



Annual Report 2081-2082

Himalayan Community Development Forum (HICODEF)

Kawasoti Municipality Ward No 5, Nawalparasi East

email: hicodef@ntc.net.np, Telephone: 078-540172/078-540212

TABLE OF CONTENTS

FOREWORD

ACRONYMS & ABBREVIATIONS

1. INTRODUCTION	3
1.1 Background	3
1.2 Vision, Mission, Core Values & Objectives	3
2. PROGRAMMAE/PROJECT PROGRESS & ACHIEVEMENTS	5
2.1 From Surviving to Thriving	5
2.2 Community Suspension Bridge Programme	7
2.3 Securing & Protecting Investments & Capacities for Environmental Sustainability	9
3. ORGANIZATIONAL DEVELOPMENT & GOVERNANCE	10
4 FINANCIAL OVERVIEW	10
5. CHALLENGES, LESSON LEARNED & WAY FORWARD	11

FOREWORD

HICODEF is pleased to present its Annual Report for the period from **Srawan 2081 to Asad 2082**. This year represented an important phase of reflection, consolidation, and institutional strengthening for the organization. Despite evolving funding challenges, HICODEF remained firmly committed to its mission of promoting inclusive, sustainable, and community-led development. With the collective efforts of our dedicated staff, supportive development partners, and local government authorities, we successfully implemented planned activities under our ongoing **STTP** and **Community Suspension Bridge Programme**.

We take pride in the meaningful impact achieved across our programmes, particularly in empowering communities, enhancing livelihoods, and promoting good governance practices at the local level. At the same time, the organization continued to invest in strengthening internal systems, financial management, and leadership structures to ensure transparency, accountability, and long-term institutional sustainability.

We extend our sincere gratitude to our partners, donors, and the communities we serve for their continued trust, collaboration, and active engagement. Looking ahead, HICODEF remains committed to deepening its impact, fostering innovation, and building resilient communities capable of thriving in an ever-changing development landscape. Together, we reaffirm our dedication to guiding HICODEF toward a future of inclusive growth, ethical leadership, and sustainable development.

Krishna Ghimire

Executive Director, HICODEF

Mahendra N Mahato

Chairperson, HICODEF

ACRONYMS & ABBREVIATIONS

BNMT	Britain Nepal Medical Trust
CRS Nepal	Catholic Relief Services Nepal
DAO	District Administration Office
DDC	District Development Committee
DFID	Department for International Development
FINNIDA	Finnish International Development Agency
FY	Fiscal Year
HICODEF	Himalayan Community Development Forum
HH	Household
LFP	Layer Farming Project
MEDEP	Micro Enterprise Development Programme
NGO	Non-Governmental Organization
NPR	Nepalese Rupee
SPICES	Securing and Protecting Investments & Capacities for Environmental Sustainability
STTP	From Surviving to Thriving Project
SWC	Social Welfare Council
TGT	The Glacier Trust
UNICEF	United Nations Children’s Fund

1. INTRODUCTION

This Annual Report has been prepared by the Himalayan Community Development Forum (HICODEF) which presents key progress and achievements made during the fiscal year 2081–2082. The report summarizes an overview of the organizational background and context, programme progress and achievements, organizational development, financial performance, major challenges, lessons learned, and the way forward.

1.1 Background

Registered with the District Administration Office (DAO), Nawalparasi in 1999, the Himalayan Community Development Forum (HICODEF) is a non-governmental organization specializing in integrated community development Programmes in Nepal. HICODEF is affiliated with the Social Welfare Council (SWC), the NGO Federation of Nepal, and other like-minded organizations and networks at both national and district levels.

HICODEF commenced its operations in 1999 in partnership with ActionAid Nepal, working in the northern hilly areas of the then Nawalparasi District. Since its establishment, the organization has collaborated with a wide range of national and international development partners, including DFID, FINNIDA, MEDEP, Restless Development, Practical Action, Handicap International, UNICEF, BNMT, Helvetas, Action Against Hunger, DAI, and Heifer International, among others. In addition to Nawalparasi East and West, HICODEF has implemented Programmes in several districts, including Chitwan, Morang, Parbat, Myagdi, and Dhading. Currently, HICODEF is implementing projects in Nawalparasi East and West districts.

1.2 Vision, Mission, Core Values & Objectives

Vision

HICODEF envisions a just, inclusive, and equitable society where all people fully enjoy their fundamental human rights and live with dignity, free from all forms of discrimination, exploitation, and poverty.

Mission

HICODEF's mission is to contribute to the creation of an equitable and inclusive society, free from all forms of discrimination, exploitation, and poverty, through sustainable community empowerment processes.

