

2019

RETHINKING
DEVELOPMENT
Forum Report





Rethinking Development Forum 2019

Understanding Samriddhi (Prosperity) in the Vision of Prosperous Nepal

Kathmandu, November 17 and 18, 2019
Sap Falcha, Babar Mahal, Kathmandu, Nepal

Note:

This publication is based on the outcome of the “Rethinking Development Forum 2019 Understanding Samriddhi (Prosperity) in the Prosperous Nepal Vision”. It has been compiled from the notes taken by the rapporteur.

This publication is a summary from the organizers’ point of view and does not express the view of each individual participant.

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**Thousand
Currents**

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1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY:

The two-day gathering of representatives from different walks of life, from researchers, policy advocates, activists, mothers groups, community members and practitioners of grassroots organizations came together in order to uncover the question relating to the discourse of development.

To understand and reflect the broader aspect of development dynamics and acknowledge the scale of its Intersectionality, detailed discussions were conducted in following themes viz. alternative economy, people's solution to the climate crisis, agro ecology/ food sovereignty, alternative education, human settlements and grass-root development.

The discussion highlighted the need to reflect on what development is in reference to the western origin of the term itself. The discussion recognized that the present understanding of the development and developmental activities are influenced by the Western and influential countries. Nepal is moving ahead towards development and prosperity through a primary focus on copying infrastructures and development patterns of the western world like rapid urbanization, high-rise buildings and wider urban highways. The need to reflect on what development, progress, and prosperity means in the local context is necessary. The western idea of development itself has to be deconstructed recognizing that it is not the absolute way of life for human societies all around the world. "Rethinking on development" calls to review the ways of our daily life. We need to answer some very crucial questions as we reconsider the facts. Such as, Is the present idea of development really for our prosperity? Do people from rural and marginalized communities benefit from this pattern of development?, etc. There is a vacuum when it comes to the holistic reviewing of development programs through the lenses of sustainability. We must not fail to consider the fact that "development" is a subjective term and that it should be modified as per the needs of the local communities.

Considering the issues of climate crisis, rising temperatures and environmental problems; the ongoing path to unsustainable development will not hold for too long in Nepal. While Rethinking development in our context, we will have to focus on the agricultural sector as large amounts of mishaps impacting human and environmental health can be realized here, At the same time, the larger scope for reform should also be brought about based on the food system.

Decentralization is still a challenge in Nepal even though it has adopted a federal structure. There is a need for redefining the roles and relations between different sectors of society. Prioritizing local production and self-employment based economy is the need of the hour. Human settlements should be inclusive of other beings to make it more alive and to tie stronger bonds with the natural environment, which can ensure ecological consideration in our everyday life decisions. Urbanization does not necessarily have to be the ultimate future everywhere.

Cooperatives in Nepal have a proven record to mobilize and empower marginalized communities and groups. Cooperatives have played a transformative role to establish an alternative economy in rural communities thus also contributed to local resilience. At present, the government has taken references from western idea of cooperatives for establishing and implementing policies and therefore is not relevant to the rural context of Nepal. While being critical to the western neoliberal policies and capitalist economy, indigenous practices of cooperatives and cooperation from the west need to be further explored for its relevance in Nepal.

Gender equity and women empowerment should be a significant part of community resilience. In many societies of the south, women groups have been the most vulnerable group when it comes to the climate crisis as well. Alternative agricultural movements and the social justice movement needs explicit dedication to gender equality. Agro ecology and collectives are the means to empower farming communities. There is a need to search for a reference to the new based on our culture's knowledge and ecological values

Education is regarded as one of the major components of advancement. There is a need for serious intervention for educational reform as the present curriculum's concept was introduced through the modern education system in society and has been the tool to dismantle indigenous knowledge and values. Grassroots based, and community grounded interventions in education can bring about the needed systemic shift in the Nepalese context. Traditional culture and community-based schools or additional activities in regular schools have been successful interventions in indigenous communities of the Philippines and can be a part of the new approach in Nepal.

Sustainable development can only be achieved when aspects of natural, economical, social and cultural aspects are regarded together equally. The multidimensional aspect of development needs to be integrated into the unique geography, culture and tradition of Nepal. Skill-based economically empowering intervention approaches can only sustain even for the effort of alternative development. Foreign migration for employment and education and rural communities stripped out of youths is one of the pressing issues that need urgent intervention in Nepal's rural context.

