



*Birtamode, Jhapa*

# Nepal on the move

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# The Development in Post-Conflict Nepal



*Progress, opportunities  
and challenges*



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# **Timeline of Nepal**

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Nepal's recent history has been one of constant struggle towards creating a stable and inclusive democratic society. Here is a look at some of the crucial events in Nepal's journey towards democracy.



# Timeline of Nepal

## Turbulent times

**1959, 60** - King Mahendra allows the first democratic national assembly to be elected but suspends it the next year, abolishing the first democratic government of Nepal("History Nepal, n.d).

**1990** - Pro-democracy protests fill the streets, which results in clashes with security forces leading to many arrests. King Birendra eventually concedes to demand for a new democratic constitution. Multi-party system of parliament is established("Nepal Profile", 2018).

**1996** - Maoist revolt begins with the aim of abolishing monarchy. It leads to series of brutal violence lasting more than a decade("Nepal Profile", 2018),

**2001** - Royal massacre takes place. The king's brother, Gyanendra becomes the king ("Nepal Profile", 2018).

# Timeline of Nepal

Moving towards  
stability

**2006, 2007** - The government signs the Comprehensive Peace Agreement(CPA) with the Maoists, ending more than a decade long conflict("History Nepal, n.d). This marks a turning point in Nepalese history.

**2008** - Constituent Assembly(CA) is elected in order to establish a democratic constitution. CA declares Nepal a republic, officially abolishing the monarchy("Nepal Profile", 2018).

**2015** - Deadly earthquake leaves more than 8000 people dead. Later that year, CA passes the landmark democratic constitution("Nepal Profile", 2018).

**2017** - Provincial and local elections take place 15 years after the last election of local representatives.("Nepal Governance", 2017)

# Transition into Federalism

*Numerous challenges remain for efficient governance*



*Main entrance to Singha Durbar, a complex housing 20 ministries, Kathmandu*

"The main structure of the Federal Democratic Republic of Nepal shall be of three levels, namely the Federation, the State and the Local level ("Constitution Nepal", 2015, p. 45)."

