



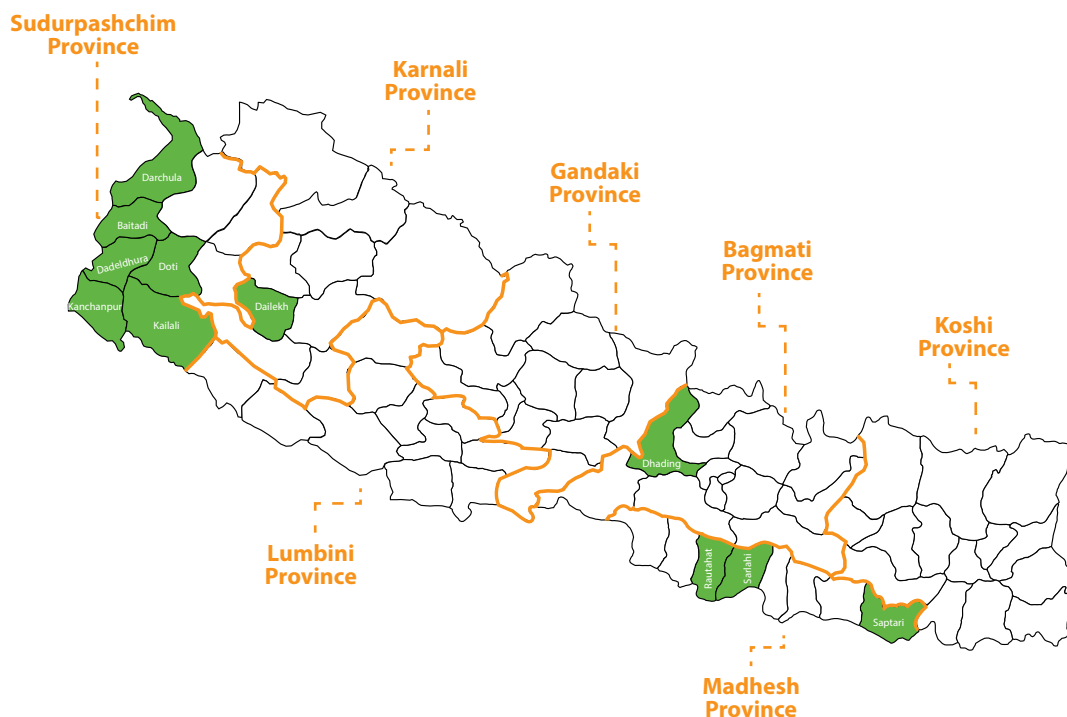
# ANNUAL REPORT 2022-23



**OXFAM**

The future is equal

# OUR REACH



- 📍 **Sudurpashchim Province** (Districts: Darchula, Baitadi, Dadeldhura, Kanchanpur, Doti, Kailali)
- 📍 **Karnali Province** (District: Dailekh)
- 📍 **Bagmati Province** (District: Dhading)
- 📍 **Madhesh Province** (Districts: Rautahat, Sarlahi, Saptari)

**Cover:** Ganga Malla from Joroyal Rural Municipality, Doti district, Sudurpashchim Province working on her farm.

**Photo:** Kishor Sharma/Oxfam

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🔗 Sunena Devi from Rautahat fills her jug with safe water from her own household tap. Photo: Susma Pant/Oxfam



# PREFACE

Oxfam has been working in Nepal since the 1980s to create lasting solutions that empower people for a future that is secure, just, and free from poverty. We work with communities, national and international partners to find practical and innovative ways for people to lift themselves out of poverty and thrive.

In 2022-23 too, we have persistently advanced our mission to alleviate poverty and address inequality in Nepal. This report highlights the impact of our various projects implemented under three interconnected thematic areas – Gender Justice, Resilience and Climate Justice, and Water, Sanitation and Hygiene (WASH) and Water Governance.

As a feminist organization, women are the key drivers and leaders for our initiatives. Our work assists and enables women leaders to take up leadership positions in local politics and community-based

organizations. We address the needs of communities through partnerships with local organizations, government agencies, and stakeholders.

Gender Justice program is mainly focused on ensuring women and girls are free from violence against women and girls (VAWG) and empowered to make informed choices and access equal opportunities.

Likewise, Resilience and Climate Justice program strengthens community resilience to natural disasters compounded by climate risks, builds local humanitarian leadership and helps to adapt through improved livelihoods and promotion of food security.

WASH and Water Governance program strengthens water security for poor and socially excluded women and men to achieve systemic change for sustainable and equitable access to water and sanitation.

# OXFAM INTERNATIONAL

Oxfam is a global movement of people fighting inequality to end poverty and injustice. Across regions, from local to global, Oxfam works with people to bring changes that last.

Oxfam's work is grounded in the commitment to the universality of human rights. Driven by diversity and founding our tasks in evidence and experience, we take side against poverty and injustice everywhere. Feminist approaches guide all our analysis, action, and interaction.

