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WEEKLY ECHOES OF NDRI

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A group picture at the Inception Consultation Meeting in Chainpur Municipality, including Mr. Krishna Kumar Tamang, The Mayor of the Chainpiur Municipality center, and Mr. Greg Klemm, Head of Mission of the Australian Embassy of Nepal center left

NDRI is an independent, non-partisan, and non-profit institution dedicated to addressing contemporary an emerging policy challenges and to influencing public policy through research.

HEADLINES FEATURED IN THIS EDITION

- NDRI field visit to Dolakha, and Makwanpur for 'Fields Without Safety Nets: Analysis of Gendered Informality in the Agricultural Sector and Cost of Social Insecurity' Project
- NDRI organized a consultative meeting on "Tobacco, Alcohol, and Sugar and Salt-related Products, including Sugar-Sweetened Beverages (SSBs)"
- NDRI Invited to the ADB's Agri finance Toolkit Development Workshop in Kathmandu
- NDRI Team organizes Inception Consultation Meeting in Chainpur Municipality; Australian Embassy Nepal representatives join NDRI field work
- NDRI Team organizes Co-production Workshop on Private Sector Climate Adaptation Opportunities in Nepal

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NDRI field visit to Dolakha, and Makwanpur for 'Fields Without Safety Nets: Analysis of Gendered Informality in the Agricultural Sector and Cost of Social Insecurity' Project

On April 25th to 28th 2026, As part of the preliminary phase of the research on Fields Without Safety Nets: Analysis of Gendered Informality in the Agricultural Sector and Cost of Social Insecurity, a field visit was conducted in Jiri Municipality, Dolakha, and Bhimphedi Rural Municipality, Makwanpur, by the study team of Dr. Manjeshwori Singh (Team Leader), Dr. Shikha Thapa Magar (Co-lead), Ms. Binita Shahi (Research Associate), and Ms. Dikshya Barasaini (Research Assistant). The visit aimed to generate contextual and ground-level insights on the status of informality and the scope, implementation, and accessibility of social safety mechanisms, particularly for workers in the informal sector. In Jiri Municipality, the team initiated the visit with a courtesy meeting with municipal officials, followed by a series of Key Informant Interviews (KIIs) with key stakeholders, including heads of departments such as Administration, GESI, Agriculture, and Cooperatives. Additional KIIs were conducted with representatives from microfinance institutions, agricultural cooperatives, savings and credit cooperatives, and women's groups to understand the range of institutional efforts, challenges, and opportunities related to social protection initiatives for informal workers. The discussions focused on existing policies, outreach mechanisms, and the municipality's role in facilitating inclusion in social safety schemes. In Bhimphedi Rural Municipality, which has taken progressive steps in implementing Social Security Fund (SSF) initiatives for the informal sector, the team conducted KIIs with both local stakeholders and beneficiaries who are actively engaged in informal occupations and have accessed SSF schemes. These interactions provided in-depth insights into the operational modalities of the schemes, levels of awareness, accessibility, and the tangible socio-economic benefits experienced by beneficiaries, particularly in terms of financial security and risk mitigation. Overall, the field visit offered a comprehensive understanding of local governance practices, stakeholder engagement, and the effectiveness of social safety interventions, which will significantly inform the following phases of the research.



KII at the Bhimphedi Rural Municipality as a part of ongoing preliminary consultations for Fields without Safety Nets Project

NDRI organized a consultative meeting on "Tobacco, Alcohol, and Sugar and Salt-related Products, including Sugar-Sweetened Beverages (SSBs)"

On April 30th, 2026, at The Square Hotel, Pulchowk, the event was led by Dr. Jaya Kumar Gurung, Senior Research Specialist, with 30 participants, including key experts and stakeholders.

The meeting aimed to generate evidence-based recommendations for effective fiscal and regulatory measures. It also aimed to strengthen the role of taxation as a public health tool and contribute to measurable policy outcomes. Overall, the initiative seeks to support evidence-based decision-making in fiscal policy and help reduce non-communicable disease (NCD) risk factors by discouraging the consumption of harmful products.



Dr. Jaya Kumar Gurung, Senior Research Specialist, presenting the background and objectives of the study.