Objectives

- To implement integrated community development Programmes through participatory and inclusive approaches.
- To conduct social research in response to the needs of communities and relevant stakeholder organizations.
- To advocate for the rights and interests of poor and marginalized populations—particularly women, men, girls, and other socially excluded groups—in collaboration with allied organizations, drawing on evidence and learning from community development initiatives.
- To design and deliver capacity-building and training Programmes based on the identified needs of communities and local institutions.
- To implement humanitarian assistance and emergency response initiatives during times of crisis and urgent need.

2. PROGRAMMAE/PROJECT PROGRESS & ACHIEVEMENTS

During this fiscal year, HICODEF continued the implementation of two ongoing projects, namely the Glacier Trust–funded *From Surviving to Thriving Project* and the Helvetas-supported *Community Suspension Bridge Project*. In addition, HICODEF initiated a new partnership with CRS to implement the *Securing and Protecting Investments and Capacities for Environmental Sustainability (SPICES) Project*. The project-wise progress and achievements are presented below.

2.1 From Surviving to Thriving

With financial support from the Glacier Trust, this project was implemented in Baseni, Dulunga, Pokhari, Dhauwadi, Ripaha, and Charghare of Hupsekot Rural Municipality, and Lahape Village of Boudikali Rural Municipality. Field activities were extended for an additional three months beyond the initially agreed project period. Subsequently, a separate project, titled *From Surviving to Thriving*, was launched, expanding its coverage to 11 villages, including four additional villages: Harde, Ramche, Kute, and Shyamagha. A total of 334 households—comprising 2 Dalit and 332 Magar households—benefited from the project, reaching 1,042 women and 1,144 men, for a total of 2,186 individuals.”

This project focuses on promoting high-value crop production and marketing to enhance livelihoods, ensure food security, and support climate adaptation. Commercial coffee farming has been promoted as the primary livelihood activity for participating farmers,

while vegetable, fruit, and forage crops are cultivated as supplementary or intercropped cover crops.

The project has actively engaged school children in environmental sanitation and climate adaptation initiatives, increasing their participation in activities such as sanitation awareness campaigns and coffee planting. Implementation has been carried out in close collaboration with beneficiary households and in coordination with local government bodies.

The following activities have been successfully completed during this reporting period of the project operation.

Table 1: Showing Activities Completed in FY 2081-82

SN	Activities	Unit	Target	Progress	Percentage
1	Baseline Survey	Group	4	4	100
2	Farmer's Group Formation	Group	4	4	100
3	Regular Follow-up Meeting and Onsite Coaching	Event	47	31	66
4	Winter Season Vegetable Seed Distribution	HHs	120	120	100
5	Coffee Farming Training	Group/Event	4	4	100
6	Coffee Sapling Distribution and Plantation support	Sapling	8000	6450	80
7	Monitoring Visit by Donor	Event	1	0	0
8	School Programme	School	4	4	100
9	Social Audit and Meeting with Ward level Stakeholders	Event	3	3	100
10	Tank and Tunnel support	HHs	16	16	100

With the successful implementation of the project activities, the following outputs and outcomes were achieved:

- Basic information was collected from four additional farmer groups, which supported the preparation of a realistic project-level activity plan and budget.
- Four farmer groups were formed in Ward No. 5 of Hupsekot Rural Municipality, comprising 95 households (9 women and 87 men). All group members belong to the Magar community.
- The regular conduct of follow-up meetings facilitated timely decision-making and consensus for effective implementation of project activities. As a result, 286 people (75 women and 211 men) benefited from these processes.
- Through the effective implementation of activities in two basic schools, 120 schoolchildren (58 girls and 62 boys) enhanced their awareness of hygiene and sanitation, climate change, kitchen gardening, and coffee plantation practices. The children have also begun kitchen gardening and coffee plantation activities within the school premises.
- Sixteen farmers benefited from Silpaulin support for the construction of water tanks for irrigation and tunnels.
- Coffee farming training was provided to farmers from four farmer groups, reaching a total of 322 participants (164 women and 158 men). As a result, 118 farmers planted 6,455 coffee seedlings.
- Coffee seedling nurseries were established at 11 different locations, which will supply coffee seedlings locally in the coming year.
- During this year, 910 kg of coffee parchment was produced and sold. As a result, 65 farmers earned an additional income of NPR 546,000.

2.2 Community Suspension Bridge Programme

The Community Suspension Bridge Programme is one of the flagship initiatives of the Government of Nepal, aimed at improving the daily lives of local communities by enhancing safe and reliable access. The Himalayan Community Development Forum (HICODEF) has been implementing the Community Suspension Bridge Programme in partnership with government and non-government organizations in Nawalparasi East and West districts since 2063 BS, playing a key role in ensuring the success of the programme.

