

Newsletter

MCA-Nepal Issue No. 10 April - September 2024

One Year On after Launch of MCC Nepal Compact

Millennium Challenge Account-Nepal (MCA-Nepal) marked the first anniversary of the launch of the MCC Nepal Compact since its Entry into Force on 30 August 2023.

Some major highlights are the award of high-value contracts to construct three 400kV substations and the 18km cross-

border electricity transmission line along with contract awards in power sector technical assistance to enable the Electricity Regulatory Commission (ERC)

with embedded advisory support and consultancy services to enhance electricity use in affected areas of the Electricity Transmission Project (ETP).

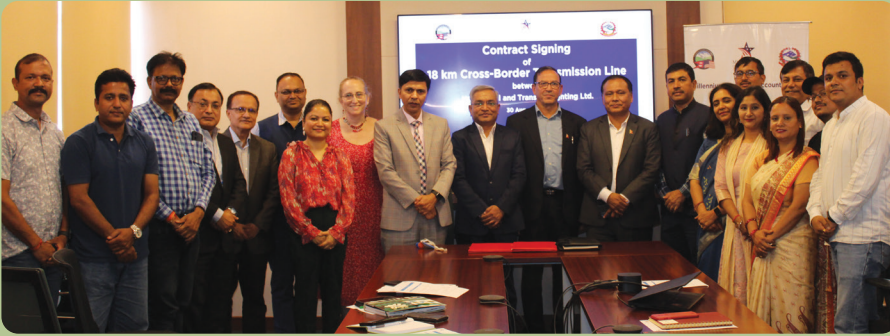
Contents	
Events	4
Electricity Transmission Project	7
Progress in Site Access	8
Road Maintenance Project	11
Success Story	12



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Hon. Deepak Khadka, Minister for Energy, Water Resources and Irrigation, addressing the Contract Signing Ceremony for the construction of the New Damauli Substation on 31 July 2024.

Contract Award for 18km Cross-Border Transmission Line



MCA-Nepal signed a contract, valued at USD 12.36 million, for the construction of the 18km cross-border electricity transmission line (TL) with Transrail Lighting Ltd. on 30 August 2024. The contractor will construct the TL from the 400kV New Butwal Substation in

Nawalparasi (Bardaghat Susta West) to the Nepal-India border within the contract duration of 21 months.

The 40th MCA-Nepal Board meeting, held on 6 March 2024, decided to advance the 18km Nepal portion of the Butwal-

Gorakhpur power TL on a priority basis by separating it from the larger 315km TL to meet the obligations of the cross-border power trade agreement between the governments of Nepal and India.

The 18 km transmission line will play an important role in helping Nepal make strides in achieving its domestic power goals and reinforcing Nepal's position in the regional energy market. The transmission line infrastructure will also promote investment in hydropower projects in Nepal and facilitate additional power trade between Nepal and India through the New Butwal - Gorakhpur, India cross-border line.

Contract Award for Ratmate Substation

MCA-Nepal signed a contract, valued at USD 51.6 million, to construct a 400kV Substation at Ratmate in Nuwakot district with Techno Electric and Engineering Company Ltd., India on 14 June 2024. The 400kV GIS substation will be constructed within the contract duration of 39 months.

The substation will serve as a critical interconnection of power transmission between the Lapsipedi and New Hetauda Substations. Once completed, Ratmate Substation will have a capacity of 1000 MVA making it one of the largest substations in the country.



Mr. Khadga Bahadur Bisht, Executive Director, MCA-Nepal, and Mr. Rajiv Agarwal, Director-Commercial at Techno Electric and Engineering Company Ltd., signing the contract for the construction of the Ratmate Substation on 14 July 2024.

Contract Award for New Butwal Substation



Mr. Khadga Bahadur Bisht, Executive Director, MCA-Nepal, exchanging the signed contract for the construction of the New Butwal Substation with Mr. Mayank Pande, Sales Director, Linxon India Pvt. Ltd. in the presence of HE Dean Thompson, the U.S. Ambassador to Nepal, Mr. Kul Man Ghising, NEA Managing Director, and Ms. Diane Francisco, MCC Resident Country Director, on 9 May 2024.

MCA-Nepal signed a contract, valued at USD 35.31 million, for the construction of the New Butwal Substation with Linxon India Pvt. Ltd. in an event in Nawalparasi (Bardaghat Susta West) district in Lumbini Province on 9 May 2024.