- Part 5, clause 56, sub-clause 1 of the constitution of Nepal





*New office building of Kankai municipality, Jhapa*

## **Opportunity 1. Unity and inclusiveness**

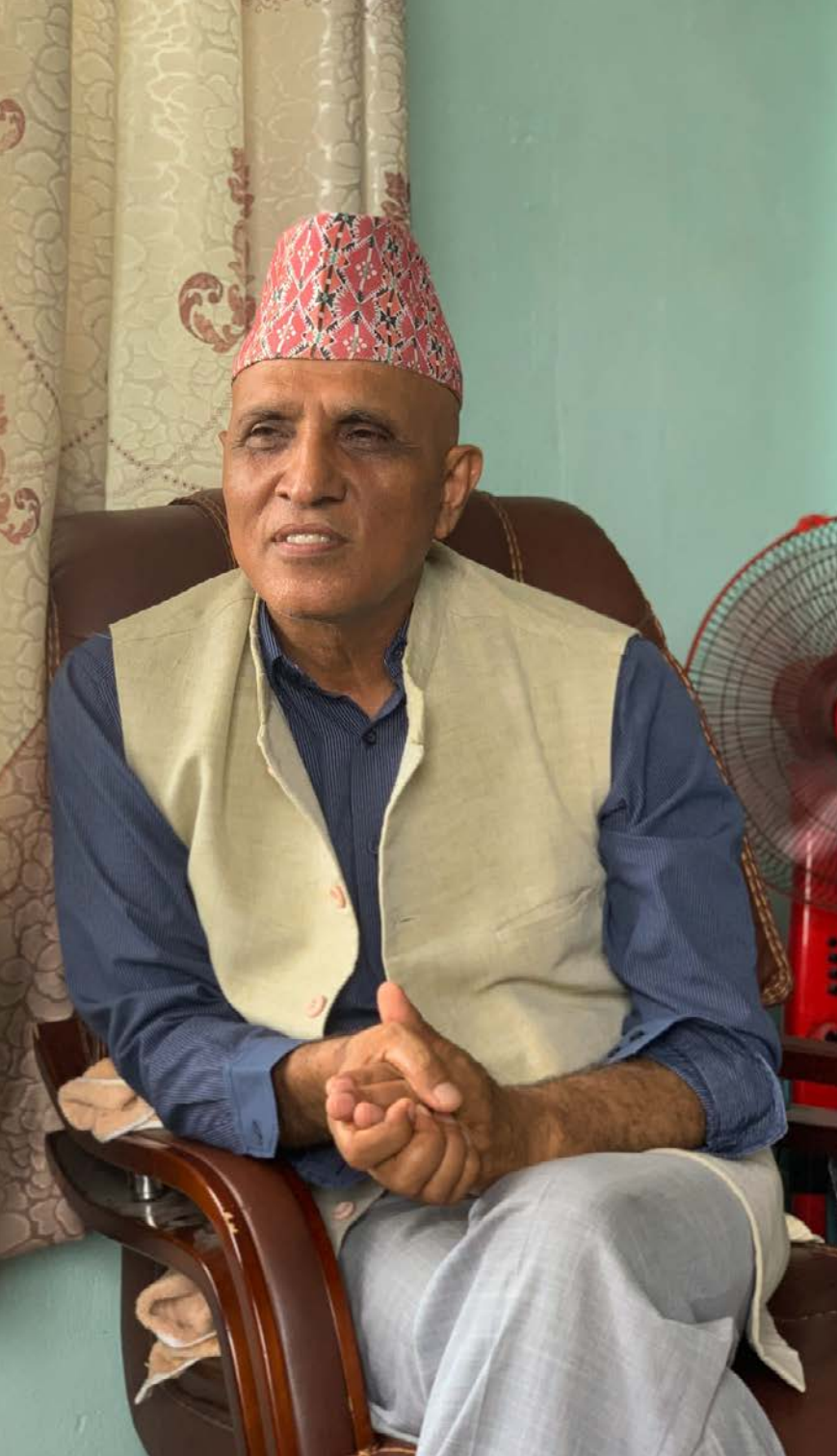
"Inclusiveness and democratic pluralism are two major conceptual as well as institutional devices created under the federal governance structure in order to mitigate discrimination and ensure 'unity in diversity', one of the core values of multi order government system (Gyawali, 2018, p. 46)."





*Women of minority community in Panthapada, Jhapa*





## Opportunity 2. Localized development

**Mr. Rajendra Kumar Pokharel** is the first elected mayor of Kankai municipality. He said the government was going through an important transition period, with lots of challenges along the way. However, he said there are opportunities as well. Especially, he was focusing on developing local economy by trying to foster innovative agricultural techniques and directing foreign investment. He said he recently met few companies from South Korea interested in investing in the municipality and hopes they will reach a deal.



## **Challenge 1. Training of local representatives**

"Regardless of educational status or age, majority of the surveyed women representatives indicated that financial and budget management issues were challenging and training in these would help them perform better at work ("Nepal's Women Representatives", 2018, p. 5)."



Constitution assigns deputy heads of local governments to act as conveners of the local judicial committee. However, with a lot of deputy heads being females with no background in the field of law, they have to rely on local government bureaucrats who are the experts ("Nepal Governance", 2017).

## **Challenge 2. Effective fiscal transfer**

"It will be important to refine the basis for fiscal transfers to be more effectively aligned to needs, local costs, and capacity; develop the revenue capacity of local governments; and ensure local governments are efficiently applying the resources received to improve the quality of service delivery, including the effective targeting of resources to the poor and vulnerable ("Nepal Development", 2019, p. 7)."





*Federal Parliament of Nepal, Kathmandu*

Inter-Governmental Fiscal Management Act 2017, passed by the Federal government, contradicts Schedule 9 of the Constitution of Nepal by confining the right to collect royalties on natural resources in the hands of Federal Government. This is likely to hamper local government's ability to provide a range of services that it is responsible for ("Nepal Governance", 2017).



### **Challenge 3. Civil service's resistance to decentralization**

"Critical for the restructuring process, many civil service employees are reluctant to move to the Local Governments(LGs) due to their desire to be located in urban centers or in Kathmandu. Civil servant resistance to devolution has manifested at the centre through the delay of the legislative drafting and enactment process ("Nepal Governance", 2017, p. 11)."



