's interest and socio, cultural and economic situation of the society. Professor Matsuo, through his presentation, stated that the establishment of the circumstances on the basis of which the substantive law and procedural law may function should be well recognized as basic institutions, which have the first priority in the legal reform plan. He also stressed on consideration of a strategic use of the law to attain positively the national development policies.

The presentation was followed by open discussion. There were many questions and issues raised related with the laws, rule of law and good governance. The workshop addressed critical issues of inconsistencies between existing laws, which might hinder the development of the nation, and tried to bring awareness of the issue among the participants. The workshop that facilitated an active brainstorming among the participants clearly established the importance of legal foundations and reform of legal agendas for economic growth and development of the nation. JICA pledged to continue the support to this reform process.



The Follow up of ADB and JICA Collaboration

A second in-country consultation meeting between Asian Development Bank (ADB), JICA and the Embassy of Japan (EoJ) was held on 17 January. The purpose of the meeting was to review the progress of collaboration and explore further possibilities of collaborative areas. Altogether, there were 57 participants from EoJ, ADB and JICA, including five ADB HQs participants through video conference.

The key progress was recognized in sharing of information, consultations, exchange of missions, joint field visit, joint policy dialogue with the Government of Nepal, and meetings on Japan Fund on Poverty Reduction (JFPR).

During the meeting, JICA and ADB made presentations on current program activities and thematic areas such as public procurement management reform, risk management measures, and results-based framework. Moreover, sector and issue-wise discussion was conducted separately focusing on energy, urban water, strategic roads/urban transport/tourism sectors, education, agriculture/irrigation/natural

resources/rural water and road, finance/governance, and gender social inclusion.

The group discussion was highly interactive with positive responses and identification of specific agendas for collaboration. Follow-up activities are currently being conducted respectively and collaboratively by the staff of both organizations. The third meeting is aimed to be held after six months.



Contributions of the SISM project to the education sector in Nepal

Institutional capacity building and enhancing management efficiency are cross cutting issues across education sector. Management capacity entails the effective utilization of resources for attaining quality education. Empowerment of local stakeholders like School Management Committee (SMC), Parents Teachers Association (PTA), head teachers, etc. are crucial for their meaningful involvement and contribution to the school governance. The School Sector Reform Program (SSRP), Nepal government's education sector plan, puts the capacity building of the local stakeholders as one of the priority areas in this regard.

In these contexts, the Government of Nepal (Ministry of Education (MoE)/ Department of Education (DoE)) implemented a project titled 'Support for Improvement of Primary School Management in Nepal (SISM)' for the duration of 36 months from 26 February 2008 to 25 February 2011 in collaboration with JICA. The aims of the project were to develop the capacity of SMCs in planning and implementing school improvement plans (SIPs); strengthen the capacity of the village development committees (VDCs) and the district education offices (DEOs) to support SMCs' efforts; and prepare suggestions and recommendations to improve the school management in Nepal.

Key approaches of the SISM project was strengthening school management by promoting the already existing elements rather than introducing something new; energizing SMCs and PTAs by equipping them with simplified SIP and school self-assessment; and clarifying the roles and responsibilities of different stakeholders for improving school-based management. Based on the practical experiences with the pilot schools and communities, the SISM project prepared some recommendations for:

- i) the continuation of SISM Model i.e. cascade training approach, SIP orientation and updating workshops, monitoring and guidance by school supervisors and resource persons,
- ii) preparation and implementation of the action plan of capacity development of SMCs,
- iii) provision of further support to schools and SMCs

Findings and outputs of the project were shared and discussed among the different levels of stakeholders in the second SISM output dissemination and networking workshop held on January 31 and February 1, 2011. These findings of the joint terminal evaluation witnessed that the school management had steadily improved with community participation and with government support. It is now commonly understood by the SISM stakeholders that SIP is a useful tool as well



SMCSIP Training in Non-pilot Schools

as a minimum requirement for schools and communities to get the necessary resources to accomplish quality education in their schools.