The 400kV Gas Insulated Switchgear (GIS) substation will be constructed within the contract duration of 39 months and will have a capacity of 945 MVA.

Contract Award for New Damauli Substation

MCA-Nepal signed a contract, valued at USD 38.89 million, for the construction of the 400kV New Damauli Substation in Tanahun district with Techno Electric and Engineering Company Ltd. (TEECL) on 31 July 2024. The contractor will construct the substation within the contract duration of 39 months.

Once completed, the New Damauli Substation will have a capacity of 1000 Mega Volt Ampere (MVA), making it one of the largest substations in the country along with the Ratmate Substation. The New Damauli Substation will be a critical connection point for power flow with the Ratmate Substation, Lekhnath Substation and New Butwal Substation.

Contract Award for Capacity Building Activities to Enhance Electricity Use



MCA-Nepal signed a USD 2.4 million contract under the MCA Partnership Program of the ETP with Winrock International Institute for Agricultural Development on 22 July 2024. The contract will provide consultancy services for Capacity Building Activities to Enhance Electricity Use. It will be executed within the contract period of 36 months.

The consultant will support MCA-Nepal enhance the capacity of institutions and individuals with a focus on preparing Municipal Energy Plans and developing capacities for the productive use of electricity within affected wards of the ETP.

Contract Award for Advisory Support to ERC



Mr. Khadga Bahadur Bisht, Executive Director, MCA-Nepal, exchanging the signed contract on consulting services for Embedded (Resident) Advisors to the Electricity Regulatory Commission with Mr. Tushar Sood, Partner, Deloitte Touche Tohmatsu India LLP on 15 July 2024.

MCA-Nepal signed a USD 1.2 million contract under the Power Sector Technical Assistance Activity of ETP with Deloitte Touche Tohmatsu India LLP on 15 July 2024. The contract provides consulting services for Embedded (Resident) Advisors to the Electricity Regulatory

Commission (ERC) 4. It will be executed within the contract period of 48 months.

The consultant will provide advisory support in the economic/financial, technical, legal and policy/institutional regulatory work of the ERC.

The support will include strategic guidance, substantive regulatory reviews, oversight of various studies, development of core operational practices and procedures, and capacity building of ERC staff among others.

EVENTS

National Assembly Committee Members briefed on Progress in Projects

MCA-Nepal presented its achievements and district-specific updates to the Federalism Enablement and National Concerns Committee of the National Assembly in Palpa on 23 September 2024.

The meeting, led by Ms. Sonam Geljen Sherpa, Chairperson, Federalism Enablement and National Concerns Committee, the National Assembly and attended by local stakeholders, centered on national pride projects and discussed the status of project implementation and related challenges with committee members.



Members of the Federalism Enablement and National Concerns Committee, the National Assembly being briefed on the achievements of MCA-Nepal in Palpa on 23 September 2024.

U.S. State Department visit to MCA-Nepal



Mr. Richard R. Verma, the Deputy Secretary of State for Management and Resources of the U.S. Government, with MCC and MCA-Nepal executive team during a visit to MCA-Nepal on 16 August 2024.

Mr. Richard R. Verma, the Deputy Secretary of State for Management and Resources of the U.S. Government, visited MCA-Nepal on 16 August 2024.

MCA-Nepal team updated him on the implementation status of the MCC Nepal Compact.

Deputy Secretary Mr. Verma engaged with the leadership team of MCA-Nepal during his visit and stressed the importance of the timely completion of the projects to drive Nepal's economic growth.

Joint Media Interaction on One-Year-On

MCA-Nepal and the U.S. Embassy in Nepal jointly organized a media interaction on 21 August 2024 to update the media on the one-year progress after the launch of the MCC Nepal Compact on 30 August 2023.

The event was attended by His Excellency Dean R. Thompson, the U.S. Ambassador to Nepal, Ms. Diane L. Francisco, Resident Country Director-MCC, Mr. Khadga Bahadur Bisht, Executive Director, MCA-Nepal and other officials from the U.S. Embassy, MCC and MCA-Nepal. MCA-Nepal Executive Director presented on the significant progress in the implementation of the MCC Nepal Compact projects, highlighting the



The media interaction jointly organized by MCA-Nepal and the US Embassy in Nepal on 21 August 2024.

completion of major high-value procurements and activities in site access. Questions on different aspects of MCA-Nepal activities forwarded by journalists were addressed by

concerned officials during the two-hour interaction.

Around 20 journalists representing various national media participated in the event.

