

*THE*

# COFFEE TABLE BOOK

*Moments of Impact, Stories of Change*



**DRIVING CHANGE TOGETHER**



Gates Foundation

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# ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

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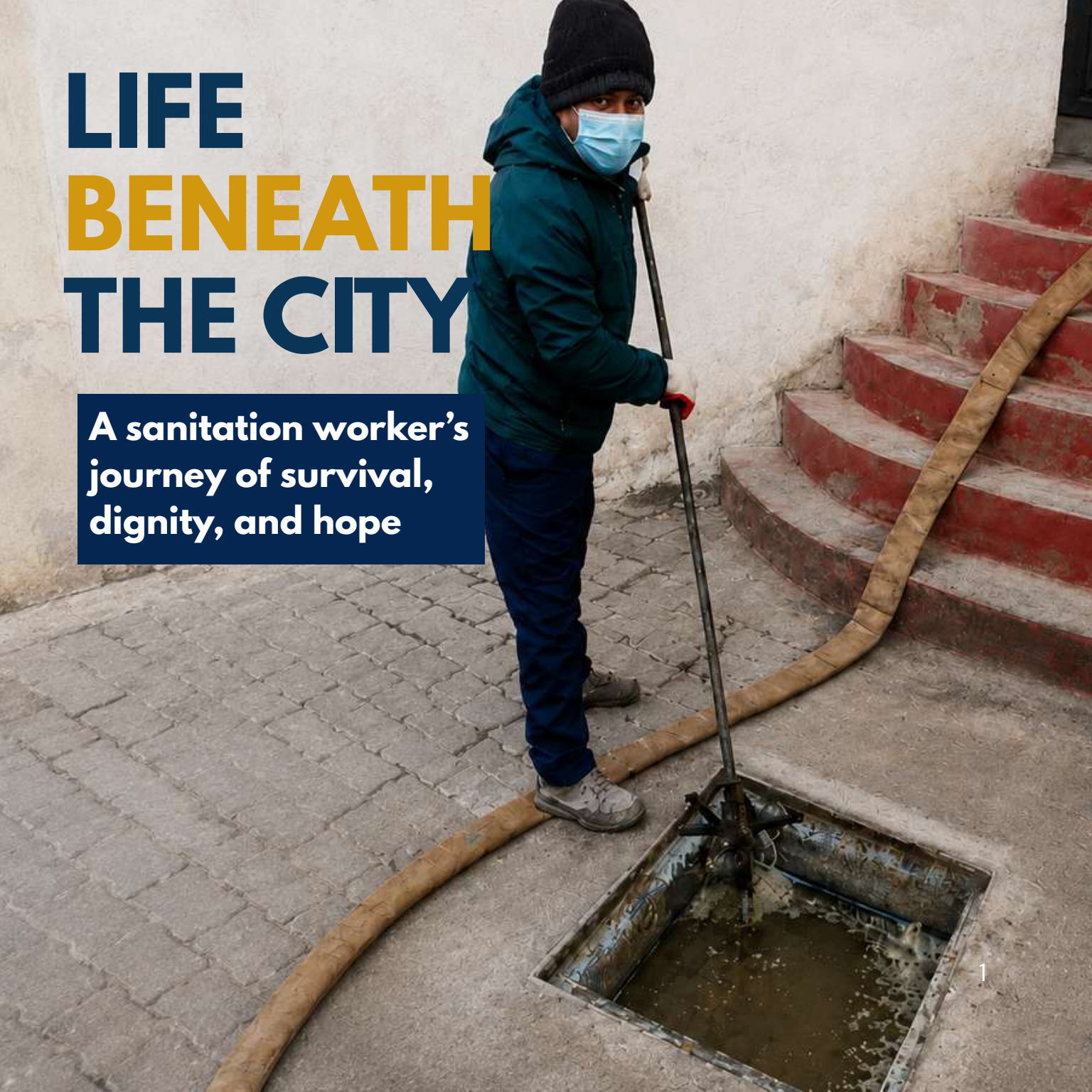
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# LIFE BENEATH THE CITY

A sanitation worker's  
journey of survival,  
dignity, and hope



# The Hands That Keep Cities Clean



At just 10, Man Bahadur lost his mother and was pushed into septic tank cleaning to survive. For more than 40 years, he has worked without protection — facing toxic gases, infections, and stigma. In Teku, he once passed out inside a tank and was saved only by a colleague's quick action.