The threat of climate crisis is already prevalent among rural agricultural communities in Nepal. There has been a seasonal shift, increased dryness and drought, and low agricultural productivity in many regions. Local communities are already mobilizing themselves at present with alternative crop system approach, development of recharge ponds, annual plantation program, knowledge

exchange with elderlies, senior citizen committee and youth exchange for traditional medicines and techniques, local seed banks, rainwater harvesting, manure improvement, cleanliness hygiene programs, medicinal herb plantation, hygienic food programs, construction of safer homes with materials for disaster relief from a youth and local communities, plastic pond, etc.

These people's solutions to the climate crisis ensuring community resilience has to be taken as a focus of our new approach of organizing the society. People's resistance to unsustainable development is the only way to stop this disaster and head towards a new direction. Interrelation between issues of sustainable aspects of urban development, possibilities of better quality of life in rural setup, holistic education, and cooperatives based economy as a base for community lead alternate economy needs.

1. a. perspective:

Nepal is at a rapid pace of catching up to stand among the developing nations. Post federalism, under the new Nepali Constitution, has envisioned 'Prosperous Nepal and Happy Nepali'. The phrase highlights the need to focus on happiness and broader aspects of wellbeing beyond economic indicators. We however need to answer some alarming questions such as; Do our institutional practices and approaches to development as of government institutions or civil society reflect this change in approach? What are the characteristics of Samriddhi / Prosperity we are seeking for?

1. b. Our Global Context:

Internationally, daily media reports of the scale of the unpredictability of the global scenario are about the environment and climate crisis impacts, or about the global economic systems, roles of the academic institutions and profession and work dynamics. The change in systemic dynamics all around the world is getting visible with rising unpredictability. The changing academic and professional scenarios and their inter-relations are influencing the socio-economic aspects of defined prosperity and value systems. Academic, governmental and other knowledge institutions approve of the drag of catching up with multidimensional change across the world. Many new forms of institutions are working to question the systems and relations between economy, agriculture, health and education, with some talking about "Economics of Happiness" and other measures of identifying prosperity and de-growth.

1.c. The Intend

We intend to halt and stand by together for a while to observe to discuss 'a Systemic Intervention Approach' to predict multiple scenarios in the future, for ourselves as civil societies. We are seeking the best stand and alternatives for the changing world. There are many organizations, groups, movements and organized societies that are working on these

different dimensions in Nepal and are connected globally. We plan to bring ourselves together to converge for a holistic understanding of where we are.

1.d. Brief:

Our land and food are being poisoned by toxic waste and pesticides; the climate crisis is threatening humankind. The problems we are observing are due to the development that is being practiced symbolized by high rises buildings and wider roads. Urbanization is increasing at an alarming rate, which is associated with issues like traffic congestion, air pollution and deteriorating quality of life. The environmental crisis is worsening; the problems today are not just confined within urban areas but have spread to the outskirts and rural areas too.

Rethinking Development Forum is the convening space where individuals and community members discuss the type of development practices that are going in our country and rethink the development process. The forum had discussions and examinations of many facets of life- including food, economy, education, climate crisis and urban development. The present development process that we have been following is unrealistic and impractical, which will deepen the environmental and economical crisis.

An alternative to the present model of development must be built up, where we care for nature and people. We need to review and address ongoing development practices and interventions critically. National forum on Rethinking Development was organized under-identified topics such as. alternative economy, people's solution to the climate crisis, agroecology/ food sovereignty, alternative education, urban development. The forum was organized to share the best practices from the community, conduct dialogue, workshops and propose a range of approaches to better understand the under-answered questions of intersectional loopholes.

2. DISCUSSION THEME FOR RETHINKING DEVELOPMENT-FORUM 2019

Forum tried to understand and reflect the broader aspect of development dynamics and acknowledge the scale of its Intersectionality by getting in details of some of the themes as follows:

1. Alternative Economy;
2. Peoples' Solutions to Climate Crisis;
3. Agro ecology and Food Sovereignty;
4. Alternative Education; and
5. Urban Development.