MCA-Nepal joins MCC to celebrate 20 years of Effective International Development

MCA-Nepal joined MCC along with other MCA countries for MCC's 20th Anniversary Partners for Prosperity tribute dinner at the George W. Bush Institute in Dallas, United States on 6 May 2024 to celebrate the agency's fulfillment of its global development vision.

The dinner attended by the US President George W. Bush and MCC CEO Alice Albright among other high-level dignitaries was hosted by MCC as a part of the 20th Anniversary celebration of its innovative international development model, and the poverty-reducing benefits the agency has delivered to millions of people worldwide. Representatives from current and former MCC partner countries took part in the event.

Representing Nepal in the event, Ms. Shalini Tripathi, Deputy Executive Director-Management at MCA-Nepal, stated, "The Government of Nepal has



Ms. Shalini Tripathi, Deputy Executive Director - Management at MCA-Nepal, addressing the MCC's 20th Anniversary Partners for Prosperity tribute dinner at the George W. Bush Institute in Dallas, United States on 6 May 2024.

demonstrated its strength, leadership and commitment to this partnership by investing an additional USD 197 million of its funds on top of the MCC Compact fund of USD 500 million, which has made the MCC Nepal Compact unique with the largest up-front contribution of any partner government in the history of MCC."

She also highlighted that the Compact will attract investment, accelerate economic growth and reduce poverty by increasing access to electricity and lowering transportation costs in general.

The evening concluded with the launch of the USD 350 million Malawi Transport and Land Compact.

Orientation on Monitoring and Evaluation Plan

MCA-Nepal organized an orientation on the Monitoring and Evaluation Plan for the MCC Nepal Compact on 26 April 2024 in Kathmandu.

The event provided detailed information on MCA-Nepal's Monitoring and Evaluation Plan along with MCC's Monitoring and Evaluation Policy and best practices from other MCC Compacts.

MCA-Nepal staff and representatives from project partners - Nepal Electricity Authority (NEA), Electricity Regulatory Commission (ERC), Department of Roads and Roads Board Nepal (RBN) attended the orientation.

The 40th meeting of the MCA-Nepal Board had approved the Monitoring and Evaluation Plan.



Mr. Dhiraj Gopal Jha, Monitoring & Evaluation Manager at MCA-Nepal, addressing the orientation on the Monitoring and Evaluation Plan for the MCC Nepal Compact on 26 April 2024.

Kick-off Meetings for Three Substations



Mr. Mahesh Acharya, Deputy Executive Director - Project Delivery at MCA-Nepal, addressing the kick-off meeting with Linxon India Pvt. Ltd for the construction of the New Butwal Substation in Nawalparasi (Bardaghat Susta West) on 24 June 2024.

MCA-Nepal organized kick-off meetings with selected contractors and consultants for the timely implementation of the activities post the award of contract awards.

The kick-off meetings discussed technical details, timelines and deliverables along with MCA-Nepal procedures and guidelines for the initiation of construction and consultancy works.

Kick-off Meeting for the Construction of the 18 km TL section

A kick-off meeting with Transrail Lighting Ltd. for the construction of the 18 km section of 400kV double circuit TL from New Butwal Substation to the Nepal-India border was organized in Kathmandu on 27 September 2024.



Mr. Amol Wankhede, a representative of Transrail Lighting Ltd., addressing the kick-off meeting for the construction of the 18 km section of TL from New Butwal Substation to the Nepal-India border on 27 September 2024.

Kick-off Meetings organized with Contractors and Consultants

A kick-off meeting with Techno Electric and Engineering Company Ltd. (TEECL) for the construction of the 400kV Ratmate and New Damauli Substations in Nuwakot and Tanahun, was organized in Kathmandu on 21-22 August 2024. Similarly, a kick-off meeting with Linxon India Pvt. Ltd for the construction of the 400 kV New Butwal Substation in Nawalparasi (Bardaghat Susta West) was organized in Kathmandu on 24 -25 June 2024.



Mr. Sujan Koirala, Lead Engineer - Substations at MCA-Nepal, addressing the kick-off meeting with Techno Electric and Engineering Company Ltd. (TEECL) for the construction of the Ratmate and New Damauli Substations in Nuwakot and Tanahun on 21 August 2024.

Kick-off Meeting for Capacity Building Activities to Enhance Electricity Use

A kick-off meeting with Winrock International Institute for Agricultural Development for consultancy services on capacity-building activities to enhance electricity use under the MCA Partnership Program (MPP) of the ETP was organized in Kathmandu on 23 August 2024.