Our vision is a world that is just and sustainable. A world in which people and the planet are at the center of just economies. A world in which women and girls live free from gender-based violence and discrimination. Where the climate crisis is contained and, an inclusive and accountable governance system allows for those in power to be held liable.

## OXFAM IN NEPAL

Oxfam's vision for Nepal is a just society without poverty, in which all women and men live a life of dignity, enjoy their rights, and assume their responsibilities as active citizens of Nepal. Oxfam has been working in Nepal since 1980s. Oxfam in Nepal has three interconnected programs viz. Gender Justice, Resilience and Climate Justice, and Water, Sanitation and Hygiene (WASH) and Water Governance to meet four country level goals.

Oxfam implements projects at ground level through local NGOs. Oxfam offers technical support to partners in project management including financial management, MEAL and data management, and funding management. This also includes providing support on gender mainstreaming and capacity building of partners. Oxfam in Nepal partnered with 13 NGO partners including three Women Rights Organizations (WROs) in the year 2022-23.

## COUNTRY GOALS



**Goal 1** – We want to see women and girls have free choice and equal opportunities and hold positions of substantive and broad leadership in Nepal's development, located within larger progress on social inclusion.



**Goal 2** – We want to see young people, women, and poor marginalized groups, in urban and rural areas, have resilient livelihoods and more income.



**Goal 3** – We want to see resilient communities through the increased coping capacity to disasters through localized risk management and response.



**Goal 4** – We want to see strong governance of water and the capacity to address environmental management and climate emergency.



# KEY ACHIEVEMENTS OF 2022-2023



## 3 Municipalities

established Local Emergency Operational Centre (LEOC) for the support of disaster preparedness, response and recovery mechanism



## Developed a new partnership strategy

with a vision to achieve an equal footing relationship, becoming partner of choice, recognized as a feminist, transformative and work towards local leadership development for sustainable social change and impact



## 43 CDMCs

in high-risk areas received support for disaster risk reduction and management plan and its implementation



## 87 Women

Leadership Platforms (WLPs) members participated in local level planning process of government. They were able to generate USD 376 to 1128 from their initiative for WLPs



## 1999 farmers from 50 groups

enhanced their income and improved livelihood through seeds and other green enterprises



Poly house, drip irrigation, plastic mulch and vegetable seeds supported for **200 + women** to support climate smart farming



**Four water supply** management board established through the endorsement of local government



## 87 farmers' groups and community seed bank

were supported for climate adaptative crop varieties production and promotion



**2 gender equality** and social inclusion policies were developed and endorsed at municipalities

## OUR REACH IN 2022 – 2023



**85,336**

people were directly reached

**58%** were women

**56%** were young people



**3,349**

people were directly reached through Gender Justice (GJ) Program



**48,076**

people were directly reached through Resilience and Climate Justice (RCJ) Program



**33,911**

people were directly reached through Water, Sanitation and Hygiene (WASH) and Water Governance Program.

# GENDER JUSTICE PROGRAM



Members of Women Leadership Platform from Ganyapdhura Rural Municipality, Dadeldhura district, Sudurpashchim Province attending a meeting. Photo: Oxfam

The **Gender Justice (GJ)** program is committed to ensure women and girls live life free of VAWG, where girls and women are empowered to have free choice, equal opportunities, and holding broad leadership positions. The program aims to enhance the capacity of women leaders to fulfil their potential for social and gender transformative leadership.

Similarly, through the program, Oxfam targets to reduce VAWG and CEFM, capacitating women and girls to challenge harmful traditional norms, belief systems that drive abuse and keep women and girl poor.

The program was able to contribute towards increasing enabling space for women leaders to hold substantive position, changing patriarchal mindset of men and community, and reducing VAWG. The program has contributed to strengthening civic space.

In year 2022-2023, Oxfam increased enabling space for women leaders to hold substantive positions, changing patriarchal mindset of men and community, and reducing Violence Against Women and Girls (VAWG).



The GJ program reached 3,349 people - 66 percent women and 32 percent young people (15-24). Oxfam's gender analysis report showed that most women in community were aware about their rights, gender equality, Gender-based Violence (GBV). However, boys and men are far behind in understanding about gender inequality and GBV.

Agriculture is highly feminized; women are mostly in agricultural labor but excluded from decision making. Therefore, Oxfam focused on building power of women to take decisions at households, community, and social activities by working with them in groups via Women Empowerment Center (WEC), Farmer Field School (FFS), and Women Leadership Platforms (WLPs).

Oxfam along with partners strengthened 232 women group and 41 women from these groups were elected in May 2022 local election as Deputy Mayor (1) and ward members (40).

Besides, three GBV case referral mechanism was established at three municipalities and gender equality and social inclusion (GESI) policy was formulated and endorsed in two

municipalities. Likewise, 37 GBV survivors received immediate and livelihood support from Oxfam and partner organizations in addition to receiving psychosocial counselling and income generation support.

We have adopted feminist approach. Gender mainstreaming is included in all our projects. This approach has strengthened women agencies and young people agencies, and increased women's meaningful participation and leadership in local government.