3. DISCUSSIONS

Rethinking development forum was organized on the 17th and 18th of November, 2019 at SAP Falcha, in Kathmandu to critically review and address the ongoing development practices and to share the best practices from the communities, have dialogues and, workshops to propose solutions to the policymakers, development planners, bureaucrats and development practitioners.

3.a. Day One -17th November 2019, Sunday

Shail Shrestha from Digo Bikas Institute started the forum with a welcoming note and briefly explained the necessity for the discussion on "Rethinking Development Forum". 'One minute silence' was performed to reconnect and reflect on the ongoing agendas and upcoming discussions. Introduction session was held briefly introducing names, the organization they represented and their involvements of the participants.

Agriculture expert Dr. Krishna Prasad Paudel from Forest Action led the first session on unpacking Rethinking Development and gave his perspective on the understanding of "What Development Is?". He mentioned that development as a term is mostly used in education and overall scenarios and we need to understand and imply the real meaning of development. He shared that the countries of the global north, like Germany and France first coined the term development, only after that the term was introduced to Nepal. All the ideas of development

and developmental activities were influenced from the rich and influencing countries of the west like the United States of America (USA). On a contextual basis, Nepal is going for development and prosperity through a primary focus on copying infrastructures of the western world like road construction, high lane roads, cars and buildings.

He stressed, we need to reflect on what development and prosperity mean in the local context of Nepal. Contextual to the issue of Climate Crisis worldwide, rising temperatures and environmental problems, the ongoing development definition could not hold for too long in the case of Nepal. While rethinking on development, the agricultural sector should not be missed as large amounts of poisonous pesticides is impacting the health of human being sand the surrounding environmental health.

Rethinking development is not just for discussion, but calls for changing the way of our daily lifestyle

and perception of Western influence and approach of development. Critical questions need to be raised “Is development really for our prosperity?” Do people from rural and marginalized communities benefit from this development? Dr. Paudel shared the example of many influencing people in various sectors on health, information and technology, sustainable agriculture etc. who are doing their role on improving the communities for redefining for better development.

Development can be reflected in three ways:

1. Grass root level: where the relation between community, nature and its sustainability is required;
2. Our development approaches should not be confined to talks and discussion;
3. Conceptual Rethinking.

3.a.1 Urban Development:

In the panel sharing on “Urban Development”, Dr. Sudarshan Raj Tiwari mentioned that to date back, it's only 10,000 years that human beings started to live in cities or towns. The common misconception about cities is that it is regarded as the areas that exclude nature, while villages include nature. In this, we should not forget, human beings are also animals like other beings. Now, cities have forgotten that we are part of nature and only have been focusing on economic development, which has led to the problems we are facing today.

The cities should be close to nature for sustainable living, which we can learn from a tree. The term green is not about green leaves but the fact that living beings flourish upon plants and services they provide. He stated that people are making cities only for themselves and forgot about other living creatures. If we need a green and colorful environment, we should include other creatures. If we think about permanent and robust things, the city will not be green.

Dr. Tiwari stressed that the Eco-city concept provides ecologically sustainable cities. The recent technology is pollution driven, which makes the

Mr. Paudel concluded urging everyone to reflect on what development really is and what really could be.

The sessions were divided into a series of panel discussions followed by group discussion and a final group sharing for a collective reflection of the issue. The first-panel discussion was on “Urban Development” presented by Dr. Sudharshan Raj Tiwari, visiting professor at Department of Architecture, Institute of Engineering and Kripendra Amatya from Save Nepa Valley Movement followed by a session on “Alternative Economy” presented by Dr. Keshab Raj Khadka from All Nepal Peasants Federation (ANPFa) and Manju Acharya Ghimire from Nari Chetna Kendra (NCK).

traps of heat into our earth's atmosphere; our cities need ecological driven technologies, which could make a cooling atmosphere. Our cities need to create all beings to coexist together with nature. Our engineering and architecture background suggests strong and long life buildings and infrastructure. Nevertheless, everything should be disposable; our cities should be made disposable. Our traditional cities were made disposable, which were thought and linked to nature. While making and designing our cities, 5 components of life and ecological consideration should be taken in consideration. Dr. Tiwari concluded by saying that if we go along with nature, underdevelopment is not the problem, but development without considering nature could lead to an unsustainable future.