नेपाल सरकार  
गृह मन्त्रालय  
जिल्ला प्रशासन कार्यालय  
बबरमहल, काठमाडौं, नेपाल  
फोन: ०१-४२६४९०८, ४२६२४३८, फ्याक्स: ०१-४२६२८२८  
E-mail: daobabamahal@gmail.com, Web: daokathmandu@moha.gov.np

*District administration office, Kathmandu*

## **Challenge 4. Autonomy of Local Government**

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"In the formulation of the LG's annual policy paper and budgets for the fiscal year 2017-18, the role of the elected officials was, in many cases, limited to tokenistic revision and modification. This has greatly frustrated locally elected officials, who report that they feel as though they are in a subordinated and inferior position vis-à-vis the local bureaucracy, who implement executive orders of the Federal Government to override their decisions ("Nepal Governance", 2017, p. 12)."



# Remittance driven growth

*Social cost of labor migration poses challenges*



*Birtamode City, Jhapa*





## Progress 1. Increase in remittance

**In recent years**, Nepal's remittance has consistently been increasing, with Rs. 543.3 billion during Financial Year(FY) 2013/14, Rs. 617.3 during FY 2014/15, Rs. 665.1 during FY 2016/17 and Rs. 695.5 during FY 2017/18 ("Economic Survey", 2018).





## **Progress 2. Remittance supported entrepreneurship**

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**Mr. Ram Prasad Tiwari** spent 9 years working abroad - 7 in Dubai and 2 in Oman. While working abroad, he began as barista in training at Starbucks, but quickly went up the ranks to become an area manager for several world-renowned F&B companies like Gloria Jeans and Baskin Robbins. With his experience in the Middle East, he set up his own franchise 'Third home coffee' at his hometown Birtamod.







*Third Home Coffee, Birtamode, Jhapa*

**The business** has since grown steadily thanks to increasing number of migrant returnees who bring their taste for coffee back home. He now plans to open a new branch in a city nearby. Not only that, Mr. Tiwan works as a government licensed barista trainer training young barista hopefuls right here in his coffee house.





*Durgapur, Jhapa*

**Mr. Rajendra Joshi** set up a gardening business, which was his interest from young, 5 years ago with the savings he got from 9 years of working in Abu Dhabi. He exports plants to nearby Indian cities and provide landscaping services to houses and businesses. He is now in the process of expanding his business due to increasing demand. He also plans to diversify the business by building a restaurant within his shop.







