

# WHAT'S UP?

## NEWSLETTER OXFAM IN NEPAL

SPECIAL EDITION - RESILIENCE & CLIMATE JUSTICE



OXFAM



*Sangita Sijali from Rautahat showing the leaf plate (Duna) she prepared with the manufacturing machine supported by Oxfam in Nepal.  
Photo: Netizen Media*

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# #BEATPLASTICPOLLUTION

World Environment Day, celebrated annually on 5th June is a platform that encourages worldwide environment activism. This year marks the 50th anniversary of World Environment Day and the focus is on solutions to plastic pollution.

More than 400 million tons of plastic are produced every year, half of which are single use products. Of that, less than 10 per cent is recycled. An estimated 19-23 million tons end up in lakes, rivers, and seas. (<https://www.worldenvironmentday.global/>). The data calls for immediate global action.

Likewise, solid waste management poses a major challenge for Nepal. According to Ministry of Federal Affairs and General Administration's assessment 2018, average per capita municipal solid waste generation was 0.39 kg/capita/day of which plastic constituted around 14 percent. Kathmandu valley alone uses more than 4.7 to 4.8 million plastic bags daily, which forms more than 16 percent of the city's garbage (ICIMOD).

Government of Nepal (GoN) has set two targets related to plastics in its 10-year framework on sustainable consumption practice (SCP); reduction in use of plastics from 2 in 2019 to 0.9 gram/day/capita in 2025 and increase in recycling of plastics in manufacturing industries from 42 percent in 2019 to 55.1 percent in 2025.

Oxfam in Nepal endeavours to support the government meet its targets by implementing projects that promote an alternative to plastic use. In fact, we have helped set up leaf plate enterprises, an alternative to plastic plates and cloth bags enterprise, an alternative to plastic bags and promote tree

plantations among various other initiatives.

This issue of our newsletter highlights the activities we have carried out for climate change mitigation under our Resilience and Climate Justice theme.

In addition to this, the newsletter also shares our efforts in supporting social enterprises under the RCJ theme. Oxfam has been implementing Enterprise Development Program to support Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs) to help build sustainable and impactful businesses through co-investment partnerships since 2011.

June 27 marks Micro, Small and Medium sized Enterprises Day.



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# 20

Women Empowerment Centers (WEC) established in Baitadi District of Sudurpaschim Province

# 136

Community based Organizations (CBOs) and Civil Society Organizations (CSOs) strengthened