A ban on polluting vehicles ended his brief escape as a rickshaw driver, pulling him back into sanitation work. Six years ago, he joined Teamwork Drain Clean Services, where he still works today despite low pay and declining health.

A father of five, he says his proudest moment was his son's graduation, a dream once denied to him, now alive in the next generation.

His story is a call for safer systems, fair wages, and dignity for sanitation workers everywhere.

“

*Life did not give me choices, but I still chose to stand up every day. I do not want pity — I want safety, respect, and recognition for the hands that keep the city clean and protect its dignity.*

**– Man Bahadur Pode**

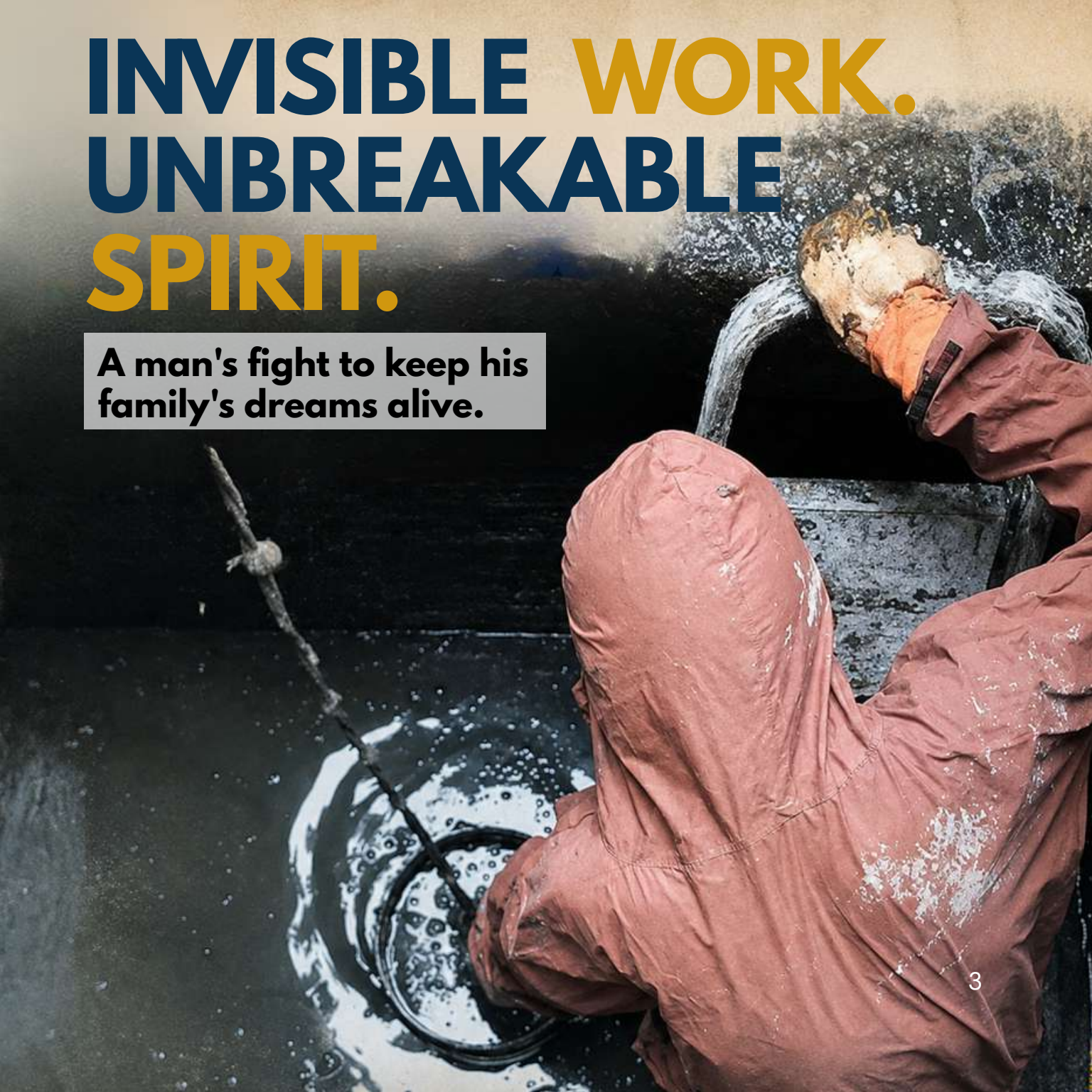
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**SCAN FOR FULL STORY**



