

WEEKLY ECHOES OF NDRI

VOLUME 252 & 253



Meeting with UNICEF and WFP Representatives in Janakpur.

NDRI is an independent, non-partisan, and non-profit institution dedicated to addressing contemporary and emerging policy challenges and to influencing public policy through research.

HEADLINES FEATURED IN THIS EDITION

- Project Fields Without Safety Nets take on field level data collection in Jiri Municipality
- NDRI field consultations in Hanumannagar Kankalini Municipality of Saptari and Barahakshetra Municipality of Sunsari (Koshi Province) as part of the baseline assessment of the Emergency Preparedness and Response: From Anticipation to Action project
- 33rd Episode of Mesmerizing Monday
- Dr. Divas B. Basnyat, Lead, Water and Climate Program, participated as a panelist on the occasion of the 64th Engineers' Day
- TIMRA Course Strengthens NDRI's Tobacco Control Initiative



Project Fields Without Safety Nets take on field level data collection in Jiri Municipality

From 5th to 10th July 2026, the Fields Without Safety Nets research team embarked on a field mission to Jiri, Dolakha for intensive data collection. The team was led by Dr. Manjeshwori Singh (Principal Investigator), accompanied by Mr. Ram Prasad Devkota (Field Coordinator), Ms. Binita Shahi (Research Associate), and Ms. Dikshya Barasaini (Research Assistant).



Dr. Manjeshwori Singh, Principal Investigator PI facilitating a FGD session with women's group

The study seeks to analyze the factors influencing women informal workers' greater reliance on formal financial institutions (BFIs) over the government-led Social Security Fund in Nepal's

agriculture sector, and to understand how this dependence is shaped by women's informal work, gendered labor dynamics, and shifting employment trends in rural areas. The visit focused on understanding the realities of rural communities through focus group discussions (FGDs) with women's groups, key informant interviews (KIIs) with agro cooperatives, and in-depth interviews (IDIs) with community members. These engagements explored themes of time use, care burdens, crop calendars, social protection challenges, and adaptation measures adopted by farmers.

Importantly, the data collection and its results will feed into identifying gaps in understanding grassroots hindrances and challenges in involving the informal sector in Nepal's social protection systems. The findings will also help explore pathways for inclusion and will be further discussed in a co-design workshop with stakeholders.

Field consultations as part of the baseline assessment of the Emergency Preparedness and Response: From Anticipation to Action project

From July 6-10, 2026, the NDRI study team—Dr. Shankar Shrestha (Project Team Leader and Co-Lead, Water and Climate Program), Mr. Pramit Ghimire (Research Associate), and Ms. Sophiya Shrestha (Senior Research Assistant and Field Coordinator) conducted field consultations in Hanumannagar Kankalini Municipality (Saptari) and Barahakshetra Municipality (Sunsari) as part of the independent baseline assessment for the Emergency Preparedness and Response: From Anticipation to Action project, implemented by World Food Programme (WFP) and UNICEF.

The team carried out 15 Key Informant Interviews (KIs) and 2 Focus Group Discussions (FGDs). Key stakeholders in Saptari and Sunsari included relevant officials from the Provincial Emergency Operations Centre (PEOC); District Disaster Management

Committee (DDMC); District Emergency Operations Centre (DEOC); Local Disaster Management Committee (LDMC); Local Emergency Operations Centre (LEOC); Ward Disaster Management Committee (WDMC); Community Disaster Management Committee (CDMC); Education, Health, WASH and Women and Children clusters at the Municipality; Nepal Red Cross district chapters; UNICEF and WFP officers and other Non Governmental Organizations such as NEEDS Nepal and Sabal Nepal working in the field of AA and/or DRR in the study area.



Interaction with Ministry of Internal Affairs and Law (MoIAL), Koshi Province

Similarly, discussions with CDMC members and community representatives were also held.

By the end of the visit, the study team had a clear sense of how preparedness, coordination, financing and early action are working in two of the project's target local governments in the Koshi basin, and of where the main gaps lie. The findings will feed into the baseline assessment report and are expected to strengthen the project's planned outputs, outcomes and impacts.

33rd Episode of Mesmerizing Monday

On July 6th, 2026, NDRI Research Intern, Mr. Bishista Wagle delivered an engaging and insightful presentation on the topic "Perverse Incentives" during the 33rd episode of Mesmerizing Mondays, NDRI's weekly knowledge-sharing platform.

The session aimed to introduce the concept of perverse incentives through an interactive brainstorming exercise and practical examples, enabling participants to develop a clear understanding of the topic and its real-world implications.