The key highlighted included welcome remarks by Dr. Shikha Thapa Magar, Executive Director of NDRI, followed by a presentation on the background and objectives of the study by Dr. Jaya Kumar Gurung. Issue-mapping presentations were delivered by Ms. Anjana Lamichhane (Tobacco), Ms. Sarya Thapa Magar (Alcohol), and Ms. Kabita Yadav (Sugar-Sweetened Beverages).



Ms. Sarya Thapa Magar, Research Assistant presenting issue mapping on Alcohol

The session also included participant reflections and inputs facilitated by the NDRI team. Dr. Rup Khadka, Tax Expert, shared global evidence on health taxes and policy options for Nepal, while Prof. Dr. Shiva Raj Adhikari, Former Vice-Chairperson of the National Planning Commission of Nepal, presented on approaches to developing tailored fiscal tax policy recommendations for the country.

The meeting concluded with an open

discussion among participants and a vote of thanks delivered by Dr. Nawa Raj Khatiwada, Senior Research Specialist at NDRI. The event was successfully conducted, fostering meaningful dialogue and collaboration among stakeholders.

NDRI Invited to the ADB's Agri finance Toolkit Development Workshop in Kathmandu

On 27th April 2026, NDRI was invited to the "Agri finance Toolkit Development Workshop: Empowering Smallholder Farmers through Access to Finance" organized in Soaltee, Kathmandu, Nepal by the Asian Development Bank (ADB) in collaboration with the Asian Development Bank Institute (ADBI) and the International Law Institute (ILI). The objective of this workshop was to introduce the draft Agri finance Toolkit to key stakeholders in Nepal, demonstrate how it can support ongoing efforts to expand financing for smallholder farmers, and gather feedback to help refine the toolkit prior to its publication.

The workshop started with introduction of the agri finance toolkit followed by consultative sessions on visualizing barriers to smallholder finance; sharing of findings from the local data collection and from the legal assessment conducted in five countries including Nepal; interactive sessions to explore practical challenges in smallholder finance using real-world scenarios; and toolkit recommendations following in-depth consultations with the invited dignitaries.

Dr. Shankar Shrestha (Senior Research Specialist, NDRI) represented NDRI in the event. Other dignitaries included representatives from micro finance financial institutions, development banks I/NGOs, NARMIN, cooperatives and national/international consulting firms/research institutes working in the field of agri finance, among others. The insights and perspectives of the invited dignitaries added value to the discussion. Key Take-Away that emerged from the workshop was "Gaps in agri finance can only be addressed by institutional and systemic reform." The workshop concluded with draft recommendations targeted for finance providers and policy makers. The finalized version of the Toolkit incorporating insights from the workshop is expected to be available later this year.



Presentation on Agri finance Toolkit Development Workshop, along with it's headline finding and Key Take Aways.

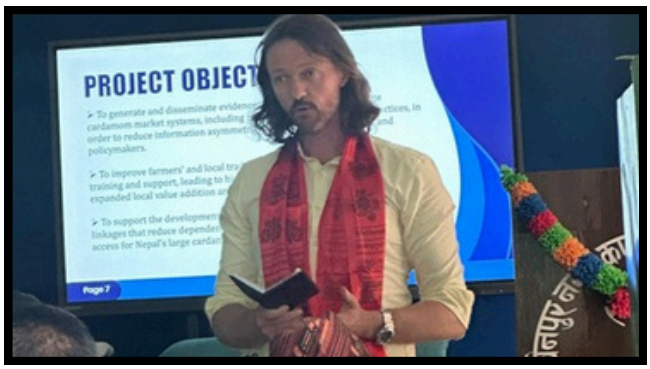
NDRI Team organizes Inception Consultation Meeting in Chainpur Municipality; Australian Embassy Nepal representatives join NDRI field work

On May 3rd, 2026, NDRI's Livelihoods and Food Security team, as part of their ongoing project titled "Empowering Farmers in Chainpur, Sankhuwasabha for Direct Export and Sustainable Production of Large Cardamom", held an inception consultation meeting with key project stakeholders and beneficiaries in Chainpur Municipality. The team, comprising Dr. Shikha Thapa Magar (Team Leader), Mr. Ram Prasad Devkota (Research Associate), Mr. Daya Shrestha (Research Associate), and Ms. Muna Thapa (Research Assistant), briefed local officials, representatives, and farmers about the project's objectives, intended activities, and expected outcomes for large cardamom farmers in Chainpur.