# INVISIBLE WORK. UNBREAKABLE SPIRIT.

A man's fight to keep his  
family's dreams alive.



# A Story of Survival, Sacrifice & Dignity

Kaji Man Kusuwa, 40, from Sarlahi, had studied only up to Grade 5. Ten years ago, with no other options, he started cleaning septic tanks — dangerous work most people won't touch.

After years of saving and taking out a loan, he bought his own desludging vehicle, hoping for a safer, more stable future. Months later, the municipality seized it, following an allegation that he had dumped waste into the river. With no way to fight the claim, he eventually sold the vehicle at a heavy loss.

Despite health risks, stigma, harassment, and delayed payments, he continues this work today. Training from ENPHO and WaterAid Nepal gave him safety knowledge he never had before, along with the confidence to speak up for sanitation workers like himself.

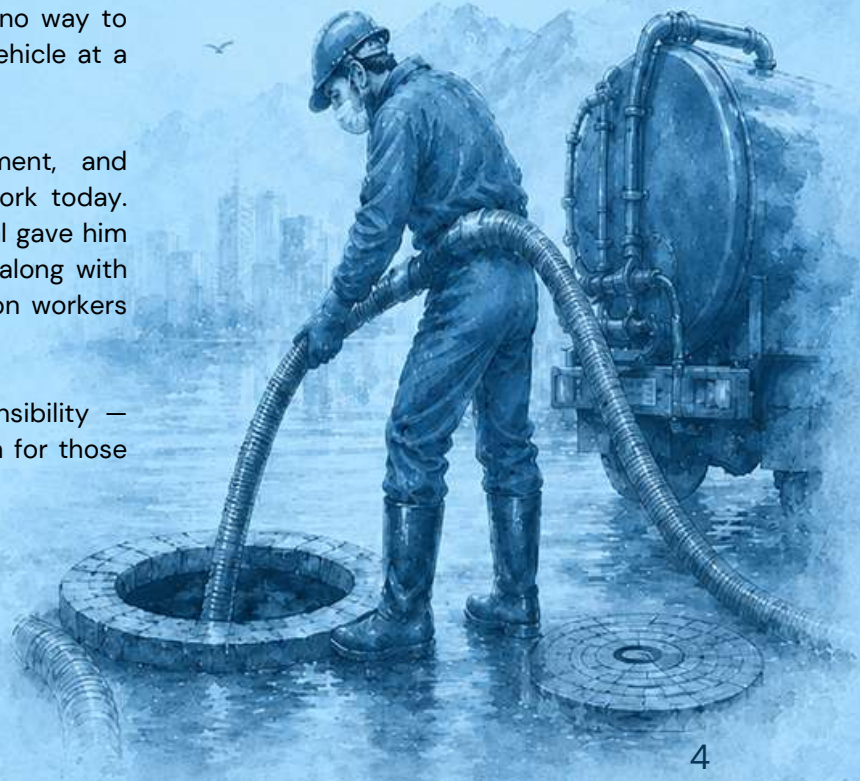
His story reflects resilience and responsibility — and the need for dignity and recognition for those who keep our communities clean.