# 5

Farmers' Seeds Enterprises established

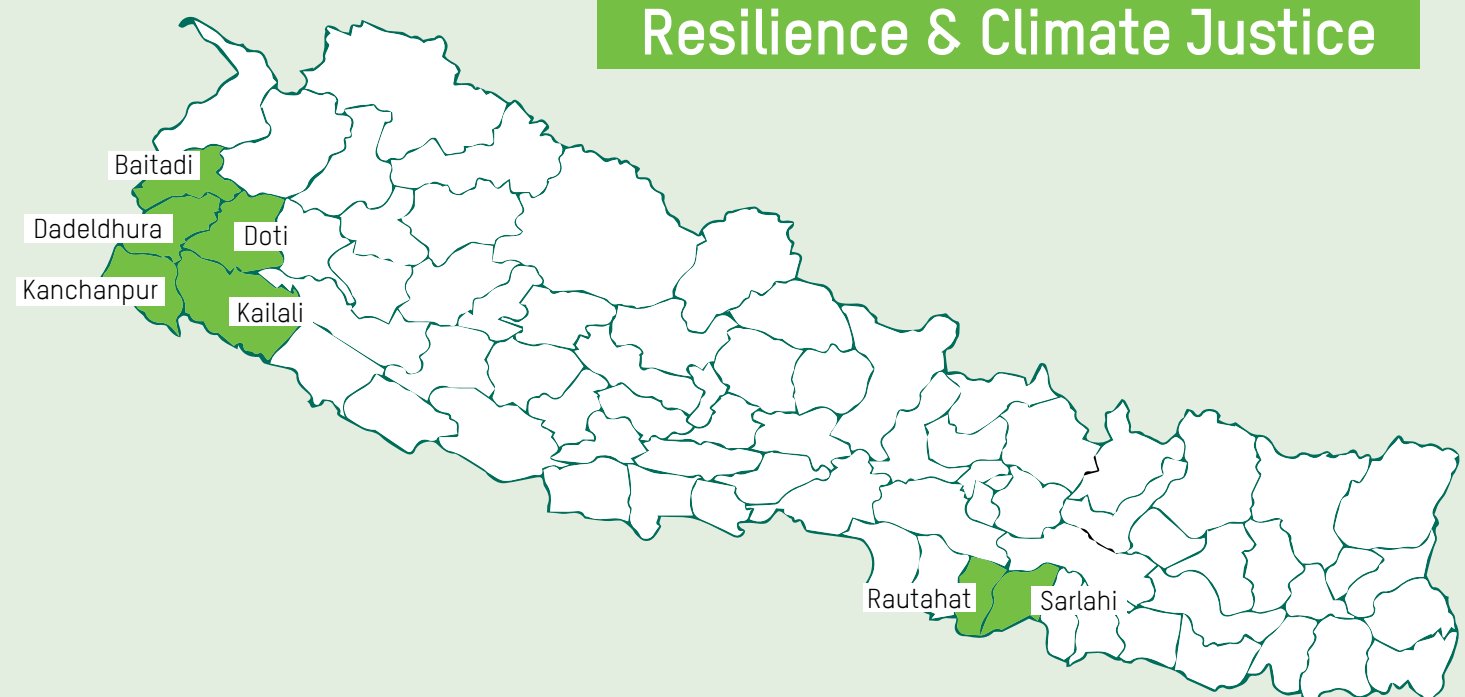
# 207

Farmer Field Schools (FFS) established

# 5

Social Enterprises supported

## Working Area of Resilience & Climate Justice





# #BEATPLASTICPOLLUTION

## From Homemakers to Entrepreneurs

A women-led Leaf Plate (duna tapari) enterprise has been established for the first time in Baitadi district. The enterprise is registered under Nirpal Women Empowerment Center (WEC), a women's center formed by Rural Development and Environment Management Society (RUDES), a non-governmental organization based in Baitadi district, under the Gender Responsive Economic Empowerment in Nepal (GREEN) Project.

Nirpal WEC, made up of 30 women from Dashrathchand Municipality, set up the enterprise after receiving technical and financial support from the GREEN Project.

The GREEN Project is being implemented by RUDES in Dashrathchand Municipality and Patan Municipality of Baitadi district with the support of Oxfam in Nepal.

Prior to setting up the enterprise, WEC served as a

centre where the women held discussions, meetings, and conducted various trainings.

Bhagrathi Joshi, member of Nirpal WEC shares, "We were able to establish this company only with the support of RUDES and Oxfam in Nepal. In our community, women are not allowed to work outside. We are compelled to spend the whole day doing household work."

"When RUDES formed Nirpal WEC, I became a member. After I got involved at WEC, I personally experienced a lot of changes. I was able to work in a group and grew more confident. I along with four other members also got the opportunity to attend a training on leaf plate making in Dhangadi. There, we observed and learnt how machines prepare a leaf plate (duna tapari). Upon return, we decided to establish our own enterprise," added Joshi.

Currently, Nirpal WEC members manufacture leaf plates from

sal tree (Shorea robusta) leaves which is easily available. Dashrathchand Municipality is planning to announce itself as a plastic free municipality and promote the use of leaf plates.

After monitoring the enterprise, Bikram Bahadur Chand, Municipality Administrative Officer said, "The establishment of this enterprise in our municipality has made it easier for us to promote plastic-free municipalities."

He also shared that he had placed an order for 400 pieces of leaf plates (duna tapari).

According to Kamala Pant, Chairperson of Nirpal WEC, "Previously, our members would come to the centre to attend meetings or trainings after completing their household work. Now the women have an opportunity to earn. We have set the price for the plates according to the size. The smaller one costs Rs. 2, medium one Rs.3 and the large plate costs Rs. 5. We produce 500 pieces of leaf plates every day."

"The main objective of supporting this enterprise is to empower women. We feel humbled to see the women who were earlier only involved in household chores now making money," claims Gopal Bhatt, Program Coordinator, GREEN Project, RUDES.



Women preparing leaf plates Photo: Gopal Bhat, RUDES

# #BEATPLASTICPOLLUTION

## Replacing Plastic with Cloth bags

Muna Dungal Chalise (35 years old) is a resident of Chandrapur Municipality-5, Rautahat District, Madhesh Province. Her primary source of income was the furniture factory she and her husband started with a partner. However, eight years ago when the partner withdrew their share, they suffered a heavy loss. Muna and her husband had to get another loan to pay off their previous loan. To pay off the loans, Muna started working as a daily wage laborer in another person's farm, while her husband went to work in Dubai. Her family struggled to meet basic needs and provide for their children's education.

When she learned about Sayapatri Farmers Group, she decided to join the group. She attended the two-day Start and Improve Your Business (SIYB) training where she learned about business, how to develop business strategy and plans and marketing.

The Sayapatri Farmers Group was formed as part of the Enhancing CSOs Roles as Key Development Partners on Climate Resilient Policies and Practices (ECCSO) project, implemented by Rural Development Centre Nepal, an NGO based in Rautahat District. The project is supported by Oxfam in Nepal and European Union.

The project provided the group with six tailoring machines.



Muna Dungal Chalise from Rautahat making a cloth bag. Photo: Bibek Karki/Oxfam in Nepal

The ECCSO Project is being implemented in Saptari and Rautahat district of Madhesh Pradesh (previously called Province 2) of Nepal. The project is working on enhancing and strengthening the capacities of Community based Organizations (CBOs) and Civil Society Organizations (CSOs) in climate change issues and creating an enabling environment to work together with local government and CSO's through advocacy so that the CSOs/CBOs act as key development partners. The project ensures meaningful participation of women, youth, marginalized groups, person with disabilities (PwDs), human rights defenders and particularly vulnerable groups in the upstream and downstream communities of the catchment area in climate change and DRR issues.