The second speaker for the session was Mr. Kripendra Amatya from Save Nepa Valley. It is a youth-led affiliation of activists who advocate an alternative, comprehensive development that respects human rights of all citizens, instead of exclusive infrastructure building, commercialization and urbanization that only serves the interests of a selected few in power.

Mr. Amatya shared that after the concept of fast track, outer ring road and other issues of development threatening the cultural heritage and significance of Kathmandu valley. Campaign Save Nepa Valley was formed with the hash tag. He also connected the issues of road expansion and other development processes relating to different Sustainable Development Goals.

He stated that haphazard expansion in the name of so-called development impacts the health of people and communities. Water supplies are being compromised due to asphalt roads in most areas. There are seen inequalities for the consumption of resources and the idea of decentralization is ignored where the central government is focusing on road expansion and smart cities. He urged, "Development should not be centralized; the decentralized development concept should be followed for the overall development of Nepal".

DISCUSSIONS AND the Question/Answer Section

Participant's question to Dr. Sudarshan was, "Can the concrete cities like Kathmandu and other cities like Biratnagar, Pokhara, could be revived again?" to which he responded that because of our lifestyle, all the natural elements are already in the verge of pollution. We need to revive soil with rainwater, not harvest it artificially. Since decade's people have been living in cities, reviving these cities in a sustainable manner is possible, if the people feel the need for it.

A participant asked Mr. Kripendra Amatya, "The government of Nepal if ensured development under sustainable development standards, will you cooperate?" To which Mr. Kripendra Amatya responded that Save Nepa Valley is not the movement which opposes development, but supports sustainable development. If

the government plans for a long-term vision development, the campaign will obviously support. But sadly the recent government plans are targeted for a few years with no long-term strategies or vision.

Ms. Srijana Poudel from Nari Chetna Kendra asked, at the same time this discussion is being held, most of the discussion is prioritized for cities, but while the villages are shifting in the trend to cities, how can we conserve areas before they rapidly turn into haphazard development like Kathmandu? Dr. Sudarshan replied that reconstruction and new construction are done by the modern knowledge and education system, where traditional knowledge from generations is sidelined. Steel and cement usage are the primary construction materials adding to the contributor's ongoing environmental and climate crisis. Historically, towns in Kathmandu valley were based on agriculture, coexisting with nature and societies. There is a need for proper planning and awareness within our education system based on our traditional knowledge for preservation of rural as well as urban environments.

A participant from ANPFa commented that the recent trend is attraction for cities and development due to various services available mostly found in cities. After decentralization, villages are gaining these facilities at the local level, but still, centralization is not slowing down. As per discussion, so many old cities have set examples and the new cities are on the rise. For the aspect of designing ecological cities, the traditional knowledge was efficient, which we need to grasp.

3.a.2 Alternative Economy

The session of alternative economy was led by Dr. Keshav Raj Khadka from All Nepal Peasants Federation and Manju Acharya Ghimire from Nari Chetana Kendra.

Dr. Keshab Raj Khadka shared that worldwide globalization is leading to increased inequality. The trend of creating more luxurious shopping malls and infrastructure for the benefit of individuals is raising more inequalities. This development is consumer centric. Food sovereignty for the case of developing countries like Nepal should be addressed and needed in discussions. There is a need to identify roles of various stakeholders such as the public sector, corporates, community and people needs to be redefined.

Manju Acharya Ghimire from Nari Chetna Kendra shared that Nari Chetna Kendra has been working in grass-root movements for the social and economic Upliftment of women, where this group was excluded from various provisions. She said from the various training and experience; we realized agriculture as the most important sector for income generation activities in rural communities. We established women cooperative for their independence and awareness.

The policies by the government have affected women cooperative because the capital money according to policy is very high for these women groups. These policies have not addressed the issues of grass root mobilization. Development should be focused on employment, local income generation, and prioritizing local production.

Participants from Khokana explained that we need to take a flashback, on the previous developments. (Example: Hetauda ropeway, which reduced fuel

consumption, trolley bus) Previous developments were very environment friendly; we need to revive our history as well. He expressed his concerns on the ongoing development process, which does not include cultural dimensions of traditional development. He stated, there is a need for development transformation and while going for discussion of rethinking development, self-awareness is also needed.