SCAN FOR FULL STORY



*"We clean what others won't.  
We enter where others can't.  
We do it so the city can live.  
We just want to live with dignity."*

**— Kaji Man Kusuwa**



# FROM TANK TO TREATMENT

**A Private Sector Shift from Unsafe Disposal to Organized  
Sludge Management**



# Private Sector Redefining Sanitation Services

“Nobody wanted to deal with faecal sludge — it was seen as a burden, not an opportunity. But by working together, we turned it into a safe service, a useful resource, and a sustainable business. Today, Butwal Sanitary shows that sanitation can protect the environment and also create value.”

—Yam Bahadur Thapa Magar

In Butwal, faecal sludge from thousands of households was once dumped near forests and rivers due to a lack of treatment sites. When this unsafe practice was stopped, seven desludging service providers came together to build a lasting solution.

They formed Butwal Sanitary Pvt. Ltd., leased land at Ramanagar Community Forest, and built their own Faecal Sludge Treatment Plant — starting with simple drying beds and gradually upgrading to better technology and management systems.

With a centralised office, call center, proper records, and optimised desludging trips, Butwal Sanitary improved both sanitation services and business performance, proving that safe sanitation can also be an organised, reliable enterprise.

With ENPHO's support in training, promotion, IEC materials, and exposure visits, Butwal Sanitary has become a model for private-sector-led faecal sludge management in Nepal.

## RESOURCE RECOVERY



**12,000**  
liters treated daily



**800**  
kg organic fertilizer  
produced

## REVENUE GROWTH



**USD 51,429 → USD 65,143**



Safe sanitation can be profitable.

# WELLNESS WITH DIGNITY

**Hetauda's Sanitation Workers Access Health Care**



# From Training to Health Security

For years, sanitation workers in Hetauda worked without basic protection, health insurance, or formal recognition. After training on safety, rights, leadership, and communication, they gained the confidence to advocate collectively for safer and more dignified working conditions.

This led to the formation of a sanitation workers' network in Hetauda, which successfully advocated for their first-ever health insurance coverage. The achievement marked an important step toward protection, recognition, and dignity for sanitation workers in Nepal.



“After getting health insurance, we feel safer and more secure at work. All sanitation workers should have access to basic workplace facilities, and our rights must also be protected.

– Gokarna B.K.

# A SPACE TO WASH, REST & RISE TANK

**WASH Facility for Waste Workers in Kritipur**



## Where Well-being Meets Recognition

In Kirtipur, waste workers who were once overlooked now have access to a dedicated WASH facility at the waste collection site. With clean toilets, bathing and handwashing spaces, safe drinking water, lockers, and laundry support, the facility addresses their daily needs for hygiene, safety, and rest.

More than a building, it represents recognition of the essential role that waste workers play in keeping the city clean. By giving them a safe and private space, the initiative improves well-being, reduces exposure-related health risks, and restores a sense of respect for their work.

The facility stands as a model for inclusive urban planning — showing that sanitation systems must care for the workers behind the service.





# TRANSFORMING PUBLIC TOILETS INTO SAFE AND USER-FRIENDLY SPACES

## A Public Toilet Reimagined

At Chapagaun Buspark in Godawari, a public toilet once avoided due to poor hygiene and discomfort has been transformed into a clean, safe, and welcoming space.

With support from BORDA, ENPHO renovated the facility with separate male and female toilets, handwashing stations, menstrual hygiene facilities, automatic urinals, soap dispensers, dustbins, and a user-friendly environment.

More people now visit the facility with greater comfort and confidence. Women benefit from sanitary pad vending and disposal facilities, while the tea shop helps keep the space active and financially self-sustaining.

What was once just a public restroom is now a model for dignified urban sanitation — improving hygiene, supporting menstrual health, restoring dignity, and inspiring the municipality to replicate the model in other wards.