The SISM project completed its planned implementation period in February 2011 and it is expected that the best practices produced by the project in two pilot districts, Dhading and Rasuwa, would be continued and spread out to the other VDCs and districts with strong initiatives from the MoE/DoE.

Details of the SISM project can be accessed @ www.sism.org.np (available until Feb 2012)



SIP Orientation in Dhading

A Joint Effort to Improve Health of School Children

School Health and Nutrition Project (SHNP) was jointly implemented in June 2008 as a pilot project in Syangja and Sindhupalchowk districts by the Ministry of Health and Population (MoHP) and the Ministry of Education (MoE) with the technical cooperation by JICA. It covers 15 VDCs in each district and a total of 224 community and alternative schools to implement School Health and Nutrition (SHN) activities.

SHNP has developed 'SHN Minimum package', which includes various activities and services such as physical checkup, de-worming, first aid services, SHN checklist including daily attendance sheet, weekly and monthly checklist, child club mobilization and monitoring and supervision of SHN activities. SHNP is promoting 'Information education communication corner' and utilizing pictorial materials for behavior change.

Following the positive impacts of the SHN activities, a nationwide and district wide expansion by the Department of Health Services (DoHS) and Department of Education (DoE) are planned utilizing

government's own budget and resources. De-worming program for students of grade 1 to 10 will be carried out nationwide by DOHS from the Nepali fiscal year 2067-2068, which will be gradually extended from primary level to the secondary level. Also, the first aid kit box will be distributed to all the schools in Syangja and Sindhupalchowk by DoHS. Similarly, SHN checklist (daily and weekly) with attendance register will be scaled up nationwide by DoE from new academic year 2068/2069. It has been seen that some of the SHN activities can be replicated even without budget or with little budget and also through utilizing existing budget mechanism of District Health Office (DHO) and District Education Office (DEO).



Provision of deworming tablets to the school children

In order to decrease the school drop out rate, the Government of Nepal is preparing to launch new attendance register from academic session 2068/2069 with the

technical support by SHNP/JICA; the register describes about everyday health condition of each student in all the classes and also explores the reason for the absence of the students. In this revised attendance register, there is a provision to record the daily health condition of the students as well as reasons for their absence. This move is the result of experience and lesson learnt from the SHNP/ JICA. In this register, there is a provision of recording Education Management Information System (EMIS) data including record of scholarship provided to individual students by each school. There is also a provision of detailed students' records. This register is found to be helpful in reducing school repetition and dropout rates, especially at primary level by making the school more children

friendly and conducive to learning. There is also a possibility to improve reporting on more quality related indicators.

In this way, SHNP/JICA is contributing towards improvement of health status of schoolchildren and establishing sustainable SHN Model and system in Nepal.



Training on Physical-Check up

A Step Towards a Harmonious Community

Strengthening Community Mediation Capacity for Peaceful and Harmonious Society Project (COMCAP) successfully conducted its eight-day basic training course for mediators from Puranojangajholi VDC and Ratanchura VDC in Sindhuli district and Gauribas VDC and Mahottari VDC in Mahottari district in January and February 2011.

Community mediators had been selected representing variety of social groups in all the wards and VDCs. The training was conducted in an inclusive manner considering various languages, education levels, gender, and other social elements. VDC assistants also participated in the training and the program was highly interactive.

A song titled 'Community mediation in village' with words as 'Our village is lucky to be able to learn community mediation with JICA's support and we will now be able to resolve disputes in our village!' was improvised by participants and performed with excitement.

The training session was closed with an oath of mediator's code of conduct and signatories. All the newly certified mediators are filled with excitement and pride to work as a volunteer in their respective villages. JICA's expert, legal

advisor for Supreme Court, Mr. Katsumune Hirai also observed the training and provided advice on justice related matter. He also perceived great motivation expressed by participants particularly from socially marginalized groups.