Srijana Paudel, President of Nari Chetna Kendra explained that cooperatives play a big role in alternative economy in rural communities as well as gender inclusion, income generation and employment opportunities. Cooperatives not only have raised these issues, but the issues of the climate Crisis have also been raised. She mentioned, examples of Western cooperative models are set as examples for the government's cooperative policies. These examples could not be set in the context of Nepal, as the context of Nepal is different.

Samir Shrestha, a community organizer in the USA and one of the participants of the forum, shared that while the discussion felt more state-centric, there are more examples which could also be taken from Western world of their indigenous practices and how it can be applicable to Nepal's indigenous ways and practices. Manju Acharya stated that the impacts of the climate crisis have been affecting the communities and agriculture production, which needs to be addressed by local communities, states and nations worldwide. The local communities have been emphasizing on preserving the agricultural production and local seed preservation, but only local communities' effort is not sufficient.

3.a.3. Agroecology:

The second panel discussion on Agro-Ecology was led by Ashlesha Khadse from Thousand Currents and women leaders from grass-root community representatives of Asha Nepal. Ashlesha Khadse from Thousand Currents presented on Agro ecology and women while connecting the examples of women from developing countries like India and Nepal, where women are the most affected groups in the case of climate or any crisis. She also emphasized that not only alternative agricultural movements, but also a social justice movement dedicated explicitly to gender equality is required. She stressed the fact that agro-ecology and collectives could be the means to empower farmers. She also shared characteristics of successful women's collectives in agro-ecology and stressed the importance of women collective groups in the development of rural as well as overall development.

Krishna Paudel from Forest Action shared that while talking about agro ecology, three major points need to be considered: Nature, Economics and Society. Local economics has a huge role. It is necessary to consider the agricultural environment of the hills of Nepal as it has its own specialty than other regions. If taken as an opportunity, knowledge from rural agriculture should be considered. He mentioned that Nepal is still based on ecological agriculture.

Ashmita Acharya from the Chhaimale community from ASHA Nepal shared that Chhaimale, being closest to Kathmandu, the area has been left behind and ASHA Nepal is working on the long-term sustainability of agriculture and livestock in Chhaimale. ASHA Nepal has been providing training on the organic agriculture system and

shifted to organic farming has drastically changed context for the women group.

Participants from Nari Chetna Kendra shared they have been providing training on natural organic farming. In the case of communities residing near to cities have been producing and got a good market. In contrast, the communities who are far but have the middleperson to the cities are getting good market but in the rural communities market for the agriculture production were hard hit. Some communities across the Koshi River have also started collective farming, but they have problems accessing and reaching the market.

After the panel discussion on topics of alternative economy, urban development, agro ecology, a parallel-group discussion was organized to analyze the cross relations among these issues discussed and the self-reflection on the discussions of the day. Shail from Digo Bikas Institute facilitated the group discussion for urban development, alternative economy and agro ecology. Various issues related to Nepal's agriculture development, rural and urban planning system, which ignores traditional and indigenous knowledge, various international and political influences in the developmental process were discussed. The session concluded with the conclusion that integration of different ideas are required otherwise, these discussions will not have any practical solutions.

3.b Day Two- 18Th November 2019, Monday

3.b.1 Alternative Education

Day 2 started with the panel discussion on Alternative education where Professor Dr. Pramod Dhakal, an advocate of Open University in Nepal and Bijaya Subba from Centre for Educational Policies and Practices (CEPP), shared their insights and experience. The panel started with a presentation by Dr. Pramod Dhakal on alternative education. He started his experience of creating an environment to return back to Nepal from Canada and his journey to Open University Nepal. He explained by showing a picture of Vietnam with streets full of cars and vehicles. Our development is only focused on GDP growth. He also reflected sayings from Dr. Tiwari on five components of the tree, correlating with sustainable development for overall partnership for development. He also showed a map of the USA 1990, where he also explained with an example where there were vibrant small towns and vibrant communities, but after the Second World War in the name of development, that vibrancy was demolished and destroyed with big infrastructures.

He also compared the picture of Detroit, USA of the 20th and 21st Century, where after bankruptcy, the whole investment was doomed, so we need to rethink our development as well. As we are in the age of knowledge, there is a need for 'human utsarga paryawaran'. The recent development of Nepal is focused on discrete development with object project systems, but should have been shifted to synergistic with every work linking and collaborating and then moving to self-glowing as an ecosystem organism. He mentioned that we should revitalize Eastern Philosophy and linking with the god and goddess Brahma, Saraswoti, Shiva and Bishnu. He further linked with philosophies for zero illiteracy, innovation, welfare and prosperity.