“This public toilet has become my main source of income. Along with toilet services, I run a small tea and grocery shop here, which has helped me manage my household expenses.”

– Mangal Maya Pujari

# TURNING WASTE INTO WORTH

**Waste Management  
and Composting in  
Kirtipur**



# A Cleaner Cycle for Kirtipur



In Kirtipur, waste is being transformed from a disposal problem into a resource opportunity. Through the partnership between Kirtipur Municipality and Kirtipur Fohor Byabasthapan Sewa Pvt. Ltd., waste is now segregated at the transfer station, with organic waste, recyclables, and residual waste following separate paths. With support from BORDA's IUWM project, a shredding machine now breaks organic waste into smaller pieces. This speeds up decomposition and improves compost quality.

Organic waste becomes compost, recyclables return to the economy, and only residual waste goes to landfill — reducing disposal pressure while supporting a cleaner, healthier environment. By properly separating and treating waste, the initiative also helps prevent the spread of disease and contamination that unmanaged waste can cause, reinforcing the link between good waste management and community sanitation.

## Impact at a glance



**Waste Segregation**  
Sorting waste for better recovery.



**Organic Composting**  
Turning organic waste into compost.



**Recyclables Recovery**  
Returning materials to the economy.



**Shredding Efficiency**  
Faster decomposition, better compost.



**Reduced Landfill Use**  
Less waste sent for final disposal.



**Circular Economy**  
Creating value from waste.

# SANITATION BEYOND TREATMENT



# Where waste becomes Resource

Along the Andhi Khola in Waling, a faecal sludge treatment plant is changing how sanitation infrastructure is seen. Built to treat waste, it has grown into a clean, green space that protects public health, safeguards the environment, and welcomes learning.

The change began after a MuNASS I sanitation survey revealed gaps across the sanitation value chain. Waling Municipality responded with local leaders and partners through planning, policy support, dedicated budget, treatment infrastructure, and improved desludging services.

With a design capacity of 6 m<sup>3</sup> per day and current operation of around 3 m<sup>3</sup> per week, the plant safely treats faecal sludge, produces compost for gardening, and generates income through tipping fees.

## Resource Recovery



Treats 3 m<sup>3</sup> of  
faecal sludge  
weekly for  
gardening



Produce 69.84 m<sup>3</sup>  
of compost  
yearly & use for  
gardening



Collects NRs.  
52,000 monthly  
from tipping fee

# LEARNING ACROSS BORDERS

for Better Sanitation



# Mentor City Cross-Learning Visits: Inspiring Sanitation Improvements

Mentor City is a concept where cities or municipalities that excel in one or more sanitation components take on the role of guiding and mentoring other cities willing to improve their sanitation systems. Building on this concept, two cities in Nepal and five in Bangladesh were identified as mentor cities.

To encourage practical learning, municipal teams from Bangladesh visited Waling and Mahalaxmi municipalities in Nepal in June 2024. Later, in September 2025, a team from Nepal visited Mentor Cities in Bangladesh. During these visits, both teams observed sanitation practices, systems, and innovations firsthand.

The visits created valuable learning opportunities. Bangladeshi municipalities showed strong interest in Mahalaxmi's Integrated Municipal Information System and are considering similar systems in their own cities. Nepali municipalities, after observing Faecal Sludge Treatment Plants in Bangladesh, were inspired to improve their own treatment systems.



# HOSPITAL-LED ACTION FOR SAFER WASH

On-site training for  
safer, cleaner hospitals



# Building Ownership through On-Site WASH FIT Training in Hospitals of Nepal



A total of 130 hospital staff from different departments were trained in WASH, Healthcare Waste Management, and Infection Prevention and Control.

During the training, participants assessed conditions in their respective hospitals and identified priority areas for improvement. Based on these findings, they developed practical action plans tailored to each hospital's specific needs.