Alternative Management Model project adopted a strategy to bring in women in leading positions in rural water supply management board by engaging with local governments to design gender inclusive water management board policy. Oxfam's study found that fewer women were in leading positions in technical jobs in water supply system. As a result of Oxfam's engagement, two women proved themselves to be the best candidates for the water supply management board in two rural municipalities and are leading as head of office and four women were appointed as meter readers.

# FINANCIAL LITERACY CLASS INSPIRES YOUTH ENTREPRENEURSHIP

Kanchan Thalal is an 18-year-old girl from Dashrathchand Municipality in Baitadi district, Sudurpashchim Province. She is studying in class 10 and lives with her family of nine members. The only source of income for the family is through her father's electrical store in the local market. Like all young people, she was only focused on her studies and helping her mother with household chores. She had little to no interest in entrepreneurship or business.

This was until she attended financial literacy class supported by Oxfam. Kanchan learned about savings, loan process and procedures, family development plan, business plans and many ideas for startup business through the class. This boosted her confidence and inspired her to start commercial vegetable farming. She shared her idea with her family, and they happily supported her.

She started vegetable farming after borrowing 60,000 NPR (USD 364) from a local cooperative. She cultivates different varieties of vegetables such as cauliflower, cabbage, tomato, bitter gourd, cucumber, pumpkin, board leaf mustard, beans, green coriander, chili, radish, etc. in her ancestral farmland.

"I now earn 15,000 NPR per month from vegetable sales. I spend the income on education and business growth. I cannot thank Oxfam and WAM enough for giving me the opportunity to become financially independent," Kanchan shared elatedly.

Similarly, Yubaraj KC, 20 years old, from Bhagwatimai Rural Municipality in Dailekh district, Sudurpashchim Province has started poultry business after attending financial literacy class supported by Oxfam. He started his business with an initial investment of 80,000 NPR (USD 484). He borrowed 40,000 NPR (USD 242) from his family and 40,000 NPR (USD 242) from a local cooperative.

Yubaraj started with just 100 chickens. He managed to earn 50,000 NPR (USD 303) from the first batch of chickens. He has doubled the chickens in his farm this time around. As chicken is consumed locally, he is planning on opening a fresh house too.

A total of 30 financial literacy classes have been conducted in Baitadi and Dailekh districts by WAM. At least 900 young people have attended the class out of which 75 per cent were females. Among them 76 have started their own business such as goat rearing, vegetable farming, mushroom farming, tailoring business, retail shops, etc.



# BUILDING VOICES FOR WOMEN DOMESTIC AND CARE WORKERS

Oxfam and partner organization Yuwalaya conducted a study “Building Voices for Women Domestic and Unpaid Care Workers in Nepal” to understand the situation of paid and unpaid care work in Nepal.

Most domestic and unpaid care workers are women who play a crucial role in society and the economy but frequently lack social security and are vulnerable to exploitation. Recognizing and respecting their work is essential to address their unique challenges and well-being that hinder the achievement of gender justice in Nepal.

The study has evaluated the existing policy and practices, identified opportunities and potential strategies to advance their rights, provided evidence-based recommendations to key stakeholders for addressing the situation and promoted the voice of these working women.

The study was conducted in 13 districts across seven provinces across Nepal. A total of 52 informants participated in the study, comprising both men and women. The informants represented various sectors, including government officials, elected representatives, trade union members,

domestic worker’s forums, as well as experts, UN agencies, civil society organizations (CSOs) representatives, development partners, and self-help groups.

The study found out that the major challenges faced by these workers included low wages, long hours, lack of benefits, limited access to legal mechanism, lack of formal contracts, and exploitation. Domestic and unpaid care workers often endure workplace and home violence due to vulnerability and isolation coupled with limited access to support and justice.

Despite the unparalleled importance of care work, the issues affecting care workers are not incorporated into political agendas. In a context where CSOs are increasingly prioritizing domestic workers, conceptual clarity for care workers is inadequate.

The study has helped identify a few key actions for improving the situation including collecting relevant data, unionizing, providing labor education, initiating the workers-to-workers model, using local language media, intergenerational dialogue, and policy advocacy for better representation and resources.

## 16 DAYS OF ACTIVISM AGAINST GENDER-BASED VIOLENCE

The 16 Days of Activism against Gender-Based Violence campaign is an annual international event that kicks off on 25 November, the International Day for the Elimination of Violence against Women, and runs until 10 December, Human Rights Day. People from all over the world come together to confront prejudice, raise awareness about gender-based violence, and call for better laws and services to permanently end violence against women.

In solidarity with the 16 Days campaign, Oxfam in Nepal organized a public event on 30 November 2022 at Jawalakhel Mandala ground in Lalitpur. The event engaged public with two

games which encouraged them to identify patriarchal practices in their day to day lives.

The games were smash patriarchy and obstacle race. For smash patriarchy game, participants were asked to smash a pyramid of glasses, representing patriarchy, with a ball to commit their actions to smash patriarchy in their day to day lives.

Likewise, in obstacle race, there were two racetracks—one for men and another for women. The track for men included several tasks such as cooking, cleaning, washing, and taking care of children, whereas the track for women were empty.