## **Challenge 1. Emotional cost of children left behind**

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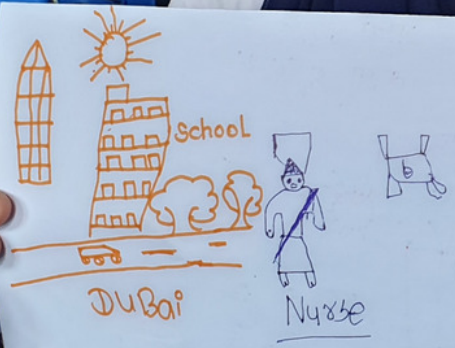
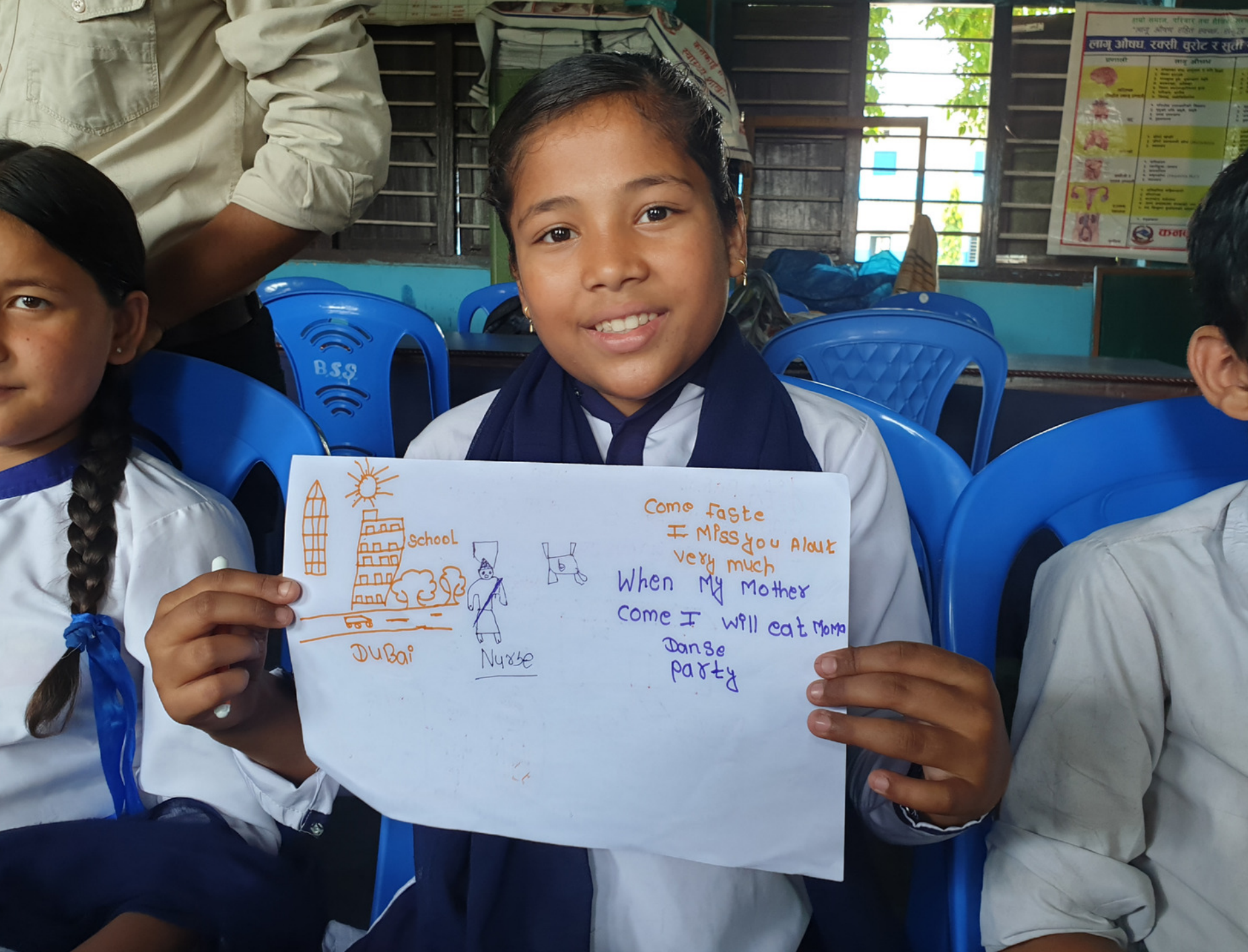
"An important consequence of parental migration is the impact on children left behind, who are separated from one or both of their parents for extended periods of time. Children are exceptionally vulnerable because their agency to influence the decision to migrate is limited, but being in their formative years, they require great care and support and are affected by the prolonged physical absence of their parents ("Migration Children", 2017, p. 5)."