The process also strengthened teamwork by bringing cleaners, nurses, waste handlers, and administrators together around shared sanitation goals.

As a result, the hospital is now better equipped to lead and sustain its own sanitation improvements.



# CLEAN WATER, LESS WASTE

A simple hospital initiative  
improving health, saving money,  
and protecting the environment.



साथी पाणी प्रोजेक्ट  
साथी पाणी प्रोजेक्ट  
प्राथमिक पाणी प्रकल्प



## Refilling Hope



In the hospital, many caregivers, visitors, and staff previously relied on bottled water every day. This created extra expenses for families and workers, while also increasing the use of single-use plastic bottles.

To address this, purified drinking water stations were installed in convenient locations across the hospital. With safe water now easily available, more people began refilling reusable bottles instead of buying bottled water — and easy access to clean water also made regular handwashing more practical for caregivers, visitors, and staff, supporting better hygiene throughout the hospital.

This simple change has made a meaningful difference. It has reduced plastic waste, lowered daily costs for patients, families, and staff, and improved access to safe drinking water. More importantly, it has strengthened hygiene practices that help prevent infections.

# WASTE TO WORTH

TRANSFORMING HEALTHCARE  
WASTE INTO A SOURCE OF INCOME



# Turning Waste into Opportunity

At Hetauda Hospital, healthcare waste management was once a major challenge. Improper waste-handling practices posed risks to staff, patients, visitors, and the surrounding environment—a hidden risk within daily hospital operations.

Change came through sustained effort rather than a single intervention. Regular consultation meetings, learning and knowledge-sharing sessions, and sensitization activities gradually strengthened the hospital's commitment to safer healthcare waste management.

This growing commitment led to an important step forward. Hetauda Hospital signed an agreement with a private waste management company to support the source segregation, separate collection, transportation, and autoclaving.

Through this partnership, healthcare waste is now managed more safely and systematically. This has reduced risks for everyone entering the hospital and strengthened the sanitation standards needed for safe and effective healthcare services.



## Income Generated



**NPR 50,000 per month from the sale of properly segregated recyclable healthcare waste**

# TURNING WASTE INTO VALUE

## The Story of Bharatpur Hospital's Circular Healthcare Waste Model

### Resource



**700**  
kg/day

Healthcare waste generated per day



**200**  
kg/day

Treated, non-recoverable waste sent to landfill



NPR  
**2.06**  
million/year

Approximate annual revenue from resource recovery



**100%**  
salary coverage

Revenue from recovered waste covers salaries of HCWM staff

# A Hospital's Circular Journey

## Recovery



**500**  
kg/day

Recovered as  
recyclable material



**NPR**  
**171,666**  
/month

Income from sale of  
treated and segregated  
recyclable waste



**6**  
**dedicated staff**

Working exclusively in  
healthcare waste  
management



**Biogas**  
from organic waste

Organic waste is  
converted into biogas at  
the waste-processing  
centre.

At Bharatpur Hospital, healthcare waste is managed not merely as waste for disposal, but as a potential resource. As a 600-bed public hospital, it generates significant daily waste that requires safe and efficient management. Through a circular approach, the hospital connects accountability, safety, and sustainability.

The system starts with source segregation using colour-coded bins, supported by a sticker-based tracking system for responsibility and traceability. Dedicated staff collect, weigh, and record waste, while infectious waste is safely treated through autoclaving. Recyclable materials are separated and stored, ensuring only treated, non-recoverable waste is sent for final disposal.

Through partnerships with private vendors, recovered materials generate income that helps cover staff costs and reduce operational expenses. With technical support from ENPHO and partners, Bharatpur Hospital shows how healthcare waste management can go beyond compliance—improving safety, protecting the environment, and contributing to sustainable WASH financing.