Mr. Wagle started his presentation with the discussion of objectives,

motivation and brainstorming slides. The presentation also included a classic example of the 'Cobra Effect' in colonial Delhi and the 'Hanoi Rat Massacre' to illustrate how poorly designed incentives can lead to unintended and counterproductive outcomes. Therefore, he ended with Goodhart's Law that states, "When a measure becomes a target, it ceases to be a good measure."

The session was highly engaging, encouraged active participation, and provided participants with valuable learning experience.



Mr. Bishista Wagle, Research Intern presenting his presentation on topic "Perverse Incentives"

Dr. Divas B. Basnyat, Lead, Water and Climate Program, participated as a panelist on the occasion of the 64th Engineers' Day

Dr. Divas B. Basnyat, Lead, Water and Climate Program, participated as a panelist in the special technical session, "Beyond Single Hazards: Building Resilient Infrastructure for Cascading and Compound Risks," jointly organized by the Asian Civil Engineering Coordinating Council (ACECC) and the Nepal Engineers Association on the occasion of the 64th Engineers' Day on 19 July 2026 at Royal Tulip, Lalitpur.



Dr. Divas B. Basnyat, Lead, Water and Climate Program with the panelist including the keynote speaker, Prof Dr. Vishnu Pd Pandey

The discussion focused on the impacts of cascading and compound hazards on infrastructure and communities, gaps in current engineering risk-assessment practices, and practical approaches for integrating multi-hazard risks into planning, design, regulation, and infrastructure management. Drawing on findings from Water and Climate Program research, Dr. Basnyat emphasized the need to build resilience to future uncertainties driven by land-use change, rapid development, and climate change. He highlighted that conventional risk assessments based on historical data are insufficient for addressing an increasingly uncertain future and advocated for bottom-up, resilience-by-design approaches that focus on what matters most to communities and critical infrastructure.

Dr. Basnyat highlighted the importance of adaptation pathways, Nature-based Solutions, responsible AI, and resilient infrastructure planning to strengthen Nepal's resilience against evolving climate risks.

TIMRA Course Strengthens NDRI's Tobacco Control Initiative

Nepal's fight against tobacco-related harm has gained fresh momentum, with Nepal Development Research Institute (NDRI) strengthening its research and policy advocacy efforts through participation in the Tobacco Industry Monitoring, Research and Accountability (TIMRA) Course at the University of Bath, UK.

Over the past eight years, NDRI has run a tobacco research and advocacy program in partnership with Cancer Research UK (CRUK), with team members regularly attending TIMRA to build skills in monitoring industry interference, supporting Article 5.3 of the WHO FCTC, and shaping evidence-based policy.

The knowledge and experience gained through TIMRA have made a significant contribution to NDRI's policy advocacy in Nepal. Among its notable achievements is NDRI's evidence-based advocacy in support of higher tobacco taxation, which helped drive a 45% increase in cigarette excise duty in recent years.

NDRI's contributions to tobacco research and policy have also earned international recognition, including the prestigious Bloomberg Award in 2023.



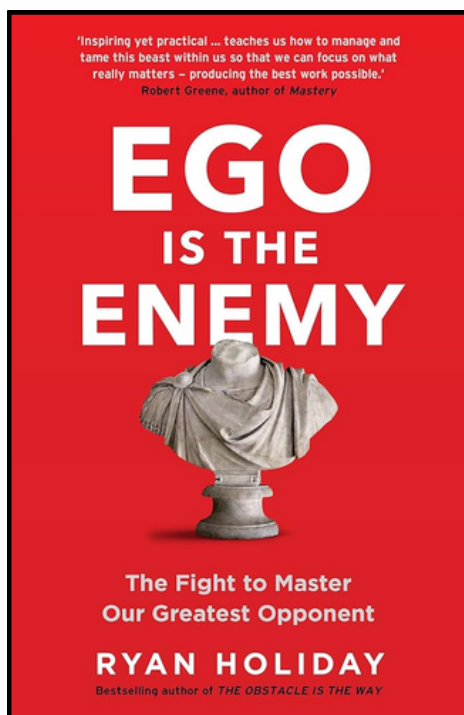
Dr. Jaya K. Gurung, Coordinator of NDRI's Tobacco Control Program with other fellow participants

Dr. Jaya K. Gurung, Coordinator of NDRI's Tobacco Control Program, represented the institute at TIMRA 2026, presenting NDRI's achievements and exchanging insights with international faculty and peers.

NDRI thanks the Tobacco Control Research Group (TCRG) at Bath and CRUK for their continued support in advancing evidence-based tobacco control in Nepal.



Women's group showcasing their crop-calendar and time-use diary post FGD session



BOOK RECOMMENDATION

THOUGHT OF THE WEEK

"The quality of our decisions depends on the quality of the evidence we gather".

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Ms. Sophiya Shrestha conducting FGD during her field visit at Barahakshetra Municipality.(Sunsari)

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