“It is much easier if we share our responsibilities at home. I think this was the intended message of this game”, one of the participants shared.

Equal rights to women have been ensured through the constitution as a fundamental right in Nepal. Recent data shows that Nepal has made significant progress on human development, human rights over the decade. However, Nepal’s rank on Gender related Development Index (GDI) still falls behind. Persistent and restrictive discriminatory social norms, attitude and behaviors, gender-blind institutions remain a huge challenge for

the wellbeing and development of women and girls.

One of Oxfam’s priority goals is to see women and girls have free choice, and equal opportunities and hold positions of substantive and broad leadership in Nepal’s development.

Oxfam has been addressing gender inequality and harmful social norms that contribute to violence against women and girls. And, the 16 days activism helps add momentum to our ongoing initiative of ensuring full equality and equity between women and men in all spheres of life.

✍ Oxfam staff and local public participating during a public event on the occasion of 16 Days of Activism Against Gender Based Violence. Photo: Grishma Raj Aryal/Oxfam





# RESILIENCE AND CLIMATE JUSTICE PROGRAM



Women from Baitadi district pose with leaf plates made with the machine supported by Oxfam. Oxfam has helped establish 83 climate smart businesses. Photo: Quibi/Oxfam

**Resilience and Climate Justice** Program is committed to strengthening communities and institutions to cope with natural disasters, improve livelihoods, promote food security, and build resilience. We want to see young people and women from poor, marginalized and excluded groups, both in urban and rural areas have increased coping capacity to natural disasters and equipped with necessary knowledge and trainings to manage climate emergency.

During the reporting period, Oxfam reached to 48,076 people (60% women) through resilience and climate justice program. We supported institutions such as Community Disaster Management Committee (CDMC), FFS, WEC and rural cooperatives. We engaged with local governments to better respond to the needs of our target groups and influence them for favorable policies changes.

This year nine municipalities were supported to develop Local Disaster and Climate Resilience Plan (LDCRP) and municipal adaptation plan. Likewise, three municipalities were supported for disaster preparedness, response, and recovery mechanism. We established 83 climate smart business and additional 15 climate resilient business were assessed. Sandmining guideline was prepared in three municipalities. A landslide susceptibility map of two municipalities in Baitadi district was prepared and handed over to municipalities along with rolling out of Pahiroland (landslide) alert app for landslide early warning.

Oxfam tested the approach of stand-by PGA with humanitarian partners to respond immediately in case of a disaster. In practice money was transferred ahead of the disaster to reduce the time of action in case of

disaster. This year, 6000 women received awareness on government's social protection and shock responsive social protection. And 1100, seasonal migrant workers accessed accidental insurance service under local government social protection scheme. Similarly, 152 women from WEC earned USD 184,922 by selling vegetables produced through climate smart agriculture practice.

Oxfam continued support to FFS to produce and promote local agro-biodiversity.

The targeted people have achieved increased knowledge and awareness, access to information, diversified livelihoods, increased ability to cope/adapt to climate induced disaster, leveraged resource from local government and ultimately increased income resilience in the program areas.

## PROMOTING LEADERSHIP THROUGH SOWING DIVERSITY, HARVESTING SECURITY

Oxfam promotes farmers' rights amongst indigenous people and small holder farmers by adopting Farmer Field School (FFS) methodology and enhance their capacity to access, develop and use plant genetic resources to improve food and nutrition security.

FFS methodology is implemented in four districts of Sudurpashchim Province – Dadeldhura, Doti, Kailali, and Kanchanpur by our partner LI-BIRD. Women are the primary participants at FFS. Furthermore, with men migrating to other countries for employment



⬆ Tikeshwori Malla from Jorayal Rural Municipality, Doti district, Sudurpashchim Province, Chair of Bhumiraj Farmer Field School addresses participants during a meeting. Photo : Kishor Sharma/Oxfam

opportunities, agriculture in rural Nepal is mainly managed by women.

FFS serves as an interactive learning platform for small holder farmers, where they learn, observe, and compare crops grown in different plots during cropping cycle of a particular crop (rice, wheat, potato, vegetables, etc) in local field setting and under the guidance of a trained facilitator. However, discussions at FFS are not limited to farming, but also includes sessions on gender equality, gender role at home, access to local resources, and negotiating with local authorities for accessing resources.

Owing to their participation in FFS, women who were once hesitant of public exposure are now aware of their rights and are better equipped with necessary knowledge about where local resources are available and how to negotiate to access those resources.

This has led to five participants of FFS (4 women, 1 man) securing leadership positions as elected personnel in their local municipalities in the recently held local elections. These elected members say that FFS helped them improve their leadership and interpersonal skills, which enabled them to be elected.