*"Before, using the hospital toilet was a struggle for me. Now, I can enter with my wheelchair and wash my hands with ease. This small change has brought me dignity, comfort, and happiness."*

**-Pabitra Khatri, Baglung**



# A Step Toward Dignity & Accessibility

## Bhaktapur Hospital's Co-Financed Sanitation Upgrade

For many patients and visitors at Bhaktapur Hospital, something as basic as using a toilet was once a daily challenge. The absence of disability-friendly facilities and the lack of clean, adequate toilets made it difficult—especially for people with limited mobility, elderly patients, and caregivers—to maintain dignity and comfort during their time at the hospital.

This collaboration led to the construction of a new, inclusive toilet block. The facility now includes one disability-friendly compartment, two female toilets, one male toilet, and a male urinal—designed to serve the diverse needs of patients, visitors, and staff.

Recognizing this gap, Bhaktapur Hospital partnered with ENPHO to bring about a meaningful change. Rather than waiting for external support, both institutions came together through a co-financing approach, sharing responsibility and investment to improve sanitation on the hospital premises.

Today, the difference is visible and felt. Patients can use clean, safe toilets with dignity; caregivers experience greater ease; and the hospital environment has become more hygienic and welcoming. What was once a challenge has now become a symbol of care and respect.

This story of change highlights how partnership, shared commitment, and practical action can transform everyday experiences in healthcare settings—ensuring that no one is left behind when it comes to basic sanitation.

# NEPAL'S **FIRST** CO-TREATMENT PLANT



A pioneering municipal initiative improving **urban sanitation, public health,** and **environmental protection.**

# Dhulikhel Co-Treatment Plant



On June 5, 2024, Dhulikhel Municipality inaugurated Nepal's first co-treatment facility—the Shreekhandaipur Wastewater and Faecal Sludge Treatment Plant. With a capacity of 50 m<sup>3</sup>/day for wastewater and 3 m<sup>3</sup>/day for faecal sludge, the plant provides an integrated and sustainable solution for safe sanitation management.

The facility demonstrates Dhulikhel Municipality's commitment to reducing environmental pollution, preventing unsafe waste disposal, protecting public health, and improving local sanitation services.

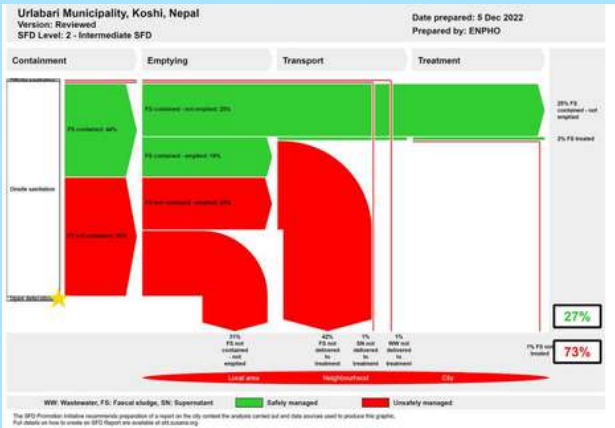
With proper operation and maintenance, it can serve as a model for other municipalities adopting integrated sanitation solutions.

The plant was developed under the leadership of Dhulikhel Municipality, with support from MuAN and UCLG ASPAC through the MuNASS project. ENPHO provided key technical support for the plant's design and implementation, helping ensure effective and sustainable operation.

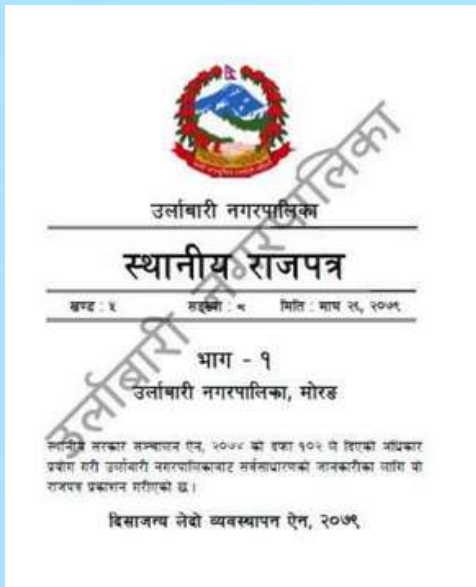
## T

Urbilabari Municipality transformed sanitation challenges into policy action through evidence-based planning. With technical support from ENPHO, a sanitation situation assessment (2022) and a Shit Flow Diagram (2022) revealed key gaps in faecal sludge management.