Ms. Bijaya Subba from CEPP shared her experience as the representative from women, Limbu (indigenous community). She mentioned that our development symbolizes education as one of the significant components of change but highlighted a need for serious educational reform.

She highlighted that the present education system has been disconnecting communities and minorities from their own culture, starting from language and thus making the present unsustainable development as the only way for people. KashiNaath Adhikari, Member of Constituent Assembly, who participated in the forum stressed that we should see Nepal's development based on eastern civilization and philosophy. He admitted that the nation was going towards the opposite way of development, which is destructive. He added, "I agree with Mrs. Bjaya Subba about reforming education-giving examples of how European civilization stands firm on the basis of educational reform.

Suman Ghising, student of Janajyoti Madhyamik, Bidhyalaya, and Surkhet shared about earning while studying campaign in Janajyoti Madhyamik Bidhyalaya. He said his story on how senior technical teachers assisted students to utilize knowledge practically to make earnings from it. Selected students were provided loans from the college and students were engaged in fish farming, bees keeping, poultry farming, etc. according to their interest. He said, we have been entrepreneurs when graduating from college.

DISCUSSIONS AND QUESTION AND ANSWER SECTION



Kedar KC from ANPFa shared that this forum helped in the realization of rethinking our traditional knowledge, which is unique to Nepal. He added that we should consider rethinking as we are slowly and sharply getting influence from the western development patterns that are unsustainable and causing ecological chaos in Nepal. The recent development pattern encourages competition, ignores pollution and environmental degradation, while previously with the local knowledge and practice, every system was organically formed through generations. He further added that the multidimensional aspect of development should be integrated in the unique geography, culture and tradition of Nepal and there is need for research before the implementation of any plan or project.

Forest Action's representative explained that the recent developmental models also have socially collapsed our societies. He linked the development patterns with two examples of his hometown at Dolpa and budget driven project at Kalikot, where the development pattern of Karnali is more budget oriented and neglected the local factors that need consideration.

Kancha Tamang from Dhapsung village of Sindhupalchowk shared that in Dhapsung village, there was only up to grade 3, where the students' drop out rate was very high due to the larger travel distance of the school. Now the school is upgraded to grade 5, expecting less drop out.

Anju Ghimire from Nari Chetna Kendra shared that after this forum, she realized that sustainable development is about working hand-in-hand with nature and culture. She also stated that Nari Chetna Kendra believes in local development and empowerment, and has been supporting youths. Adding to this Srijana Paudel shared that Nari Chetna Kendra has already been working on local development through sustainable agriculture and traditional knowledge. Youth empowerment has been the primary focus on vocational and technical training as well.

Shanti Lama from NCK also added that there has been a trend of foreign countries migrating for education or foreign employment. If the trend continues, then illiterate and old age groups will only be left in the country. Samir Shrestha gave an example of Lumad, indigenous communities of the Philippines. Communities, which started their own schooling with their life long skills such as agriculture, cooking with the regular curriculum. He also urged and questioned the participants that without the interference of the state government, how can we mobilize community movements and developmental works?



Tulsi Maya Shrestha from Nari Chetna Kendra expressed her concern on the trend of repetition of work and neglecting each other's collaboration, which hampers the same aspiration for the development of the community.

Ms. Suzzane from Thousand Currents explained that exchanging grassroots' movement is crucial in the world of negative Western influence development for a radical paradigm shift for development. Nepalese could make solutions for their own Nepali people. Adding up, representatives of thousand currents shared that Thousand Currents started with the frustration from project-based activities; therefore, they can understand that grassroots' movement could lead to sustainable development in the long run.

Krishna Paudel from Forest Action reflected that the foremost thing is linking the perception and practice. The concept of development as a term itself has negative consequences .

The picture we draw related to development needs to be eliminated so that we do not suffer the consequences of our unsustainable action.