Two Community Mediation centers were officially launched in two pilot VDCs in Sindhuli district after the training. Mediators, district and VDC government officials, representatives from political parties and other groups participated in the ceremony with great hope and expectation for future mediation activities.

VDC representative expressed in his speech that since it is the first community mediation centre established by the Government of Nepal, everyone should deliver the service sincerely so that it will be the first exemplary model for the rest of Nepal. Even though community mediation activities have been conducted by other organizations during last 10 years in Nepal, COMCAP has a different approach in working based on the ownership of government of Nepal

both at local and central level. Local political leaders also delivered speeches thanking JICA and the Government of Nepal to have chosen their remote village to deliver the service.

Trained Community Mediators



Bridges as the Linkage to Development



Bridge being constructed in Rosi River, Kavrepalanchowk

Roads and bridges are frontrunners in the development process of the nation. Efficient transport facilities not only create better mobility but also are means for development and stimulation of socio-economic activity, alleviation of poverty and a good environment for peace building in Nepal. The Government of Nepal prepared the local Infrastructure Development Plan 2004 covering seven sectors including rural transport. Recently, it has set basic needs of road access according to the walking time needed to reach the passable nearby road for mountain, hill and Terai areas by six, four and two hours respectively.

The total length of the road network including the Strategic Road Network (SRN), urban, district/rural roads in Nepal is estimated to be around 50,000 km, with rural roads covering roughly around 38,000 km. However, due to severe terrain and weather conditions, only about 10,000 km of the rural road network is passable all year round. The majority of the rural roads are of sub-standard and lack river crossing structures.

In a country like Nepal where there are 6,000 rivers and rivulets, the non-existence of river crossing structures limits the usage of the existing rural roads considerably in the rainy season. This has forced many communities to walk long hours in rainy season depriving them of basic facilities. Many other donors have assisted in the construction of rural roads including DDC-constructed rural roads. However, due to various reasons, the majority of the efforts are more concentrated in the construction of roads and not bridges. The need of the hour is to construct bridges on these existing roads so that its utility will be increased significantly and consequently, providing people with numerous benefits such as timely marketing of agricultural products, enhanced trade and commerce, development of cottage industries, access to health and education facilities, and so forth.

Responding to the request from the Government of Nepal, JICA decided to provide support for the 'Community Access Improvement Project'. As there is a lot of demand for bridges all over Nepal, it is not possible for JICA to support the construction of bridges in many districts. Therefore, it was agreed that JICA shall concentrate on the Sindhuli Corridor by selecting five districts, namely, Sindhuli, Mahottari, Kavrepalanchowk, Ramechhap and Sindhupalchowk. The objective of the project is to construct rural road motorable bridges, culverts and causeways in the above five districts and to establish and strengthen local peace building initiatives through community mobilization and implementation of infrastructure development works. Thirty-five sites along twelve rural roads prioritized by the District Transport Master Plan were selected for the bridge construction. Initially 108 major river crossings were selected and then, 35 sites were prioritized. These sites were selected based on the road closure duration due to flooding in the rivers and other criteria like population, agriculture prospects, and so on. Basically, the bridges will be of four types, i.e. Suspension Bridge (3), Truss Bridge (6), RC Bridge (3), and Continuous Box Bridge (23) depending upon the site conditions. Nepali contractors will be responsible for the construction of these bridges under the supervision of the Japanese consultant.

The project started in the Japanese Fiscal Year 2010 and is planned to be completed within two years and six months.



Dholan bridge, Mahottari



Spreading Volunteers' Message through AD Follow-up Caravan

The JICA Volunteers' PR campaign titled 'AD Follow-up Caravan' was set forth by the volunteers from March 2 to March 7, 2011 celebrating the 40th anniversary of JICA Volunteers Program. JICA dispatched two volunteer groups to Syangja and Dhading districts in Nepal. Various programs were organized at each visiting sites including introduction of JICA Volunteers, environmental education, nutrition and health education, health checkup program, and introduction and demonstration of Japanese culture. This caravan was a good opportunity for both volunteers and Nepalis to facilitate exchange and cooperation.