Using these insights, the municipality took the initiative to develop and endorse FSM bylaws in 2023—establishing a clear framework for safe collection, transport, treatment, and disposal. This journey highlights how data, local leadership, and technical support can drive practical solutions—moving Umlabari toward safer sanitation and stronger governance.



**Scan the QR code to view the SFD report for Urlabari Municipality**



# Mahalaxmi Municipality Leads Digital Sanitation Governance



Mahalaxmi Municipality has become a pioneer in digital sanitation governance by implementing both Faecal Sludge Management (FSM) bylaws and the Integrated Municipal Information System (IMIS).

In response to rapid urbanization and growing sanitation challenges, the municipality strengthened its systems through a legal framework and digital tools. FSM bylaws established clear regulations, while IMIS enabled efficient planning, monitoring, and data-driven decision-making across the sanitation value chain.

The integration of IMIS with the Electronic Building Permit System (eBPS) has improved inspection and monitoring, ensuring that septic tanks are properly designed and constructed.

IMIS now serves as a shared platform across departments, enhancing coordination, efficiency, and service delivery. This has significantly improved how the municipality manages sanitation services.

Mahalaxmi's success has inspired other municipalities, including Waling, to replicate IMIS, demonstrating its potential as a scalable model for strengthening sanitation governance across Nepal.

# INCLUSIVE SANITATION IN ACTION

Promoting dignity, equity,  
and participation in  
sanitation systems



## Creating Employment Opportunities for LGBTIQ+ Communities in Sanitation



*Hetauda City honoured sanitation workers, including LGBTIQ+ members, for their dignity, resilience, and courage.*

In Hetauda, LGBTIQ+ community members strengthened their capacity to advocate for WASH rights, leadership, and municipal engagement with support from FANSA Nepal. Building on this, the community led its own advocacy by collaborating with the municipality through meetings, proposals, and continuous dialogue. As a result, Hetauda Municipality became the first municipality in Nepal to recruit three LGBTIQ+ individuals in sanitation roles, marking an important step toward institutional inclusion. In addition, Nepal's first gender-neutral public toilet was constructed, improving safe and dignified sanitation access for all.

This case shows how local governments can advance inclusive sanitation not only through infrastructure development but also by creating employment opportunities for marginalised communities.

# FROM VOICE TO POLICY

Community-Led Advocacy  
Driving Policy and  
Budget Change



## C



With support from FANSA Nepal, LGBTIQ+ communities received training on WASH rights, leadership, and advocacy. The training helped them understand their rights and speak directly with local and provincial governments about inclusive sanitation and dignity.

After the training, the LGBTIQ+ community led its own advocacy by joining meetings, raising concerns, and demanding recognition in plans and budgets. Their efforts helped bring LGBTIQ+ issues into government discussions.

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As a result, Bagmati Province introduced Nepal's first policy for the LGBTIQ+ community in 2022/23, creating a foundation for inclusion. The province also allocated a dedicated budget of NPR 116 million in fiscal year 2023/24 to support LGBTIQ+ programs. At the local level, the Hetauda LGBTIQ+ Network secured NPR 0.1 million, and the Pokhara LGBTIQ+ Network secured NPR 0.5 million from local governments for awareness programs.

# Special Thanks







## ENVIRONMENT AND PUBLIC HEALTH ORGANIZATION (ENPHO)

New Baneshwor- Kathmandu(East), Nepal

(977) 1-5244641; 5244051

[enpho@enpho.org](mailto:enpho@enpho.org)

[www.enpho.org](http://www.enpho.org)