The meeting was also attended by Mr. Greg Klemm, Deputy Head of Mission of the Australian Embassy of Nepal, and Mr. Krishna Karki, Senior Research and Policy Officer. The project, funded by the Australian Embassy, Nepal as part of its Direct Aid Program, was hailed as an "outstanding initiative" by Mr. Klemm.

The Mayor of the Municipality, Mr. Krishna Kumar Tamanag, expressed strong appreciation for NDRI's work so far in Chainpur as part of other projects and reaffirmed the Municipality's commitment to strengthening existing ties while supporting this timely endeavor on sustainable large cardamom production in the region.

Farmer representatives and local officials in Chainpur Municipality highlighted key challenges in large cardamom production and marketing while welcoming NDRI's initiative to address them. Following a national study on post-production practices, the project has now shifted its focus to local-level issues faced by farmers and traders. During a week-long field visit, the NDRI team began baseline data collection through surveys, interviews, and discussions, while Greg Klemm and Krishna Karki visited cardamom fields and interacted with local farmers.



Mr. Klemm, Deputy Head of Mission of the Australian Embassy of Nepal, providing the Embassy's thoughts and expectations of the project to the local participants.

NDRI Team organizes Co-production Workshop on Private Sector Climate Adaptation Opportunities in Nepal

On 7th May 2026, under the ECONOGENESIS Project, Nepal Development Research Institute (NDRI) organized a co-production workshop at The Square Hotel on the theme "Private Sector Climate Adaptation: Opportunities in Nepal." The workshop focused on exploring opportunities for private sector investment in climate adaptation to address growing climate risks and contribute to Nepal's national adaptation priorities. The event brought together representatives from government agencies, commercial banks, private sector institutions, development partners, and climate experts to exchange perspectives on strengthening climate resilience through innovative financing and investment approaches.



A group picture at Co-production Workshop on Private Sector Climate Adaptation Opportunities in Nepal



Dr. Divas Basnet, Senior Research Specialist at Co-production Workshop on Econogenesis project

Participants highlighted climate challenges and the need for stronger policies, climate finance, collaboration, and adaptation investment in Nepal.

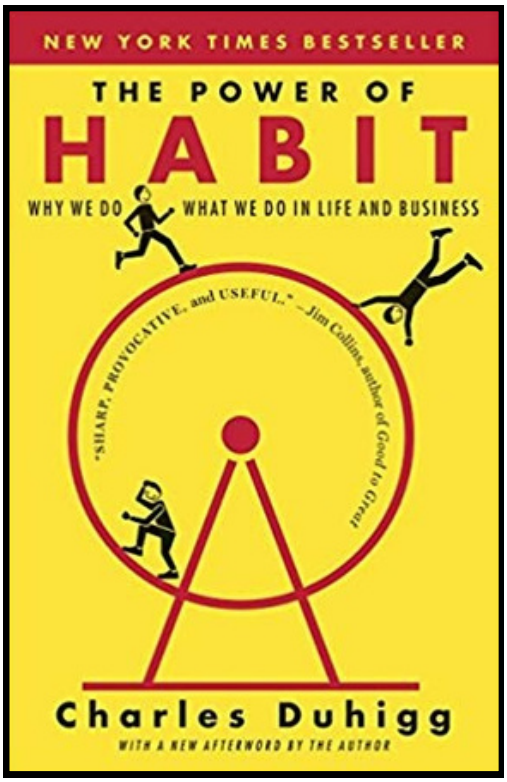


Ms. Shreya Bajimaya, Senior Researcher presenting at Co-production Workshop on Private Sector Climate Adaptation Opportunities in Nepal

A total of 32 participants attended the workshop and exchanged perspectives on opportunities, challenges, and collaboration pathways for strengthening private sector participation in climate adaptation in Nepal.



A group discussion at consultative meeting on "Tobacco, Alcohol, and Sugar and Salt-related Products, including Sugar-Sweetened Beverages (SSBs)".



BOOK RECOMMENDATION

THOUGHT OF THE WEEK

"Winners are not people who never fail, but people who never quit."

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A group discussion at Co-production Workshop on Private Sector Climate Adaptation Opportunities in Nepal