An Effort to Bring Positive Changes...



(Mariko Hori worked as a JOCV Volunteer from 2008 to 2010)

Mariko Hori was anxious when she learned that she was assigned to Nepal for two years as a JOCV. She had just finished graduate school in Philippines and was hoping to go to one of the South East Asian countries as a volunteer as she was already accustomed to its surrounding and culture. Nepal was completely new to her but with the consolation that it was still an Asian country; she stepped into its soil with obvious apprehension. The bumpy ride continued after her arrival in Kathmandu. In her own words, Hori stated that she misinterpreted Nepal's raw simplicity and outward honesty as inhospitable and impolite.

Hori was assigned to implement various Agricultural Production programs as well as monitor the progress and strengthen income increment procedures. She faced

difficulty in the field when she was flooded with direct demands mainly monetary from the local farmers. "I had to tell them that I could probably provide them some monetary assistance but it would last them only for two years while I am here. What will happen to their needs after I leave? I told them that I was here to work hand in hand with them and teach skills and techniques that will help them become self reliant and responsible in future."

Putting aside these initial challenges, Hori started working hard in her pursuit to bring changes. At her own best pace, she supported and strengthened Agricultural Cooperatives for income generation such as beekeeping extension for small-scale farmers, coordination of beekeeping training, initiation of saving and loan schemes through which farmers can purchase necessary equipments and

tools, improvement of honey-packing process and carrying out marketing research for it. She also cooperated with coffee farmers in Pokhara and taught marketing skills including searching for possibilities of exports to Japan. She coordinated compost making and candle making trainings. Besides all these, she encouraged organic farming and improving the contents of the soil.

Hori frankly admits that her initiation in the beekeeping was less than successful. The reason being inefficient planning and lack of proper insights. The honey produced by the villagers was just enough to feed them and could not produce enough for profit. Undeterred by this, Hori planned a follow-up training in order to rectify this problem. She planned to renew the interest of the villagers in beekeeping by organizing a small workshop where an already successful bee farmer from the same village will explain the reasons behind his success to the interested locals.

Fondly referred to as 'Bideshi Bani' (Foreign Sister), Hori was determined to give her level best till the end of her term. She noticed that children in Nepal do not practice healthy diet. She gave an example of her landlady who packed sugar-sweets and ready-made noodles in her daughter's lunchbox. Concerned, she made a decision to go around primary schools and create awareness about proper nutrition for kids.

Hori wished the concerned authorities to create agriculture friendly policies in order to improve the lives of farmers since agriculture is a significant force behind the economy of Nepal. She realized that two years is too short to make a significant difference and advises future incoming volunteers to come with a learning attitude and leave behind their high expectations back home. "It would be best to mingle with the Nepali people and learn the culture as this will enable you to not only contribute more but learn better as well," she added.



Bee keeping training



Organic coffee marketing



JICA Trainings offered to Government Officials from January to March 2011

Course	Center	Duration	No. of Participant
Crime Prevention (Senior Seminar)	TIC	10 January – 10 February	2
Improving Teaching Methods in Mathematics in Primary Education	TBIC	23 January - 5 March	1
Area Focused Training Course Local Government Administration and Public Services (Participatory Local Development)in South Asian Countries	OSIC	10 January – 5 March	3
Development and utilization of mitigate technologies for slope-induced disasters in developing countries (Masters Degree: Engineering)	TIC	27 March, 2011 – 31 March 2013	1
Infrastructure Planning and Design (Master's or Doctor's Degree: Engineering)	TIC	27 March, 2011 – 31 March 2013	1
Forum on Institutionalization of Evaluation System in Asia and Africa	TIC	22 February – 10 March	1
Vegetable Cultivation Technology for Small Scale Farmers	TBIC	6 February – 12 November	2
Local Emergency Operation Plan with Flood Hazard Map	TBIC	10 January – 12 February	1
Human Resource Development for the Rural Community Health	KIC	7 February – 12 March	1
Global Seismological Observation	TBIC	12 January – 12 March	1
Midwifery course for Safe Motherhood	OSIC	31 January – 12 March	2
Promotion of the Collaboration between Child Welfare and Maternal and Child Health	TIC	25 January – 19 February	2
Prevention and Control Measures of AIDS	KIC	21 January – 20 March	2
Disaster Risk Management technology on Volcanic Eruption, Debris Flow and Landslides	TIC	16 March – 10 September	1