Kick-off Meeting for Embedded Advisory Support to ERC

A kick-off meeting with Deloitte Touche Tohmatsu India LLP for consulting services to provide advisory support to the Electricity Regulatory Commission (ERC) under the Power Sector Technical Assistance Activity of the ETP was organized in Kathmandu on 20 August 2024.

ELECTRICITY TRANSMISSION PROJECT

Market Outreach for 297 km Transmission Line

MCA-Nepal organized a market outreach event in Kathmandu for the upcoming procurement of the remaining 297 km of transmission line on 30 September 2024. 70 participants representing various national and international companies attended the event that provided detailed information on the scope of work, timeline, procurement procedures, principles, and guidelines of MCA-Nepal to potential bidders. The bid for the 297 km transmission line will be launched in November 2024. MCA-Nepal has already contracted out the critical 18km cross-border transmission line following a separate priority procurement process. The 18km transmission line was separated from the larger 315 km transmission line following a collaborative decision given its significance of cross-border trade for the Government of Nepal.



Mr. Sanjay Poudyal, Deputy Resident Country Director at MCC, addressing the market outreach event for the upcoming procurement of the remaining 297 km of transmission line in Kathmandu on 30 September 2024.

Study of Temporary Access Tracks for 297km of TL



Engineering survey on temporary access tracks required for the construction of tower pads along the route of the transmission line being conducted.

MCA-Nepal has completed an engineering survey on temporary access tracks required for the construction of tower pads along the route of the transmission line (TL) to be built under the ETP. The survey carried out in eight districts was completed on 25 April 2024. Additionally, an environmental and social assessment survey for selected temporary access tracks in the eight districts was also carried out and completed in August 2024.

The survey has provided detailed field data on the length of the temporary access tracks and their environmental and social impact. This has been incorporated in the revised bid document for the remaining 297km TL.

Closure of Ratmate Livelihood Restoration Program (LRP)

MCA-Nepal has completed the Ratmate Livelihood Restoration Program (LRP) implementation, initiated on 18 March 2022 with the support of its Consultant SAPPROS Nepal, on 30 May 2024. The LRP was launched to restore or improve the livelihoods of around 270 Project-Affected Persons (PAPs) whose land was acquired in the Ratmate area of Nuwakot district.

The two-year program executed a variety of interventions including agricultural advancement activities, skills-based training, financial literacy, GSI and life skills orientations, adult literacy training, business plan development and the establishment of a multipurpose cooperative.

The LRP trained 106 PAPs under agriculture advancement activities such as commercial vegetable farming, goat farming, poultry farming, and rice farming. The PAPs were provided with required input and technical support after the trainings which resulted in increased productivity by 303 %. Similarly, 163 PAPs participated in 18 different trades under the



skills-based training component of the LRP.

Financial literacy, adult literacy, GSI and life-skills orientations were also provided to PAPs. These trainings have enabled PAPs to manage their finances and encouraged savings and entrepreneurship. The first Cooperative in Belkotgadhi Municipality was also registered on 10 May 2023 as a hallmark of the program for access to savings and credit.

Overall, the LRP enhanced agricultural productivity leading to increased income levels, and skills development for improved employability. As an outcome, 34 PAPs have secured jobs and 39 have initiated their own businesses.

MCA-Nepal organized an event on 23 July 2024 to appreciate its Consultant SAPPROS Nepal on the successful implementation of the Ratmate LRP.

PROGRESS IN SITE ACCESS

Land Acquisition for Transmission Lines

MCA-Nepal has made notable progress in acquiring land to build tower pads for the transmission line (TL) in all ETP-affected districts. As per Section 9 of the Land Acquisition Act,

1977, public notices with full details of the land parcels to be acquired were issued in all nine districts. Post the publication of the notice, Compensation Fixation Committee (CFC)

Sub-committees formed to recommend compensation rates for the lands to be acquired have completed field verification visits in all nine districts.

Compensation Rates of Land determined in Five Districts

Compensation rates of land to be acquired for the construction of TL tower pads under the ETP have been determined in Five districts.

The Compensation Fixation Committees (CFCs) formed as per the Land Acquisition Act, 1977 and chaired by the Chief District Officer (CDO) of respective districts determined the compensation rates after the completion of the required process and mandatory

activities and in consultations with relevant stakeholders.