3.b.2 People's Solution To Climate Crisis

The session on people's solution to the climate crisis was led by Abhishek Shrestha from DBI and Nanu Chatani from Namuna Nari Chetna Kendra Cooperative. Abhishek Shrestha on the topic People's Solution to the climate crisis requested participants to share their observation, experience and view on the climate crisis. Initially, to introduce the impact of climate crisis in local and rural context, he asked Mrs. Manju to share some of the climate crisis issues being faced by women groups in Kavrepalanchowk. Ms. Manju Acharya shared that there has been a seasonal shift, increased dryness and drought; low seed productivity in the region and the participants also shared similar experiences. Well and natural springs that were functioning well in previous decades are now drying up and water scarcity arose in the region. Manju Acharya stressed that for many reasons, women are the most affected groups from the climate crisis.

Mr. Abhishek Shrestha from Digo Bikas Institute then started with the ongoing worldwide climate activism led by Greta Thunberg and young people globally. For the economy, developed countries exploited resources like coal, oil leading to an environmental crisis (climate crisis). To make the participants familiar with the term climate crisis, he talked about the science of global warming with some examples to connect the issue. Worldwide the solutions for energy crisis are unsustainable and very dangerous (such as Nuclear, gas). He also briefed on the carbon capture and storage capacity of our earth system, where various rich countries introduced a carbon trading system and carbon offsetting. Therefore, people's solutions to the climate crisis could be decentralized renewable energy systems, agroecology, direct

resistance to resource extraction and indigenous people as frontline defenders. Samir Shrestha commented that while giving an example of Greta as a climate activist, we need to be critical to take international examples, which might not be relevant to the issues of indigenous communities. Nanu Chatani from Namuna Nari Chetana Kendra, Fulbhari, Namobuddha Municipality explained that a small group was formed called "Community environment conservation and climate crisis committee" with 95 households. Water scarcity was the biggest issue in the region, so the committee started to analyze the issues. Within 10 years, 40 water sources had dried up in the area. She shared the issues of the regions, which the committee found like an increase in invasive species (Banmara -Lantana camera) and other species, extinction of local seed species, increased hot days in summer and increased cold days in winter and increase in mosquitoes.

She also shared community environment conservation and climate crisis committee's interventions for local solutions like alternative crop system, plastic pond, tree and medicinal herb plantation program, and knowledge exchange with seniors (also formed elderly citizen committee) and youths for traditional medicines and techniques.

Further committee constructed a rainwater harvesting tank (50 water tanks), 45 gothsudhar, gothey mal sudhar and seed banks and safe shelter home construction with materials for disaster relief from youth and local communities. She mentioned that despite all these efforts from the committee, they are facing financial challenges and political difficulties in the execution of the activities.

DISCUSSION AND QUESTION /ANSWER ROUND

Ms. Bijaya Subba asked if there is children's involvement in the process. She added that because the school curriculum does not provide lifelong skills and disaster preparedness, it might be an opportunity for them to learn important things. Ms. Nanu Ghatani responded that children are not involved in these processes since the ward offices instructed not to include children in the committee.

Two groups were formed to discuss the various issues in the intervals of two days. Issues like sustainability aspect of urban development, possibility of a better quality of life in rural setup, sustainable education and cooperatives based economy as a basis for community lead alternate economy was pointed out as a way forward.

4. Agenda proposed and discussed from the groups - A way forward:

1. Research on the operation of grounded cooperative groups and networks in Nepal to create a base for the contextual new economic models.
2. Further research and exploration of the role of education, curriculum, and the functioning of schools and its relation to development dynamics needs to be established for a holistic understanding of knowledge systems and their relation to development models.
3. The effort for holistic development and systemic intervention needs a grounded and more deeper and well-assessed long-term intervention in a confined area or community. Such a location should be selected with rigorous consultation with the public. Long-term evidence-based multi-phased intervention efforts should also be well documented. This will ensure the formation database and well-proven and analyzed approach for systemic transformation to convince replication for government agencies in Nepal.



