

**IMPACT SHEET:** Parya Sampada: Heritage Conservation, Environmental Protection and Tourism Promotion

## Sustainable Tourism and Green Growth for Heritage Settlements of Kathmandu Valley



*Promoting sustainable consumption and production (SCP) with heritage tourism sector stakeholders through demonstration in the Bungamati and policy advice, dialogue and advocacy at Kathmandu Valley level*

## PROJECT BACKGROUND

In Nepal, the devastating Gorkha Earthquake (2015) caused extensive damage, especially to housing and human settlements (estimated at USD 2.5 billion), along with severe impacts to the tourism sector, losing USD 624 million (Post Disaster Needs Assessment, Vol A: Key findings; National Planning Commission, Govt. of Nepal 2015). In the affected urban areas, 80% of the 138,771 houses that were badly damaged mostly concentrated in 50 historical urban centers in the Kathmandu Valley. Livelihood of the people was severely affected, while reconstruction programmes overlooked the issues of urban reconstruction and its close link to livelihood recovery. The SWITCH-Asia Parya Sampada project was implemented in Bungamati, a heritage settlement in Lalitpur Metropolitan City in Kathmandu Valley, providing extended support also to 10 other settlements in the valley by promoting sustainable heritage tourism to boost the local economy.

## CHALLENGE

The largest part of the USD 4.4 billion of reconstruction funds in Nepal was set aside for an owner-driven housing rebuilding programme. The national government provided a nominal subsidy of USD 3000 for the rebuilding of a destroyed house, in both rural and urban areas. However, the cost of rebuilding a house in urban areas (and particularly in the heritage settlements) using traditional technologies was complex due to socio-technical, economic and land issues. The cost amounted to less than ten-fold of the grant, for which the government-subsidized soft loans that were not accessible through banks. Entrepreneurs and SMEs in settlements like Bungamati needed both construction credit and business development loans, but while sitting on destroyed houses, they lacked collateral. Therefore, technical support for housing reconstruction in the traditional settlement and heritage infrastructure revitalization were critical to restore the heritage value and tourism potential of these settlements. A strong need was also identified for building the capacities of tourism SMEs on entrepreneurial skills, business development and access to finance, in order for them to promote their sustainable tourism businesses, as well as facilitating reconstruction loans.

## PROJECT OBJECTIVES

The project aimed to promote sustainable tourism and green growth in the heritage settlements of Kathmandu Valley, contributing to sustainable development, poverty reduction and contributing towards mitigating climate change. More specifically:

- It promoted SCP among heritage tourism sector stakeholders, including policy makers invested in reconstruction, through demonstration in Bungamati settlement and providing policy advice, dialogue and advocacy at Kathmandu Valley and country levels.

- It developed and demonstrated Bungamati and Pilachhen as exemplary destinations for green growth of the heritage tourism sector, focusing on sustainable rebuilding, equipping women and youths with the needed entrepreneurship skills to boost their local businesses, strengthening SMEs' engagement and investment, encouraging product innovation and spearheading awareness raising campaigns.

## TARGET GROUPS

- National Reconstruction Authority, Ministry of Urban Development, Department of Archaeology, Nepal Tourism Board
- Lalitpur Metropolitan City, Bungamati community and Reconstruction and Development Council
- SMEs in eco-tourism and green building services, youth and women of heritage settlements
- Federations of Women Entrepreneurs' Association, Handicraft Association and Cottage and Small Industries. Associations of Hotel, Travel Agencies, Tourist Guides and National and Tour and Travel Agents

## PROJECT ACTIVITIES

### Green rebuilding of Bungamati further planned and strengthened with a focus on sustainable heritage tourism

Promoted safer and greener rebuilding of the heritage settlements based on a comprehensive heritage settlement recovery plan for heritage conservation supporting sustainable tourism with demonstration of public heritage infrastructure reconstruction.

### Capacity enhancement of municipality and community in green development and green building through heritage conservation and green tourism

Implementation in collaboration with Lalitpur Metropolitan City, Chandragiri, Kirtipur, Siddhipur and Godawari Municipalities, targeting both mayors, decision makers and technical municipal staff.

### Policy dialogue platform established to disseminate learnings of Bungamati

Established peer learnings, networking and consultation mechanism and collaboration with intermediary organisations such as the Federation of Handicraft Association of Nepal, Nepal Association of Tour & Travel Agents, among others.

