

NEWSLETTER

2nd December to 8th December

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Strengthening Regional Collaboration for MSME Growth and Innovation

On December 5-7, 2024, NDRI team represented by Dr. Shankar Shrestha (Executive Director), Prof. Dr. Raj Kumar Bhattarai (Senior Research Specialist / Principal Investigator) and Mr. Rajendra Khatri (Senior Research Associate / Project Manager) visited New Delhi, India to meet IDRC team (New Delhi Regional Office-based) and Foundation for MSME Clusters (FMC) team (New Delhi Head Office-based) as a part of the project **“Promoting Innovation and Inclusion on Growth Potential Enterprises: Evidence from Nepal,”** funded by IDRC-Canada.

The meeting with the IDRC team focused on discussions on further increasing the productivity of the project outputs and also on the exposure visit of the project beneficiaries (entrepreneurs/MSMEs) to India next month. The meeting with the FMC team focused on exploring opportunities for organizing exposure visits of selected Nepalese entrepreneurs/ MSMEs (project beneficiaries) next

month to the relevant sites throughout India to learn from the successful stories of India’s entrepreneurs/ MSMEs. The FMC team has expressed a strong willingness to support the initiative, emphasizing their commitment to facilitating linkages between entrepreneurs from Nepal and India.



This collaboration aims to create valuable opportunities for knowledge exchange, capacity building, and fostering innovation, ultimately strengthening the MSME ecosystem in both countries and paving the way for mutual growth and development.

Dream-catching the AI Wave: Insights from Mr. Kundana Kumar Lal

On December 5, 2024, Nepal Development Research Institute (NDRI), in collaboration with Everest Engineering College (EEC), organized a seminar at the EEC premises in Sanepa, Lalitpur. The seminar was coordinated by Dr. Nawa Raj Khatriwada, Senior Research Specialist of NDRI. The event, entitled “Rise of AI: Its Impact on Industries and Society,” featured an engaging and insightful presentation by Mr. Kundana Kumar Lal, President of Vitti Foundation, India. The program was chaired by Prof. Dr. Hari Krishna Shrestha, Chair of the Research Committee at EEC, who emphasized the importance of understanding AI’s transformative potential. Ms. Ashma Aryal, Outreach and Communication Officer at NDRI served as the Master of Ceremony for the event. Mr. Kundana Kumar Lal provided a thought-provoking overview of how Artificial Intelligence (AI) has evolved, from Artificial Narrow Intelligence to Artificial General Intelligence, and now advancing

towards Artificial Super Intelligence. He highlighted the profound implications of this transition on industries, society, and human capital, explaining how automation is reshaping the workforce and reducing dependency on human labor.

A key focus of his talk was the groundbreaking Dreamcatcher Project, which has set a new benchmark in AI innovation and demonstrated its potential to outpace human capabilities in various fields.



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The seminar concluded with an interactive Q&A session, allowing participants to engage with Mr. Kundana Kumar Lal on the challenges and opportunities AI presents in today's rapidly changing world. This seminar marked another milestone in fostering collaboration between academia and industry, reflecting NDRI's commitment to promoting knowledge-sharing and innovation in Nepal.

Field Visit Report: Strengthening EbA Interventions for Flood Risk Mitigation Through Women's Leadership

As part of the Global EbA-funded project *"Mitigating Flood Risks Through Women's Leadership in EbA Interventions"*, Ms. Shreya Bajimaya, Senior Research Associate, and Ms. Sophiya Shrestha, Senior Research Assistant, conducted field visits from December 3 to 6, 2024. The visits aimed to explore and assess ongoing Nature-based Solutions (NbS)/Ecosystem-based Adaptation (EbA) initiatives led by organizations such as Practical Action and Mercy Corps in flood-prone areas of Karnali and Dodha River basins.

The team visited Rajapur and Madhuwan in Bardia district (Lumbini Province), where Practical Action has been establishing Biodykes for flood risk reduction.

They also traveled to Kailali and Kanchanpur districts in Sudurpaschim Province, to study similar efforts by Mercy Corps using Sugarcane plantation. The field visits provided an opportunity to gain firsthand insights into the impact of these interventions on local flood risk management and community resilience.

During the visits, Ms. Bajimaya and Ms. Shrestha engaged with project field staff, local government representatives, and community members to understand the challenges, successes, and lessons learned from the projects. The observations and learnings from these visits will contribute to strengthening the Global EbA project's objectives and guiding future interventions.



Participation in the Fifth National Food Systems Dialogue

President of NDRI Dr Krishna Pahari and Senior Research Specialist Dr Kishor Dahal attended the Fifth National Food Systems Dialogue organised by the National Planning Commission, the World Food Programme and FAO on 2nd December 2024 at Hotel Marriott, Kathmandu. Realising the need to approach food security holistically, the first United Nations Food Systems Summit was organized in 2021. Since then member UN member countries have also made national programmes to implement food systems in their respective countries. In Nepal, a national steering committee on the food systems has been formed, and the event on 2nd December was the fifth such dialogue organized in Nepal. The chief guest of the occasion was the Honourable Minister of Agriculture and Livestock Development, and it was attended by dignitaries including the Vice-Chairman and a few members of the National Planning Commission, secretaries of the Ministry of Agriculture and Livestock Development, the UN Resident Coordinator and representatives from various UN agencies, development partners and research institutions. A presentation was made on the progress made so far, which was followed by working group sessions on different tracks of the food systems. NDRI participants highlighted the need to prioritize research in order to provide credible evidence for informed policy-making and optimal use of resources.



208th Episode of Contemporary Policy Dialogue



The 208th episode of the Contemporary Policy Dialogue was held on December 6, 2024. This dialogue series, jointly organized by Nepal Development Research Institute (NDRI) and Resources Himalaya Foundation (RHF), has been fostering critical discussions on policy issues for the past 6 years.

The hybrid event was chaired by Former Minister Er. Ganesh Shah and featured a compelling presentation by Prof. Dr. Anjana Singh, a professor at the Central Department of Microbiology, Tribhuvan University, and a scholar at the Nepal Academy of Science and Technology (NAST). Dr. Singh delivered an insightful talk titled "Sustainable Development Goals through Science Diplomacy", highlighting the intersection of science and policy in advancing sustainable development. The presentation was followed by an engaging interactive Q&A session.

The program concluded with Dr. Dinesh Bhujju, Chair of RHF, delivering the Concluding Remarks, emphasizing the importance of collaborative efforts in addressing sustainable development challenges.

Click on the image above to watch the full Episode of CPD.

Thought-provoking News

Child marriage and teenage pregnancy rampant in Baglung despite legal protections

<https://kathmandupost.com/gandaki-province/2024/12/09/child-marriage-and-teenage-pregnancy-rampant-in-baglung-despite-legal-protections>

Complexity of transgender life in Janakpur

<https://kathmandupost.com/province-no-2/2024/11/17/complexity-of-transgender-life-in-janakpur>

Thought of the Week

In three words I can sum up everything I've learned about life: It goes on.

-Robert Frost

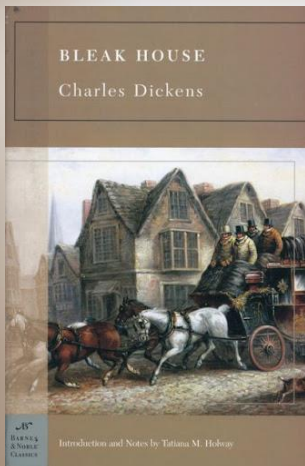
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Book Recommendation of the Week

4.5 ★★★★★

Feel free to recommend books to our readers so that we can collectively enhance knowledge exploration.

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