Community Suspension Bridges are constructed through a participatory approach in which local communities themselves identify the need for a bridge, analyze the associated problems, and mobilize the required resources. The bridges are implemented through a user committee formed under the leadership and management of the local community. This approach ensures strong community ownership and participation from the very beginning, particularly in the operation and maintenance of the bridges, thereby improving community access to essential services and livelihood opportunities.

In this process, HICODEF's primary role is to facilitate the identification of bridge needs, support the entire pre-construction process, and provide social and technical assistance throughout construction until completion. HICODEF also supports the formation of maintenance committees to ensure long-term sustainability of the bridges and promotes local employment by engaging community members in construction and maintenance activities.

The Community Suspension Bridge Programme, implemented by the Himalayan Community Development Forum (HICODEF) in collaboration with the then District Development Committee (DDC) Nawalparasi, has been in operation since 2006. The programme is currently being implemented with the support of local governments across the district. In Nawalparasi East, it covers five local levels, including four rural municipalities and one municipality, while in Nawalparasi West, it operates in three local levels, including two municipalities and one rural municipality.

In the current year, HICODEF has been providing both social and technical support in close coordination with local governments for the identification of needs, feasibility assessment, field surveys, and preparation of Detailed Project Reports (DPRs) for suspension bridges. During this year, the construction of four suspension bridges has been completed and formally handed over to the respective Rural Municipalities and Municipalities. The remaining fourteen bridges are at various stages of construction. In addition, the process of obtaining work orders from the concerned local governments for additional surveys is currently ongoing.

Since 2006, a total of 69 suspension bridges have been constructed and are operational in Nawalparasi East and West districts with facilitation support from HICODEF. During the fiscal year 2081/082, the construction of the following four Community Suspension Bridges was successfully completed.

Table 2: Showing Completed Bridges in FY 2081-2082

SN	Name of the Suspension Bridge	Location	Province	Remarks
1	Chargharghat	Sunwal Municipality-4	Lumbini	
2	Muralikhola	Hupsekot Municipality-6	Gandaki	
3	Khaikhola	Hupsekot Municipality -5	Gandaki	
4	Naraynchok	Bardaghat Municipality-14	Gandaki	

The completion of four Community Suspension Bridges in FY 2081/082 has directly benefited 6,165 people from 943 households by providing safe and reliable access and enhancing their quality of daily life. In addition, the programme generated local-level employment for 9,917 individuals, primarily from poor and Dalit households.

The following seven bridges will remain under implementation in the upcoming fiscal year 2082/083.

Table 3: Showing Bridges Planned for Upcoming FY 2082-83

SN	Name of the Suspension Bridge	Location	Province	Remarks
1	Kaharekhola	Bulingtar Rural Municipality-1	Gandaki	
2	Chharchhare Khola	Bulingtar Rural Municipality-1& 2	Gandaki	
3	Dumrikuna	Bulingtar Rural Municipality-3	Gandaki	
4	Shantipark	Bulingtar Rural Municipality-3	Gandaki	
5	Khumaltar Jyamire Khola	Binay Triveni Rural Municipality 2	Gandaki	
6	Belashpur	Palhinandan Rural Municipality 3	Lumbini	
7	Shankarpur	Palhinandan Rural Municipality 1	Lumbini	

2.3 Securing & Protecting Investments & Capacities for Environmental Sustainability

The Himalayan Community Development Forum (HICODEF) has launched a new programme titled **Securing and Protecting Investment & Capacities for Environmental Sustainability (SPICES)** in partnership with **Catholic Relief Services (CRS) Nepal**, effective from June of the current fiscal year. The programme aims to promote agriculture and expand market access in Gorkha, Palpa, Nawalparasi, and other districts.

In Nawalparasi, the programme will primarily focus on strengthening the **ginger and coffee value chains**.

Although the overall project is envisaged as a **four- to five-year programme**, due to certain technical considerations, an initial agreement has been signed for a period of **four months**, from **June to September** of the upcoming fiscal year. During this initial phase, the programme will be implemented with an estimated budget of **approximately NPR 4 million**, with the possibility of extension based on performance, need, and mutual agreement.

3. ORGANIZATIONAL DEVELOPMENT & GOVERNANCE

During this reporting year, HICODEF made measurable progress in strengthening its organizational development and governance systems to enhance transparency, accountability, and effectiveness. The organization successfully conducted its Annual General Meeting and held regular Executive Committee meetings, during which key strategic, financial, and policy decisions were reviewed and endorsed. A smooth and well-documented leadership transition was completed in accordance with the organization's statutes, ensuring continuity in management and programme delivery. HICODEF completed its annual statutory and external financial audits within the required timeframe, with audit recommendations systematically reviewed for improvement. Key organizational policies and operational guidelines—including finance, procurement, and human resource management—were reviewed and updated, and compliance monitoring mechanisms were strengthened. In addition, capacity-building sessions were conducted for Executive Committee's members and staff on safe guarding and child protection, governance and donor compliance, contributing to improved institutional performance and reinforcing HICODEF's commitment to good governance and long-term sustainability.