**Renu Kumari Dangaura**  
Ward Chairperson,  
Joshipur Rural Municipality-3,  
Kailali district.

**Renu** belongs to Kamaiya family (now abolished traditional system of bonded labour that was practiced in western Terai, Nepal). She credits her success to Oxfam and LI-BIRD as she believes FFS provided her the opportunity to take up leadership position for community development. The seven-day training she attended on conservation of local landraces and FFS facilitation skills not only bolstered her confidence but also erased the shyness she once grappled with. With unwavering support from her family, relatives, friends, and FFS members, she courageously vied for the position of Ward Chairperson in the local elections. As a Ward Chairperson, she is determined in promoting women's empowerment and advocating for gender equality, encouraging agro-biodiversity, addressing social inclusion issues and capacity strengthening of excluded groups.





**Dhyamati Devi Rana**  
Ward Member,  
Laljhadi Rural Municipality-6,  
Kanchanpur district.

**Dhyamati**, had got married at the age of 16, belongs to Kamaiya family. Her father was a bonded laborer before the system was abolished by Government of Nepal in 2000. Her husband migrated to India for employment, and she had to look after her two children. She recalls how she was not proficient in Nepali language, and FFS helped improve her language besides providing trainings on public speaking and cultivation of various crops. Later, she became a facilitator at FFS and her proudest moment as a facilitator was when she discovered and helped protect local rice varieties that were on the brink of extinction. She claims that FFS helped to grow her interest in community development and supported in being elected as a Ward Member. She is committed to advocating for social and gender justice as well as land rights and land distribution in her role as a Ward Member.



**Krishna Deuba**  
Ward Member,  
Ganyapdhura Rural Municipality-2,  
Dadeldhura district.

**Krishna** was raised by a single mother. She was born as the youngest in the family of two brothers and six sisters. Her father's absence was a bitter reality but her resilient mother fought hard to ensure she received an education. She was allowed to complete her studies up to grade nine despite living in a community where men are given priority for education. Although she was married off at a young age of 14, she worked as Female Community Health Volunteer (FCHV) for over 19 years before getting involved in FFS. She considers her role in empowering FFS members of her village, enabling them to amplify their voices, and rights and preservation of local crop varieties as her greatest joy. As a Ward Member she hopes to address some of the pressing concerns of her community such as multiple marriage, forced marriage, abortions, and domestic violence. Her efforts are focused on uplifting the livelihoods of the poorest women in her community and championing conservation of indigenous crop varieties.



**Mohan Singh Badayak**

Ward Member,  
Laljhadi Rural Municipality-3,  
Kanchanpur district.

**Mohan Singh Badayek** is from a Kamaiya family. His father and generations before him were bonded laborers. They did not own land but would cultivate on others' land to make a living. Despite financial struggle, his father provided for his education. He is currently pursuing a bachelor's degree. Prior to joining FFS, he worked as a helper for construction contractor. He also participated in street dramas during the ODF (Open Defecation Free) campaign. He is among the few men involved in FFS where majority of participants are women. He believes that FFS instilled self-confidence in him that led him to his victory at the local elections. As a Ward Member he hopes to address gender-based violence in his community and promote youth entrepreneurship with focus on cash crops like bananas and sugarcane.



**Indra Oli**

Ward Member,  
Jorayal Rural Municipality-1,  
Doti district.

**Indra**, a mother of five daughters, lost her husband in an accident. After that she had to be the breadwinner for her family. She was involved in agriculture before being associated with FFS. Despite the challenges she faced as a single woman, she was committed to environmental conservation and volunteered tirelessly for community forestry. Through her involvement with FFS, she developed public speaking skills which proved invaluable during election campaign. She has played a role in combating various forms of gender discrimination and violence, such as Chhaupadi (now banned tradition that banishes menstruating females from the house) and unequal treatment of sons and daughters besides providing training on cultivation of various crops as an FFS facilitator. She remains committed to resolving social and gender-related issues within her community and empowering women from underprivileged groups as a Ward Member.

## SMALL IS BEAUTIFUL

A Community Disaster Management Committee (CDMC) in Kanchanpur district, Sudurpashchim Province has successfully established an interlocking block production enterprise and are progressing towards the path of a more resilient future.



Interlocking block production in Kanchanpur. Photo: Oxfam

This venture not only provides a consistent income for its members but also supports CDMC's financial sustainability. 10 percent of net profit from the business contributes to CDMC's emergency response fund.

CDMCs have been established and strengthened by Oxfam and NEEDS Nepal in Kanchanpur and Dadeldhura districts.

Prior to establishment of the enterprise, a comprehensive study conducted by Oxfam and NEEDS Nepal found that a small brick factory is a profitable enterprise in the riverine area of Bhimdutta Municipality in Kanchanpur.

Interlocking blocks are crafted from locally available materials such as sand and cement, making them environmentally friendly and cost-effective. Utilizing local resources minimizes transportation cost while generating employment opportunities for the community. Moreover, local production of building materials enhances the community's capacity to take charge of their development and resilience to future disasters.

Interlocking blocks not only resist natural disasters like earthquakes, floods, and storms more effectively but also minimize damage incurred during such events. Additionally, dedicating a portion of the profits to establish an emergency fund signifies a proactive stance of the community in disaster preparedness and response. The emergency fund will serve as prompt aid to disaster-affected individuals as well as a safety net for community members confronting unexpected personal emergencies or financial difficulties.