Muna was among the women who benefited from it. She learned tailoring and started earning NPR 6,000 per month by making kurta salwar, daura suruwal (Nepali attire), cushion and bags.

The project has also assisted the group in getting a PAN registration.

Besides this, the members have also received doll and cushion making training, sponsored by Chandrapur Municipality. Some of the women are now making dolls, cushions, mobile bags, other simple bags. The Sayapatri Farmers Group has also planted 250 plants along the road.



## #PROMOTINGMSMES

### Enterprise Development Program



A shop run by Pavitra Jankalyan Agriculture Cooperative; an enterprise supported by EDP. Photo: Aubrey Wade

Oxfam in Nepal has been implementing Enterprise Development Program (EDP) that supports small and medium sized enterprises through co-investment partnerships with private sector, cooperatives, and NGOs. This is a unique program that enhances the capacity of agro-based rural cooperatives and links them to formal banking system.

Oxfam provides technical support that includes access to loan, use of ICTs in marketing, handicraft trainings, and improved seeds. The EDP provides an intelligent mix of loans, working capitals, grants, entrepreneurship development, technical and vocational skill trainings, business counselling and policy influence to selected portfolios.

The program also establishes Participatory Learning Centres (PLC) to identify problems and solutions.

We help cooperatives improve their financial management system and prepare a business plan. The cooperatives sign agreements with buyers (15-25) and MOUs with farmer groups. This way the market rate is guaranteed.

The farmers benefit from increased income due to high value production, adoption of better farming techniques, and guaranteed market rate.

The program has benefitted 7500 (70% Women) people since the launch in 2017 to date. We have also helped establish five enterprises.



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## Geeta Chaudhary's Journey to Empowerment

Geeta Chaudhary (33) was born into a family of kamaiyas (traditional system of bonded labour) in Kailari Rural Municipality, Kailali District, Sudurpaschim Province. She herself became a kamalari (female bonded labour) at the age of 7 until the age of 12.

As a kamalari, she was forced to work for wages that were hardly enough to survive. The Government of Nepal abolished the kamaiya system in 2000.

Despite facing many unfair and unjust situations, she remained resilient.

Today, Geeta is the chairperson of Janabatawaran Saving and Credit Cooperative in the municipality. She is an epitome of grit and determination. She never received a formal education but educated herself informally.



*Her participation in various trainings and workshops such as account management, cooperative management, leadership, business planning training, group management and coaching sessions has removed her fear of public speaking.*

She first approached the cooperative as a service seeker. She was an extremely shy woman. She had difficulty engaging in conversations. But after participating in various capacity building workshops conducted by the Sowing Diversity=Harvesting Security (SD=HS) project, she started growing confident.

Her participation in various trainings and workshops such as account management, cooperative management, leadership, business planning training, group management and coaching sessions has removed her fear of public speaking. As a chairperson, she was obligated to participate and lead executive board meetings, meetings of sub-committees, interact with various seed producer farmers, staffs, and stakeholders which boosted her confidence.



Geeta Chaudhary reviewing documents in her office Photo: Lalita Ale, LI-BIRD





*Geeta Chaudhary reviewing documents in her office Photo: Lalita Ale, LI-BIRD*

Oxfam in Nepal is supporting Local Initiatives for Biodiversity, Research and Development (LI-BIRD), a non-governmental organization committed to improving the livelihoods of rural people in Nepal, in the implementation of SD=HS project.

The SD=HS project aims to enhance the capacity of smallholders, women, and indigenous farmers to access, develop and market seeds of climate-resilient crops and varieties.

Initially, Geeta's lack of confidence held her back. But, with the encouragement of others and the various trainings she attended, she went on to become the vice chairperson of the cooperative and is now the chairperson. She was directly involved in operating small grant projects, completing them with utmost honesty, transparency, and ethical conduct, inspiring and motivating other stakeholders of the cooperative.

Luckily, the cooperative also received a small grant from SD=HS project the same year she was elected chairperson. During her tenure, the total number of shareholders increased by 65 percent, with women shareholders increasing by 73 percent. Likewise, there has been a significant increase in seed production. The total transaction of seed business has increased more than five times since she took office.

If you have any concerns or queries regarding safeguarding, please contact the following number **16600150076** or send an email at **[speakup@oxfam.org.uk](mailto:speakup@oxfam.org.uk)** For feedback and complains related to programme, please contact the following numbers— NTC: **9851179358**; Ncell: **9801571204**

## FEEDBACK?

Do you have programme updates, stories, pictures, videos to share? Or, any important questions on the newsletter?

Please contact: **Rachana Mukhia, Media and Communication Officer** at **[rmukhia@oxfam.org.uk](mailto:rmukhia@oxfam.org.uk)**

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