Compensation rates of land to be acquired for the construction of TL tower pads under the ETP were determined in Chitwan on 13 September, in Tanahun on 11 September, in Nawalparasi (Bardaghat Susta West) on 7 July, in Makwanpur district on 10 May and in Dhading district on 30 April 2024.

Similarly, CFCs formed in other

districts will be determining compensation rates for land in the coming months.

Earlier, MCA-Nepal organized field visits for subcommittees, formed under the CFCs and led by Assistant Chief District Officers of these districts to recommend the compensation for land. Officials from related government agencies alongside elected representatives were part of the visit.



A meeting to declare compensation rates of land to be acquired for the construction of TL tower pads in Chitwan on 13 September 2024.



A meeting to declare compensation rates of land to be acquired for the construction of TL tower pads in Tanahun on 11 September 2024.



A meeting to declare compensation rates of land to be acquired for the construction of TL tower pads in Nawalparasi (BSW) on 7 July 2024.



A meeting to declare compensation rates of land to be acquired for the construction of TL tower pads in Makwanpur on 10 May 2024.



A meeting to declare compensation rates of land to be acquired for the construction of TL tower pads in Dhading district on 30 April 2024.

RAP and LRP Disclosure Event

MCA-Nepal organized a Resettlement Action Plan (RAP) and Livelihood Restoration Plan (LRP) disclosure event in Nawalparasi (Bardaghat Susta West) district on 16 September 2024. This is an important milestone in land acquisition whereby it will be followed by the Compensation Agreement with individual Project Affected People (PAPs) and the disbursement of compensation.

At the disclosure event, participated by the Chief District Officer (CDO), elected representatives and local officials, a summary of the RAP and LRP report on affected



A meeting to disclose a Resettlement Action Plan (RAP) and Livelihood Restoration Plan (LRP) in the CDO's office in Nawalparasi (Bardaghat Susta West) district on 16 September 2024.

private assets and compensation measures based on the replacement cost principle and the entitlements allowances as applicable as per MCA-Nepal's Resettlement Policy Framework (RPF) were briefed.

The RAP and LRP are based on international standards to ensure

improved means of livelihood for physically and economically displaced persons.

MCA-Nepal will organize similar events in all ten affected districts after the determination of land rates and before the payment of the compensation begins in October 2024.

Financial Literacy Program for PAPs

MCA-Nepal organized a financial literacy program for project-affected people in Nawalparasi (Bardaghat Susta West) district from 7 to 11 August 2024 .

The financial literacy program was organized to ensure project-affected people are well equipped to manage the compensation amount received for their lands which is to be acquired to build electricity transmission tower pads.

Opening bank accounts and financial literacy for all persons receiving compensation are necessary precursors before compensation payments.

MCA-Nepal will organize



A financial literacy program, organized for project-affected people in Nawalparasi (BSW) district on 7 August 2024, in progress.

financial literacy programs as a part of its Resettlement Action Plan (RAP) across all ten districts

where land will be acquired for the Electricity Transmission Project (ETP).

Forest Census

MCA-Nepal has completed forest census works in nine districts affected by the Electricity Transmission Project (ETP). Extensive consultations with Community Forest User Groups (CFUGs) and Leasehold Forest User Groups (LFUGs) were organized prior to the initiation of the forest census works.



Second phase of consultations with CFUGs and LFUGs

MCA-Nepal completed the 2nd round of consultations with CFUGs and LFUGs affected by the ETP in various districts.

MCA-Nepal conducted the second round of consultations with CFUGs and LFUGs affected by the ETP in Sindhupalchowk district on 30 September, in Palpa district from 23 August to 6 September, in Tanahun district from 23 August to 5 September and Nuwakot district from 21 August to 26 September 2024.



2nd round of consultation with CFUGs and LFUGs affected by the ETP in Palpa.

Similar Consultations were conducted in Nawalparasi (Bardaghat Susta West) from 16 to 22 June, in Makwanpur district from 9 to 17 June, in Nawalparasi (Bardaghat Susta East) on 5 June, in Chitwan district from 10 to 14 June and Dhading district from 4 to 20 June 2024.

The forest census was carried out to document and provide details of forest area and the

number of trees that need to be cleared in the community including identifying leasehold and government forests affected by the ETP, based on the results of the forest census, to CFUGs/LFUGs and secure their consent to use the national forest land for the implementation of ETP.

Based on the data collected, MCA-Nepal will plan appropriate mitigation measures.

Such consultations will be organized with all CFUGs/LFUGs across 10 districts affected by the ETP.