Annexes:

Annex 1:

PROGRAM SCHEDULE

Rethinking Development Forum
17th and 18th November 2019
Sap Falcha, Babar Mahal

DAY-I, Sunday, 17th November, 2019	
Time	Details
8:00-8:45	Registration and Breakfast
8:45-11:00	Why Rethinking the Development Forum? Connecting with what we are doing? And in 2 days what we aim to achieve – Dr. Krishna P. Paudel- Forest Action Nepal
11:00-13:00	PANEL DISCUSSION Followed by Q/A URBAN DEVELOPMENT 1. Dr. Sudarshan Raj Tiwari –Department of Architecture, Institute of Engineering 2. Kripendra Amatya – Save Nepa Valley Movement ALTERNATIVE ECONOMY 1. Dr. Keshab Raj Khadka-All Nepal Peasants Federation Facilitator: Sujata Tamang – Forest Action Nepal 2. Manju Acharya Ghimire from Nari Chetna Kendra
13:00-14:00	Lunch
14:00-16:30	PANEL DISCUSSION Followed by Q/A AGRO ECOLOGY 1. Ashlesha Khadse- Thousand Currents 2. Ashmita Acharya, Grass root Community Representative Chhaimale community - ASHA Nepal Facilitator: Srijana Poudel, Nari Chetna Kendra
DAY-II, Monday, 18th November 2019	
Time	Details
8:00-8:45	Registration and Breakfast
8:45-10:00	Review of Day-1
10:00-12:00	PANEL DISCUSSION ALTERNATIVE EDUCATION 1. Dr. Pramod Dhakal, Open Education Activist 2. Bijaya Subba, Centre for Educational Policies and Practices
12:00-13:00	LUNCH
13:00-15:00	PEOPLE'S SOLUTION TO CLIMATE CRISIS 1. Abhishek Shrestha, Digo Bikas Institute 2. Nanu Ghatani – Namuna Nari Chetna Kendra, Fulbhari, Namu Buddha Municipality
15:00-15:15	Tea
15:15-18:00	GROUP DISCUSSION AND GROUP SHARING

Annex 2

ORGANIZERS

The event was collectively organized by All Nepal Peasant's Federation (ANPFa), ASHA Nepal, Digo Bikas Institute, Forest Action Nepal, Nari Chetna Kendra, and Thousand Currents.

All Nepal Peasants Federation (ANPFa) is an umbrella association of entire Nepali peasants fighting against feudalism, imperialism and neoliberalism. It has been fighting for the agrarian reform and peasant's rights for the last 6 decades since its inception in 1951 AD. In the new context of the democratic republic of Nepal with the abolition of feudalism, Nepal is on the way to new-socialism. ANPFa has thus re-structured its organization to form commodity and community based associations. ANPFa is the largest peasant federation in Nepal and an alliance of 23 national level subject specific producers organizations.

ASHA Nepal has chosen to work in some of the most marginalized communities in Chhaimale and Okharpauwa, areas in the central part of Nepal. Through training on agroecology, cooperative formation and management, health and anti-violence education, and advocacy skills – members build self-determination in every area of their life.

Digo Bikas Institute (DBI) is a research and advocacy organization committed to promoting ecological sustainability and social equity at policy and community level. Based in Kathmandu, DBI believes that Nepal (and the rest of the world) can develop meaningfully by identifying and applying alternative ways of meeting human needs without harming nature and fellow human beings.

Forest Action (Forest Resources Studies and Action Team) Nepal, established in 2000, is learning-oriented, not-for-profit, a professional organization working in the areas of Forestry, Agriculture, and Climate Crisis. They adopt an interactive approach to policy research and advocacy in collaboration with the research community, civil society groups, and government agencies to build deliberative and collaborative policy practices.

Representing 42 cooperatives and over 45,000 women, **Nari Chetana Kendra / Women Awareness Center Nepal (WACN)** has combined farming, economic development, and gender justice to weave one of the most substantial civil infrastructures in Nepal. Each collective comprises smallholder farmers who use the food primarily for sustenance and secondarily for family income. Founded 25+ years ago, WACN boasts one of the largest bases of organized farmers and the combined assets of these 42 cooperatives are over 457 million Nepali rupees (US\$ 4.2 million).

Thousand Currents partners with grassroots groups—led by women, youth, and Indigenous Peoples in the Global South—that are transforming their communities and creating lasting solutions to our shared global challenges. For over 30 years, Thousand Currents has invested in more than 750 community-led initiatives and today are working with over 2 million women, small farmers, Indigenous Peoples, urban residents, sexual and ethnic minorities, and youth on community projects focused on food sovereignty, alternative economies, and climate justice.

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