



USAID Inclusive Livelihoods–Central



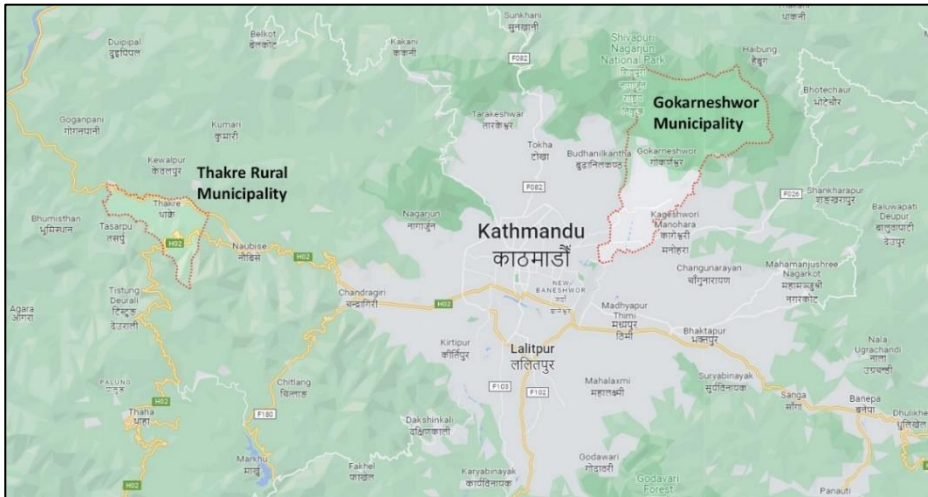
International Disability Day, Kathmandu



Livelihoods training in Dhading District

This is a project to promote the inclusion and economic empowerment of disabled people in central Nepal: through mobilization, increased access to livelihoods and training, and an initiative to promote inclusive employment.

We are working in rural Dhading and an urban/peri-urban area of Kathmandu:



Five Nepalese partner organizations are implementing the project: Disabled Human Rights Center (DHRC), Disabled Welfare Association (DWA), Federation of Women with Disability, Nepal (FWDN); Forward Looking (FL); and SHRUTI (National Association of the Hard-of-Hearing and Deafened).



Early in the project, Social Mobilizers like Ambika (right) collected disability data in Gokarneshwor and Thakre, as a basis for assessing the needs, inviting participants, convening self-help groups, and establishing a baseline for the activity.



Inclusive, sustainable livelihoods

More than 300 disabled people and family members in Thakre and Gokarneshwor have been brought together into mostly women-led self-help groups (SHGs).



SHGs in Thakre and Gokarneshwor

SHGs provide a supportive environment for marginalized people to turn their economic lives around – and increase their resilience to disaster – through small-scale investment, savings, training and productive activity. They are forums to share problems, learn about rights and entitlements, receive moral and practical support. Working together is better than struggling individually and, as recognized entities, they can access mainstream development programmes in future.



Following leadership and livelihoods training in 2023, 30 SHG members in each Municipality are being selected and supported in each quarter of the Inclusive Livelihoods–Central activity to set up small enterprises for income generation, greater independence and resilience. Social mobilizers from DWA and FWDN continue visit and provide regular updates, support and oversight.

The SHGs will become self-sustaining, continuing their savings, loan and support activities; and the new enterprises will continue beyond the lifetime of the project.

Training for employment in urban Nepal

Disability – and other intersectional inequalities – can mean that young people miss out on educational, training and employment opportunities; unmet communication or accessibility needs can have lifelong consequences. Young disabled people can also face stigma and assumptions of incapacity. We aim to enhance employment prospects through targeted training in areas of demand.



Following a market needs assessment in April 2023, Forward Looking (FL) and SHRUTI have provided inclusive, accessible vocational training courses for the first 127 young people, in hospitality management; basic, intermediate and advanced IT; graphic and web design; and digital marketing.

Inclusive Employment

The project's advocacy element aims to promote, celebrate and multiply inclusive employment practices, and to tackle the legal, regulatory, and cultural barriers that hold disabled people back from full participation in economic life.

DHRC-Nepal has been raising awareness of these issues through its *Apangata Aawaz (Disability Voice)* magazine, radio broadcasts and programme on Nepal TV. DHRC is working with important employers in Nepal like CloudFactory, Subisu Cablenet, Worldlink Communications and the MeroJob platform, on principles for the fair and equal recruitment of people with disabilities.

And in February 2024, DHRC held a first Inclusive Employer Award ceremony in Kathmandu to recognize and celebrate exemplary private sector employers for their contributions to the promotion and development of disability-inclusive employment in Nepal.



The symbolic awards went to MeroJob, Prabhu Management, Hotel Hardik, CloudFactory Nepal, Subisu Cablenet, T-21 Café, BIA Institute, Kathmandu Model Hospital and the *Cocina Mitho Chha* School of Hospitality.

Referrals

Each quarter, we aim to provide at least 10 disabled people with the specific practical support they need through referrals to other NGOs, agencies, authorities or institutions.

Over 160 people have benefited so far from referrals for assistive devices including sticks, crutches, wheelchairs and prostheses; educational scholarship; disability registration assessments, medical services, transportation costs to attend vocational training, and seed funding programs for income generation activities including a grocery stall, tailoring, cosmetics and small shops.



Manju was referred for a wheelchair in collaboration with the local health post and Gokarneshwor Municipality. A lack of accessible transport means her husband represents her at SHG meetings, but now she can be involved in income generation activities independently.

Beg Bahadur had polio as a child in Dhading. A visit to a traditional healer made things worse and he became physically disabled. Still, he successfully finished school and now works online and as a delivery rider to support his ageing parents. Noting his struggle with a damaged caliper, FL referred him for an upgrade, making riding safer and less painful.



With the support of FWDN, Jenisha got a receptionist job in the office of a political party. It has brought good experience and enhanced her quality of life, self-esteem, confidence, independence, freedom and economic status. Jenisha would like to work in the government sector, supporting others affected by disability.

DDP has been working on disability and development for 30 years.

Our vision is one of inclusion, where disabled children, women and men can access all the opportunities their societies have to offer, and are not left behind.

Run by and for disabled people, our local partners are well placed to understand their needs and challenges.

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