Forest census, consultations and consensus with forest user groups, and coordination with district officials are necessary steps to secure the Forest Clearance Permits that will ensure timely implementation of the works.



2nd round of consultation with CFUGs and LFUGs affected by the ETP in Nuwakot.



2nd round of consultation with CFUGs and LFUGs affected by the ETP in Makwanpur.



2nd round of consultation with CFUGs and LFUGs affected by the ETP in Nawalparasi (BSW).



2nd round of consultation with CFUGs and LFUGs affected by the ETP in Chitwan.



2nd round of consultation with CFUGs and LFUGs affected by the ETP in Dhading.

ROAD MAINTENANCE PROJECT

Initial IEE Report for FDR Works approved

The Initial Environmental Examination (IEE) report prepared for the 40km Full Depth Reclamation (FDR) road maintenance works from Dhankhola to the Lamahi segment of the East-West Highway has been approved by the Ministry of Physical Infrastructure and Transport (MoPIT) on 18 August 2024.

A discussion meeting was organized earlier on 2 June 2024 with various stakeholders before it was submitted to the Ministry for approval.

The report will help MCA-Nepal adopt measures to reduce the negative impact of the project on the environment and the community.



A meeting on the Initial Environmental Examination (IEE) report prepared for the maintenance of Dhankhola to the Lamahi segment of the East-West Highway at MoPIT on 2 June 2024.

Market Outreach for RMP

MCA-Nepal organized a market outreach event in New Delhi, India for potential bidders to share information on the upcoming procurements related to the Road Maintenance Project (RMP) on 15 April 2024.

The event graced by Mr. Tara Nath Adhikari, Minister (Economic) from the Nepal Embassy, was organized for potential bidders to share information on the upcoming procurements related to the RMP specifically the application of Full Depth Reclamation (FDR) and Superpave in road maintenance works.

The event attended by 70 people



Participants at the market outreach event on the upcoming procurements related to the Road Maintenance Project, organized in New Delhi, India on 15 April 2024.

and potential bidders provided detailed information on the objective of the procurements and its timeline to potential bidders alongside necessary procurement procedures, principles and guidelines of

MCA-Nepal.

Earlier on 27 March 2024, a similar market outreach event was organized in Kathmandu, in which 89 people representing various national companies took part.

SUCCESS STORY

Bhimeshwar Multiple Cooperative Ltd. – Creating Economic Opportunities

One of the key components of the Ratmate Livelihood Restoration Program (LRP), designed by MCA-Nepal to restore the livelihood of project-affected people at Ratmate, was setting up a cooperative to mobilize savings and credits to support agricultural activities and income-generating businesses for project-affected families.

With the support and technical guidance of MCA-Nepal Consultant SAPPROS Nepal, Bhimeshwar Multiple Cooperative Limited, established in Belkotgadhi Municipality in Nuwakot district, was registered on 10 May 2024. Trainings on account keeping, cooperative management, governance, saving and credit mobilization, financial lending and reimbursement of loans as well as market linkage of agricultural products were also provided to enhance the capacity of members.

Mr. Maheshwor Neupane, the

Chairperson of the Cooperative and a project-affected person shared, “The cooperative will foster a sense of solidarity and mutual support among members, promoting social cohesion and resilience in the face of challenges. It will also serve as platforms for skill-building, knowledge-sharing, and capacity development, empowering project-affected families to pursue sustainable livelihoods and achieve long-term economic stability.”

Ms. Sanju Bagale, the Team Leader for the LRP, SAPPROS Nepal, shared, “In the course of the registration of the cooperative, a major obstacle was the absence of bylaws necessary to register a cooperative in Belkotgadhi municipality. The LRP team had to facilitate the process of endorsing the bylaws and simultaneously conduct various key activities to establish the same after relentless efforts.”



The cooperative was officially inaugurated by the Mayor of Belkotgadhi Municipality on 4 July 2023. As of the closing of the LRP program, the cooperative already generated a total revenue of NPR 12,228,700 from the shareholding members and provided 34 individuals with loans to initiate their own small-scale businesses or scale up the existing businesses among which 16 are project-affected persons.

Watch the success story:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=fxkODLkcCUg&t=1s>



Mr. Jagat Bahadur Gurung, the Mayor of Belkotgadhi Municipality, inaugurating Bhimeshwar Multipurpose Cooperative Ltd. at Belkotgadhi Municipality in Nuwakot district on 4 July 2023.

Contact

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