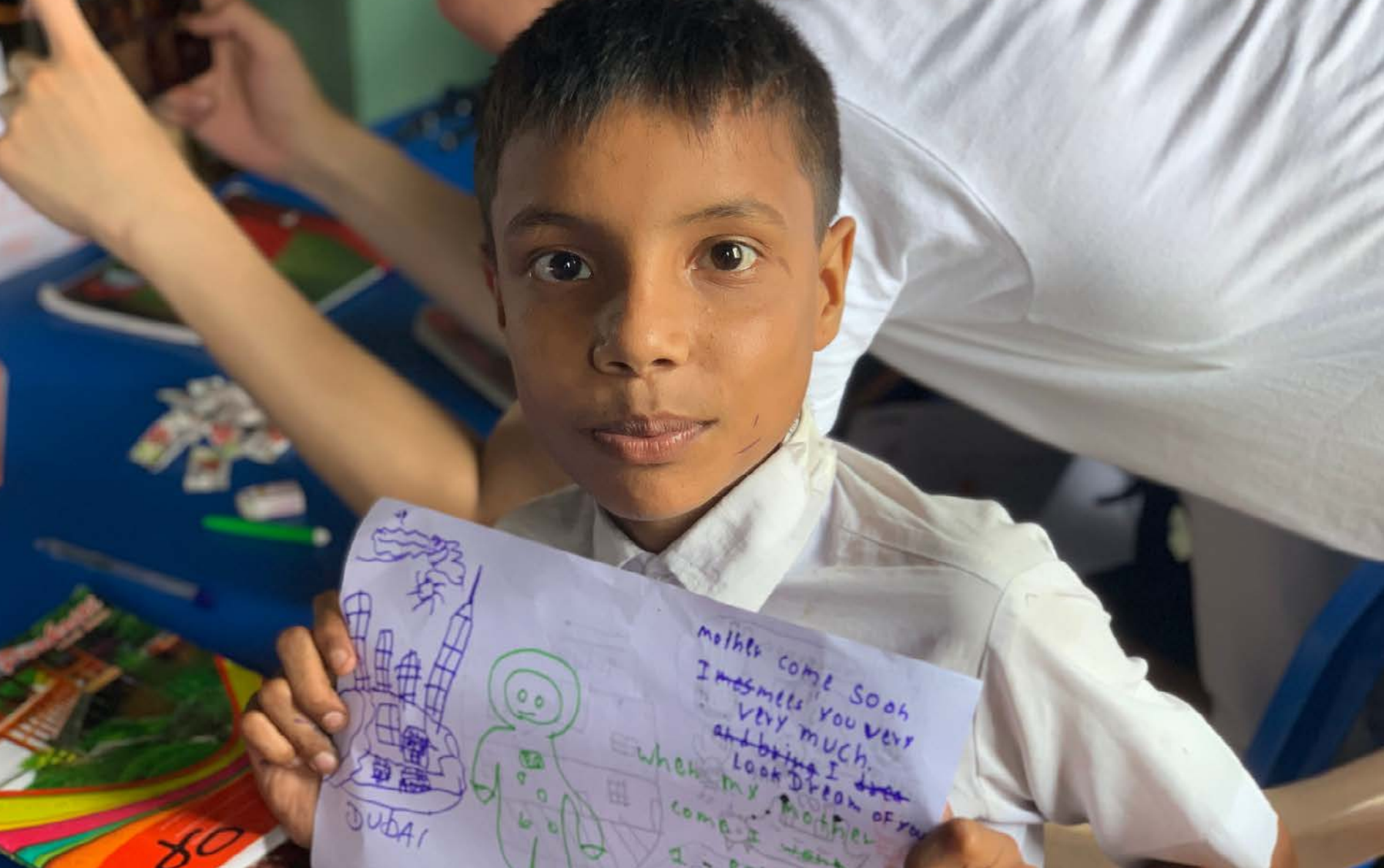
*Durgapur, Jhapa*

**Children** from Bhrikuti Secondary High school smiling during a focus group interview. When asked whether they would like to follow their parents' paths and work abroad in the future, the children unanimously talked of their love for Nepal and their hopes to work in their own country.





Come faste  
I Miss you Alout  
very much  
When My Mother  
come I will eat more  
Dance  
party



*Durgapur, Jhapa*

Kanak Duwal surprised us with his dream of becoming an astronaut. It was heartbreaking to hear his hopes of eating momos, a popular Nepalese dish, as one of the first things he would love to do with his mother when she returns.



## **Challenge 2. Loss of human capital**

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"Large-scale migration is rapidly, and in many cases, permanently, depleting the country's stock of human capital(Cosic, Dahal, & Kitzmuller, 2017, p. 5)."



*Durgapur, Jhapa*

**Mr. Ganesh Gautam(left)** and Mr. David Baraily(right), were full of excitement as they discussed their plans to work abroad. With the youth making up 69 percent of unemployed population of Nepal, labor migration becomes an attractive solution ("Human Capital", 2019).





*Birtamode, Jhapa*

**Mr. Binod Khawas** worked in Qatar for 2 years after his business in PC cafe was unsuccessful. He moved since as an only child, he had to support his family. While in Qatar he faced harsh working conditions and long working hours working for Qatar airways. However he plans on working abroad again with a different company and a better working condition.

### **Challenge 3. Human Trafficking**

"Its(Nepalese) laws do not criminalize all forms of forced labor and sex trafficking, and despite a large number of Nepali male trafficking victims overseas, government protection efforts disproportionately focused on female victims. Official complicity in trafficking offenses remained a serious problem, both direct complicity as well as negligence ("Trafficking in Persons", 2019, p. 341)."