Man Bahadur Thapa, CDMC member shares, "We have sold more than 30,000 blocks and have received orders for additional 5,000 pieces. The business has helped us become financially independent."

Oxfam had supported an initial investment of NPR 570,040 (USD 3455) while the community contributed NPR 130,000 (USD 788) to establish this entrepreneurial venture.



## LAND RECLAMATION UPLIFTS LIVELIHOOD

Chanda Kumari Bam's lives in Sargauda village, Parshuram Municipality-6 in Dadeldhura district, Sudurpashchim Province. Her story represents all the households affected by flood. At 61 years of age, she has been living in Sargauda with her joint family of 11 since 1965. Her family is dependent on agriculture just like the other residents of the village.

According to Chandra, production from their farm was so good that they could live off their land for the entire year. The income

from selling their produce was enough to pay their children's school fees. They would grow various crops such as rice, wheat, corn, pulses, vegetables, etc. all year round in their land.

In her experience, for the first time in 1988, Puntura River and Rangoon River entered Sargauda village although it did not cause much damage. Chandra says that this was the result of expansion of road network, haphazard infrastructure development, especially deforestation. Since then, every year, during the rainy season villagers, have been losing their land to flood. Some families even migrated from the village due to the risk of continuous flooding.

However, it was the flood in 2007 that caused most damage. The arable land of most of residents was swept away by flood in Puntura River and Rangoon River. Their paddy fields turned into rocky, sandy, unfertile land. Removing boulders and sand on their own was not possible. And due to their low income, they could not afford to hire machines and labor.

"Our land remained barren for over 15 years. We went through unspeakable tragedies as we were unable to farm in the land," shares Chandra reminiscing their ordeal.

This was the plight of 14 families in Sargauda village. Oxfam and NEEDS Nepal supported the families in reclaiming around 3 hectares of land that was made uncultivable by the flood.

"Now, finally our land will be covered with greenery this year. I cannot thank Oxfam and NEEDS Nepal enough for their support," says Chandra smiling.



Chanda Kumari Bam shows her first harvest after land reclamation. Her land had remained barren for more than 15 years. Photo: Susma Panta/Oxfam

# WASH AND WATER GOVERNANCE PROGRAM



⬆ The joy of collecting water from your own household tap is unparalleled. An elderly woman in Dhading filling her “*gagri*” from her household tap. Photo: Susma Panta/Oxfam

**WASH and Water Governance** Program focuses on two major sub-themes – WASH Governance and Water Resource Management. Under WASH Governance, we focus on WASH infrastructure construction, access to finance for WASH facilities, demand creation and behavior change and functionality and sustainability. Likewise, under Water Resource Management, focus is on basin management and river resilience for effective resource protection, management, and utilization of basin and river resources.

Oxfam addressed the challenges of water insecurity for poor, socially excluded, and vulnerable women and men and achieve systemic change for sustainable and equitable access to water, sanitation, and natural resources. And paved the way to achieve sustainable solution to community water management through established through four Water Supply Board Models. Three palikas are now implementing online platform to keep records of and maintain financial transaction. And 276 individuals

from different Water User Committee were trained to use online platform for billing and payment gateway. During this year, Oxfam reached 33,911 population through 39 water supply schemes (WSS) in four municipalities. And financial analysis of 520 WSS conducted to understand their financial status and business plan were developed.

Oxfam focused on integrated watershed management. Oxfam developed indicators for abilities of People Landscape Approaches (PLA). The People Landscape Framework has 6 abilities to achieve people centric resource sharing. These abilities are sustainable socio-ecological system that is adaptive to change, bio-cultural diversity and spiritual wellbeing of all, stakeholder networks for

converging interests and stakes, inclusive and accountable decision making within policies that work, financial spatial programme with coherent set of landscape interventions and, climate resilient and vital landscapes where communities thrive.

Oxfam collaborated with local governments, Ministry of Water Supply, Department of Water Supply and Sanitation, Water Energy Commission Secretariat (WECS), provincial government, private sectors, like-minded I/NGOs and media/journalists influencing the right stakeholders to address water security. Oxfam and WECS jointly conducted a Multistakeholder Consultation Workshop on Watershed Management.



# INNOVATION IN RURAL WATER SUPPLY SYSTEMS IN NEPAL



📍 A lift system reservoir tank in Dhading district, Bagmati Province. Photo: Susma Panta/Oxfam

Topography of Nepal, primarily hills and mountains, come with a lot of challenges including access to safe water. Women and children living in such topography are forced to carry the load of water on their backs daily through the difficult terrain. This daily errand weighs on them in more ways than one, physical strain, lack of sleep, loss of time, and lack of safe water.

Although there are many water supply systems present in rural municipalities, a staggering amount of those schemes are dysfunctional due to lack of proper management. It is estimated that only 25 per cent of the piped

system are functional, while the remaining needs repairs. Most of the schemes that are functioning are dependent on highly volatile parameters that make them vulnerable to frequent breakdowns. One of those volatile parameters is the manual operation of the water supply system.