4. FINANCIAL OVERVIEW

During the reporting year, HICODEF maintained sound financial management practices to ensure effective utilization of resources, transparency, and accountability to donors, partners, and stakeholders. The organization managed funds from multiple development partners to implement programme activities aligned with its strategic objectives and approved work plans.

All financial transactions were recorded in accordance with established financial policies, donor guidelines, and statutory requirements. Regular financial monitoring, internal controls, and periodic financial reviews were conducted to track expenditures against approved budgets and to ensure value for money. The organization successfully completed its annual statutory and external financial audit within the reporting period, and audit observations were reviewed and addressed through management action plans.

Expenditures during the year were primarily directed towards programme implementation, community-level interventions, capacity-building activities, and operational support costs necessary for effective programme delivery. HICODEF continued to strengthen its financial systems by improving budgeting, cash flow management, procurement processes, and financial reporting, thereby enhancing institutional efficiency and donor confidence.

Overall, HICODEF’s financial position remained stable during the year, enabling the organization to meet its financial obligations and sustain programme operations. The organization remains committed to prudent financial management, transparency, and responsible stewardship of resources to support its mission and long-term sustainability.

Table 4: Showing Income and Expenditure Status in 2081-2082

SN	Name of the Project	Funding Organization	Income (Amount in NPR)	Expenditure (Amount in NPR)
1	STTP- TGT	The Glacier Trust	686,746	664,979
2	Community Suspension Bridge	Local Government	1,473,866	683,686
3	Spices	CRS	2,787,653	
4	Internal		1,054,204	762,347
5	LFA	The Glacier Trust	1,521,386	1,826,309
	Total		75,23,855	43,14,966

5. CHALLENGES, LESSON LEARNED & WAY FORWARD

During the reporting period, HICODEF encountered several operational and institutional challenges that provided valuable learning opportunities for improving future programme implementation.

One of the key challenges was **staff dropout in the SPICES project**, which affected continuity and increased the workload on remaining team members. This highlighted the importance of staff retention strategies, timely recruitment, and providing adequate orientation and support to field staff to maintain programme momentum.

Delays in project agreement created difficulties in the timely transportation and transplantation of seedlings to project sites. As plantation activities could not be carried out during the optimal season, plant mortality rates increased. This underscored the need for early planning, realistic timelines, and joint risk assessment with partners during the project design and agreement phase.

Similarly, **delayed availability of project funds** resulted in the late establishment of nurseries, which negatively affected the germination rate of coffee seedlings. This experience emphasized the importance of timely fund disbursement, advance financial

planning, and contingency arrangements to align nursery operations with appropriate agricultural seasons.

The organization also faced challenges related to the **lack of proper guidance and orientation for newly appointed staff**, which affected efficiency during the initial phase of their deployment. This reinforced the need for structured induction processes, clear implementation guidelines, and ongoing mentoring for new team members.

At the institutional level, **declining donor funding** posed a challenge to programme expansion and long-term sustainability. This highlighted the necessity of diversifying funding sources, strengthening engagement with local governments, and exploring alternative financing mechanisms to reduce dependency on limited donors.

Overall, these challenges provided important lessons that are being used to strengthen planning, staff management, financial preparedness, and partnership coordination, thereby enhancing HICODEF's resilience and effectiveness in future programming.

Based on the implementation experience and lessons learned during the reporting period, the following recommendations are proposed to further strengthen programme effectiveness and institutional performance:

- **Local Recruitment of Field Staff:** Priority should be given to recruiting field-level staff from the local communities where projects are implemented. Locally hired staff possesses contextual knowledge, language skills, and social acceptance, which enhance community engagement, improve programme efficiency, and reduce operational costs related to mobility and logistics.
- **Careful Assessment During Project Agreement Phase:** Prior to finalizing project agreements, both implementing and funding partners should jointly assess critical implementation factors, including the appropriate season for seedling transplantation and the accessibility of project sites for transportation. Early assessment of these factors will help minimize implementation delays, reduce costs, and ensure better project outcomes.
- **Development and Orientation of Special Implementation Guidelines:** A project-specific implementation guideline should be developed for each major programme and oriented to all relevant project staff before field implementation begins. Clear guidelines will help ensure consistency in implementation, improve compliance with technical and donor requirements, and enhance the overall quality of programme delivery.
- **Strengthening Coordination with Local-Level Authorities for Resource Mobilization:** Coordination with local government authorities should be further strengthened, particularly to explore opportunities for local funding and resource mobilization. Proactive engagement with municipalities and rural municipalities can support co-financing arrangements, enhance local ownership, and contribute to the long-term sustainability of project interventions.