*Bhadrapur, Jhapa*

**The local branch** of Non-governmental Organization, Tiny Hands, co-operates with local armed guards in preventing vulnerable Nepalis from being trafficked into India, through the open border. Most common human trafficking cases happen in rural villages against women. Fraudulent agencies would lure them by false promise of high salary jobs. However, in reality, most women end up working under harsh conditions with low salary in India or other Gulf countries.

Many Nepalis, mostly young men, have been seeking help from embassy of Nepal in Egypt, Cairo. They were lured by promises of lucrative jobs, often in Europe, by human traffickers. However, they ended up in countries such as Morocco and Libya, stuck with severe working condition ("Nepalis Dream", 2019).





*Bridge to India that is often used as trafficking route, Jhapa*



# Women Empowerment

*Despite provisions under the constitution, challenges remain*



*Durgapur, Jhapa*



## **Progress 1. Constitutional rights of women**

(1) Every woman shall have equal lineage right without gender based discrimination("Constitution Nepal", 2015, p. 24)

(5) Woman shall have the right to obtain social opportunity in education, health, employment and social security, on the basis of positive discrimination("Constitution Nepal", 2015, p. 25).

- Part 1, clause 38, sub-clause 1 and 5 of the constitution of Nepal



*Birtamode, Jhapa*

## **Opportunity 1. Women Activism**

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**As a female deputy-mayor** and a social activist, Ms. Ratna Kumari Rajbanshi says she is deeply concerned with the issue of gender inequality in Nepal. She has been fighting for laws and regulations that ensure equal rights for both female and male in Nepal and a future where women can live and work free of discrimination.





*Surunga, Jhapa*

**Ms. Bhattarai** became a widow in 2002 when her husband passed away from a car accident while working in Saudi Arabia. She was pregnant and had a four years old son at the time and struggled to repay the loans that her husband had taken to go abroad. Not only that, she stayed at a rural village where she faced discrimination as a single woman. However, she overcame those challenges through perseverance and now works as a women rights activist helping women who are in similar situation as her.

**Opportunity/challenge : Low labor participation rate of Women**

"For every 100 males in the working-age population there are 125 females. Yet, for every 100 employed males there are only 59 employed females."("Nepal Development", 2019, p. 43)





*Durgapur, Jhapa*

**Despite the statistics,** women that were interviewed were leading women empowerment through their entrepreneurship. Here, Ms. Renuka Bhandri (Right) is showing her co-worker how to cut a fabric at her tailoring shop.



*Ms. Aruna Basnet at her beauty shop 'Wake up to Make up' located in Durgapur, Jhapa*



## **Challenge 1. Discrimination under the constitution**

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"The constitution states that citizenship derives from one Nepali parent, but it also stipulates that a child born to a Nepali mother and a non-Nepali father may obtain citizenship only through naturalization. In some cases, mothers faced extreme difficulties in securing citizenship papers for children of Nepali parents, even when the mother possessed Nepali citizenship documents, except in cases in which the child's father supported the application ("Human Rights", 2018, p. 17)."



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## **Challenge 2. Discrimination against single women**

The placard reads "Single women demand, live and let live. Provide single women opportunity rather than kindness." This was a response to government's proposal of supporting re-marriage of single women by giving about \$600 to newly wed couples.





*Bhadrapur, Jhapa*

**Ms. Rekha Adhikari**, the chairperson of single women's cooperative, shows photo of its members celebrating 'International Widows' Day'. As single women, many living in the rural area still face discrimination such as people staring at them to check out their activities and bargaining for their properties after their husband passed away to take advantage of their financial illiteracy.



# Tourism in Nepal

*Infrastructure development, a key to tourism growth*



*Fikkal, Ilam*





*Birtamode, Jhapa*

**Nepali hospitality** never ceases to amaze visitors of Nepal. This was especially the case when a cultural exchange event at the Aadarsha school of management was followed by a wonderful Nepalese traditional lunch prepared and served by future hotel managers of Nepal.

## **Progress 1. Growth in tourism revenue.**

"The service sector is likely to grow by 7.5 percent (in financial year of 2019) due to a boost in the retail, hotel, and restaurant sub-sectors, driven by an uptick in tourist arrivals and remittance-fueled private consumption ("Nepal Development", 2019, p. 1)."





*Dwarika's Hotel, Kathmandu*

"A trekkers' paradise, Nepal combines Himalayan views, golden temples, charming hill villages and jungle wildlife watching to offer one of the world's great travel destinations ("Lonely Planet", 2019)."