In majority of rural water supply schemes, there is a fixed scheduled supply of water, either through community taps or household taps. People get anywhere from one to four hours a day of water supply (in the case of functional water supply schemes, which is rare).

To provide water to rural municipalities, it first needs to be collected in a reservoir tank. There is a gate valve that needs to be manually opened so water can be distributed to household (or community-level) taps. In almost all rural water supply schemes, Heralu (caretaker) is responsible for opening and closing the gate valve on schedule. While it sounds like a simple task, it can get very complicated. Turning gate valve on and off can be a multi-fold process depending on nature of water supply system.

In hilly regions, where water is collected through a lift supply, the water must be pumped from a lower elevation to collection chambers and then to reservoir tank. If it is a multi-fold lifting system, water needs to be pumped to multiple collection chambers at different elevations.

Heralu manually turns pumps on and off, waits for each collection chamber to be filled before finally turning on the reservoir tank gate valve for distribution. In general situation, this task could take four to five hours a day. However, due to electricity fluctuations (a common occurrence in the hills), Heralu is compelled to walk through hills and forests in the middle of the night to ensure the collection chambers are filled.

Given the difficult nature of the job coupled with low pay and no days off, Heralus often migrate for better opportunities. There aren't enough technically knowledgeable people in a community to replace the Heralus. Likewise, manual work means more people are engaged which increases operational cost.

Oxfam is working to achieve sustainability of rural water supply management system through piloting an Alternative Management Model for water supply management.

After various field-level studies and research, Oxfam has determined that innovation in the water supply systems could drastically improve conditions. This includes adopting technologies such as:

1. Automated gate valve operating device
2. Listening stick to know the exact pipe breakdown point
3. Digital Water Meter
4. Floating Switch to operate the pump remotely

While none of these are completely new technologies, in the context of Dhading district's rural setting, successful and sustainable implementation of these technologies are non-existent. Some of the reasons being affordability, lack of awareness, and frequent breakdown of apparatus and lack of local skilled technicians to repair it.

Therefore, Oxfam has partnered with National Innovation Center (NIC) to develop an automated gate valve operating device, which is the first phase of automating the water supply system.

A prototype of an automated gate valve operating device that can be opened and closed through a smartphone and online dashboard has already been developed. The lab testing and field testing of the prototype has been completed. We are now analyzing the findings from field testing.

# TRANSBOUNDARY RIVERS OF SOUTH ASIA (TROSA) 2



➤ Transboundary Rivers of South Asia (TROSA) Phase 2 inception workshop that was held from 27 February – 1 March 2023. Photo: Susma Panta/Oxfam

Oxfam launched second phase of Transboundary Rivers of South Asia (TROSA) in February 2023. TROSA 2 is built on the foundations and learnings of Phase I and aims to improve cooperation in governing sharing of water resources and strengthening resilience to climate change of communities in Mahakali River basin.

There are four outcomes that have been outlined to contribute to the goal of the project – a) strengthening the climate resilience of livelihood communities, b) improved and

inclusive management of the transboundary river ecosystem, c) strengthened leadership of multi-stakeholders, and d) strengthened cooperation, collaboration, and accountability across basins.

Transboundary Rivers of South Asia (TROSA) 2 is funded by SIDA and is implemented in three countries – Bangladesh, India, and Nepal. Oxfam works in partnership with a diverse group of international, regional, national and local partner organisations in Bangladesh, India and Nepal.



In Nepal, TROSA phase I was implemented in Mahakali River basin from 2017 to 2022 to reduce poverty among marginalized and vulnerable river basin communities through increased access to and control over water resources. Under the project, Oxfam along with national partners – NEEDS, RUWDUC, RUDES, and Sankalpa/CRDS had formed Women Empowerment Centers (WEC) to strengthen the communities' knowledge on women's rights, gender issues, local decision-making processes, improve their advocacy and leadership skills.

Likewise, TROSA introduced Mahakali Sambad, dialogue between concerned stakeholders

from India and Nepal to advocate for rights and water-related issues concerning the people living in bordering areas along Mahakali River.

Similarly, white water rafting in Mahakali River was promoted to support livelihood of local communities. Citizen scientists were trained to collect and test water samples of Mahakali River to generate data on water pollution to advocate for effective policies and raise awareness about water pollution with the community members and local government. Oxfam in Nepal also worked with stakeholders of India (Oxfam in India and its partner, GDS) to develop a joint Theory of Change and joint action plan.

# PEOPLE'S LANDSCAPE APPROACH FOR RESOURCE SHARING

People's Landscape Approach pilot study was undertaken in Rangoon Watershed to promote and understand the importance of better governance structure for natural resourcesharing.