Incoming Experts during the Quarter of January to March 2011

Post/ Title	Project	Total No.
Team Leader	Project for Capacity Development on Water Supply in Semi-Urban Area	1
Chief Advisor	School Health and Nutrition Project	1
Team Leader	Promoting Peace Building and Democratization through the Capacity Development of the Media Sector in Nepal	1
Experts	Promoting Peace Building and Democratization through the Capacity Development of the Media Sector in Nepal	3
Experts	Participatory Watershed Management & Local Governance Project	2

Incoming JOCVs during the Quarter of January to March 2011

Field	Assigned Office	Total No.
Community Development	District Cooperative Development Office, Kavre; Kirtipur Municipality; District Public Health Office, Kaski; District Agriculture Development Office, Barabise Service Centre; District Agriculture Development Office, Kavre; Community Based Rehabilitation Service (CBRS), Syangja; District Development Committee, Kavre; Nepal Agriculture Cooperative Central Federation, Kathmandu; District Cooperative Development Office, Kaski	9
Physiotherapy	Ghuri Shankar Hospital, Dolakha; Model Hospital, Kathmandu	2
Environmental Education	Kathmandu Metropolitan city; Pokhara Municipality, Kaski;	2
Nursing	Western Regional Hospital, Kaski	2
Public Health	District Public Health Office, Kaski	1
Vegetable/Fruit Growing	District Agriculture Development Office, Kavre	2
Automobile Maintenance	Underprivileged Children's Education Programs (UCEP-Nepal), Sano Thimi	1
Early Child Education	Mangal Higher Secondary School, Kathmandu	1
Acupuncture Moxacautery Massage	Oriental Treatment Cum Training Centre, Kathmandu	1
Occupational Therapy	Rehabilitation Center/ National Disabled Fund, Kathmandu	1
Nutrition	District Public Health Office, Syangja	1

JOCV: Japan Overseas Cooperation Volunteers

Incoming Senior Volunteers during the Quarter of January to March 2011

Field	Assigned Office	Total No.
Statistics	Central Bureau of Statistics, Kathmandu	1
Mushroom Cultivation	Plant Pathology Division, Nepal Agriculture Research Council (NARC), Lalitpur	1
Agricultural Cooperative Management	Nepal Agriculture Cooperative Central Federation, Kathmandu	1
Cooperative Management	Directorate of Agriculture Extension Department of Agriculture, Lalitpur	1
Cooperative Promotion and Training	Department of Cooperative, Kathmandu	1
Police Fleet Management	Police Headquarter, MT Division, Kathmandu	1
Sanitation	District Public Health Office, Kathmandu	1
Earthquake Disaster Mitigation Planning	National Society for Earthquake Technology Nepal, Lalitpur	1
Educational Statistics	Department of Education, Bhaktapur	1
Biofuel	National Academy of Science Technology, Lalitpur	1
Earthquake Disaster Mitigation Measures	National Society for Earthquake Technology, Lalitpur	1
IT Instructor	Nepal Polytechnic Institute, Kavre	1
Pharmacy – GMP	Association of Pharmaceutical Producers of Nepal (APPON), Kathmandu	1
Physical Education	National Center for Educational Development, Bhaktapur	1
Volleyball	Nepal Sports Council, Kathmandu	1
Program Officer (Short Term)	Women Skill Development Organization, Kaski	1