*Pashupatinath Temple, one of 7 UNESCO World Heritage Sites in Kathmandu Valley*









*Nyatapola temple, Bhaktapur*

## **Challenge 1. Lack of infrastructure**

"Abdullah Tuncer Kececi, country manager of Turkish Airlines for Nepal, says the poor infrastructure development in the country and the vision of 'Visit Nepal 2020' are at opposite ends. Even the roads within the major cities are in poor condition and the airport can hardly accommodate any significant increase in the number of tourist arrivals (GIRI, 2018, para. 8)."





*Tribhuvan Airport, the only international airport in Nepal, Kathmandu*

"A dispute over payment between the Chinese contractor and the Nepali sub-contractor, Northwest Infra Nepal, stalled work at the construction site(of Gautam Buddha International Airport) for more than six months. As a result, the project deadline was extended many times after the initial extensions. The country's national pride project was on track for year-end completion, but again it hit a snag with local authorities demanding a higher price for riverbed materials ("Bhairahawa airport", 2019, para. 9)."



# Future Prospects



## **Challenge 1. Education**

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"Fewer than 20 percent of children in grades 3, 5, and, 8 can master competencies in problem solving and reasoning. Even more concerning, 19 percent of third graders could not read a single word of Nepali, while less than 13 percent were able to read with fluency and comprehension. This is a huge problem since the ability to read by age 10 lays the foundation for future learning("Nepal Development", 2019, p. 8)."