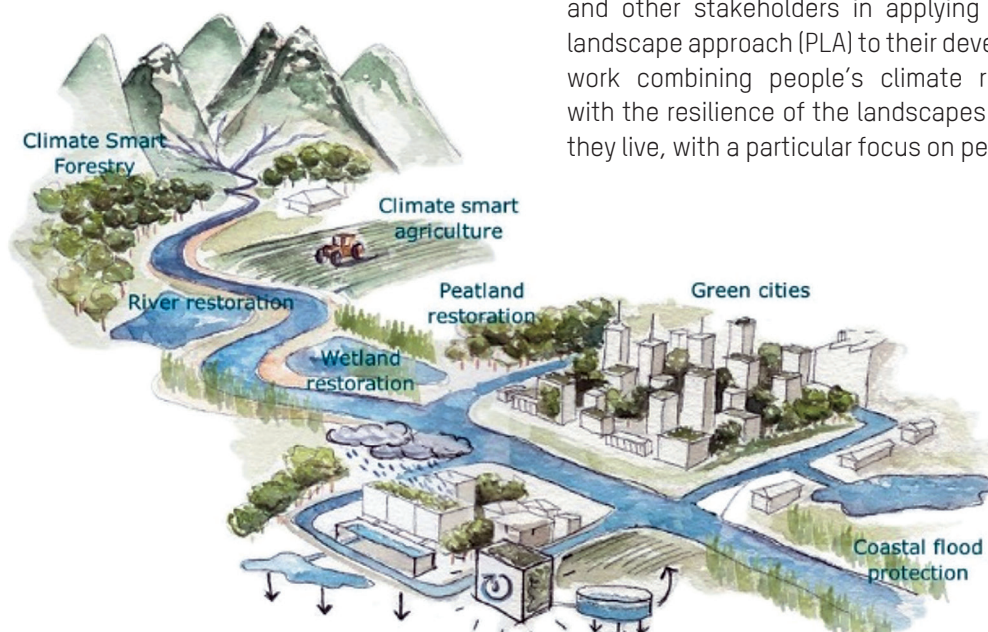
As part of climate resilience interventions, Oxfam and partners aim to ensure rural communities' rights to achieve food security, be resilient to climate change and improve their livelihoods, while sustainably managing their natural resources. A review of interventions underlined a need for Oxfam to broaden its current approach of technical support and advocacy for land and water rights. This led to development of People's Landscape Framework – an innovative tool that can be used in a landscape to identify areas for cross-sectoral collaboration and building nexus between various program areas.

There is a need to strengthen people's adaptive capacities so that they can develop

their own agency to engage in management and governance of their natural resources. This requires combining people's climate resilience with resilience of landscapes, necessitating a broader approach: a landscape approach. With this realization, Oxfam and partners laid the ground for developing People Landscape Approach Framework and promoting a 'People's Landscape Approach' (PLA).

Oxfam's vision with the landscape approach is to develop tools (in first phase) to build landscape on more meaningful participatory planning. This could help to build a bottom-up governance system in which landscape actors design and implement landscape plans that are more sustainable and inclusive legitimized by landscape actors and endorsed and administered by local governments.

The major achievement of this Pilot Study project was a compendium of tools designed to assist civil society, government, private sector, and other stakeholders in applying people's landscape approach (PLA) to their development work combining people's climate resilience with the resilience of the landscapes in which they live, with a particular focus on people.



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- BWSN
- CSRC
- FOCUS Nepal
- HCGN
- NEEDS Nepal
- LI-BIRD
- RDC Nepal
- RUDES
- RUWDUC
- WAM
- Yuwalaya

## FINANCIALS



**Total Expenditure**  
**2.31 MILLION GBP**  
(April 2022-March 2023)



# ACRONYMS

BWSN:	Bagmati Welfare Society Nepal
CBOs:	Community Based Organizations
CDMC:	Community Disaster Management Committee
CEFM:	Child, Early and Forced Marriage
COVID-19:	Coronavirus disease
CRDS:	Community Rural Development Society
CSOs:	Civil Society Organizations
CSRC:	Community Self Reliance Centre
DRR:	Disaster Risk Reduction
FFS:	Farmer Field School
FOCUS Nepal:	Forum for Community Upliftment System, Nepal
GBV:	Gender-based Violence
GDS:	Grameen Development Services
GESI:	Gender Equality and Social Inclusion
HCGN:	Himalayan Conservation Group Nepal
HH:	Household
ICIMOD:	International Centre for Integrated Mountain Development
I/NGO:	International/Non-governmental Organization
LI-BIRD:	Local Initiatives for Biodiversity, Research and Development
MEAL:	Monitoring, Evaluation, Accountability, and Learning
NEEDS:	National Environment & Equity Development Society
NGO:	Non-governmental Organization
PGA:	Project Grant Agreement
RM:	Rural Municipality
RUDES:	Rural Development & Environment Management Society
RUWDUC:	Rural Women's Development and Unity Centre
SD=HS:	Sowing Diversity Harvesting Security
SIDA:	Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency
SWC:	Social Welfare Council
VAWG:	Violence Against Women and Girls
WASH:	Water, Sanitation and Hygiene
WEC:	Women Empowerment Centre
WECS:	Water Energy Commission Secretariat
WLP:	Women Leadership Platform



Women in Dhading rejoice having a stable water supply system. Due to frequent system breakdowns, they had to spend hours carrying water on their back. Photo: Susma Panta/Oxfam







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