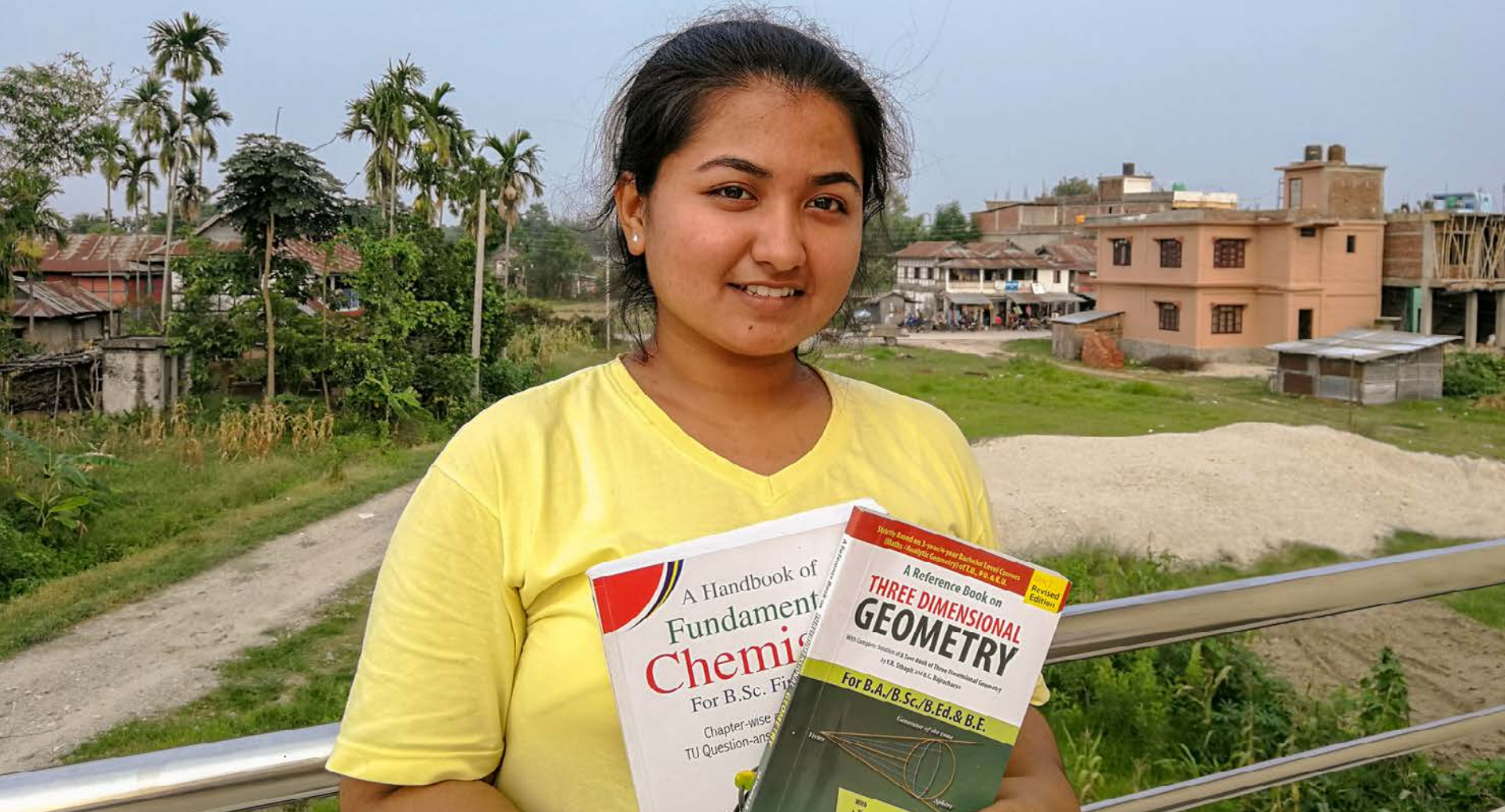




*Durgapur, Jhapa*

**Ms. Anjana Sitaula**, Principal of Bhrikuti Secondary High School, said the school faces financial constraints despite private donation from donors and government funding. The school wishes to purchase more English books to improve English level of its students. She hopes that our visit will lead to co-operation between Non-Governmental Organizations and the school.





*Durgapur, Jhapa*

**Ms. Pranita Baraily** is a student who studies sciences at a local government university. She has struggled to focus her study in the university due to inadequate education standard. She told us about professors slacking off from teaching classes or not coming to school at all. Hence, she has to study home alone with her books. She wishes the standard of tertiary education improves in Nepal.



## **Challenge 2. Environmental pollution**

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"In recent years, air pollution in Nepal has become a serious environmental and public health risk, with pollution levels 4.9 times higher than recommended by the WHO. Deteriorating air quality in Kathmandu is putting hundreds of thousands of Nepalese at risk of several health problems. In fact, the WHO has consistently found air pollution to be the leading risk factor for death and disability in Nepal ("Environment", n.d.)."



*Streets of Kathmandu*



"Rapid and uncontrolled urbanization, lack of public awareness, and poor management by municipalities have intensified environmental problems in towns in Nepal, including unsanitary waste management and disposal ("Solid Waste", 2013)."





*New Baneshwor, Kathmandu*



## **Opportunity 1. Population structure**

"In Nepal, the demographic dividend has begun, with the growth of the working age population becoming higher than the growth of total population. This is likely to end sometime in the coming decades when the growth of the working age population becomes lower than the growth of total population, implying that we are currently in the window of opportunity for Nepal to reap the benefits of demographic dividend("Population Situation", 2017)."



*Mr. Sakshyam Koirala(Left) and Mr. Uday Wasti(Right), Durgapur, Jhapa*



## **Opportunity 2. Hydro-power**

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"Hydro-power plays a particularly important role in Nepal's economic future because of the scale of its potential. It is estimated that Nepal has the economically viable potential to put in place over 40,000 megawatts (MW) of hydro generation capacity. If such potential is realized, it could easily meet Nepal's suppressed demand and create a surplus that could be exported to neighboring countries in South Asia ("Nepal Hydropower", 2018).



*Koshi barrage connecting Sunsari and Saptari district*

**"The lack of access** to reliable, grid-supplied electricity is a key constraint to economic growth and an obstacle to reducing poverty. Developing sustainable hydro generation will enable Nepal to balance its supply deficit in the dry season with the revenues made through exports during the wet season, when river flows are high("Nepal Hydropower", 2018)."





*Building of Department of Hydrology and meteorology under construction in New Baneshwor, Kathmandu*





*Birtamode, Jhapa*

**Conclusion :** Nepal made an important leap from a conflict-ridden society to a democratic federal republic. Whether Nepal can reach its goal of becoming a middle-income country by 2030, will depend on embracing **inclusiveness, sustainability and efficiency** in socio-economic and political development.



# Acknowledgements



**Depak Das (Local Co-ordinator)**



**Sanjay Basnet(Translator)**

# Acknowledgements

Faculty of Social Sciences,  
The University of Hong Kong  
Centre for Social Change(Nepal)





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