## Capacity of local youth and women entrepreneurs in MSMEs eco-tourism enterprises in Bungamati and Pilachhen built and services strengthened

Engaged communities based on a Comprehensive Tourism Entrepreneurship Development Plan to further support the development of tourism-based entrepreneurship, its operation, access to finance, market linkages, among others.

## Sustainable tourism supply chain improved by strengthening back/forward linkages

Sustainable heritage tourism promoted based on Tourism Development Plan linked to sustainable consumption and production. Development of innovative tourism products and services, based on indigenous skills and heritage value to increase the local and green economy.

## PROJECT ACHIEVEMENTS

A comprehensive heritage recovery plan for Bungamati and Pilachhen was developed and adopted by respective wards of Lalitpur, with allocation of an annual budget for implementation. Similarly, 10 settlements in 4 municipalities were supported with recovery plans for their annual planning. These plans foresee:

- 20 green infrastructure and amenities revitalized/constructed serving both locals and tourists.
- Based on Tourism Development and Entrepreneurship Development Plan, about 600 and 494 locals trained in Entrepreneurship Development and Skills Development respectively, especially in the food, handcraft and hospitality sectors.
- 59 Tourism related enterprises established and mostly led by women.
- 151 municipal officials trained on traditional construction and green technologies, tourism development, among others.

## LESSONS LEARNED

Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, several activities were delayed in 2020 and 2021, with some being conducted online or re-programmed to respond to beneficiaries' needs during this period. Close coordination was maintained with local stakeholders and a programme extension of 9.5 months was beneficial to provide targeted support to relaunch tourism and revitalise tourism based MSMEs in the post-pandemic recovery period. Furthermore, local and national elections that took place in 2022 also slightly delayed project activities due to government restrictions preventing the organisation of public events. With the constant change in government officials, the Parya Sampada project ensured that close coordination was maintained with stakeholders at municipality and ministry levels, to ensure that

both the newly elected Mayor and Chief Administration Officer, were regularly updated about the project and invited to participate during events, ultimately creating a sense of ownership.

**Continuous communication** with multi-stakeholders including government, non-governmental and intermediary organisations, locals and community-based organisations, ensured a good understanding about the project's implementation process and activities, and greatly strengthened the relationship among actors. This was particularly true during restrictions and lockdowns.

**Improving participation of both the local government and community members** built a sense of ownership and strengthened engagement during planned activities, contributing to reinforcing the project's sustainability.





Building Back Better after any disaster is challenging. It is not limited to the construction of stronger houses. It is about rebuilding the confidence of people and their readiness to respond to future disasters. It is about restoring the socio-cultural fabric of affected settlements and advancing the economic recovery.

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## Long-term project sustainability

The project pursued a holistic and systematic approach to ensure heritage conservation and create opportunities for MSMEs in the heritage eco-tourism sector. It also worked closely with stakeholders and adopted a participatory approach to ensure ownership and sustainability of planned initiatives. Gender and social inclusion have been put at the forefront when planning and implementing activities. As a result, during all conducted training programmes, more than 73% participants were women and 71% youths. Moreover, Plans developed through Parya Sampada have been adopted by the local government and are being used for the municipal annual fiscal planning. The infrastructure built by the project was handed over to the local government in the presence of community members, who are committed to its maintenance and operation. Additional resources have been secured for heritage infrastructure construction. Finally, the project has empowered locals through trainings, workshops, peer to peer learning, providing support on networking and establishment of formal collaboration mechanisms to access market and financing for strengthening enterprises' sustenance. A Multipurpose Training Center in Bungamati has also been built to increase craftsmen's agency to collaborate and tap both domestic and international markets, using the Center as a hub for learning, networking and skills transfer.

## Project contributions to Climate Change Mitigation and SDGs



Through technical assistance in the municipal drawing (green construction) and supervision during house construction, the project supported community members to adopt green building practices while conserving heritage values. 249 house owners have been supported through municipal drawing and 75 house owners have been supported through supervision during their house construction. The Green Development Policy of Lalitpur Metropolitan City will greatly contribute to mitigating the impact of climate change. Moreover, plans related to heritage settlement, tourism and entrepreneurship development have mainstreamed approaches to adapt and mitigate climate change impacts, promoting sustainable consumption and production practices (SDG 12). Green and blue solutions were also demonstrated for replication such as the installation of solar lights, revitalization of ponds using local materials, ground water recharge, greening of open spaces and solid waste management. As solid waste is a major contributor to climate change, the project supported the preparation of the Solid Waste Management Plan of Bungamati, which was adopted by the local government.

The project directly contributed to the achievement of **SDG 8** – Decent work and economic growth, creating and promoting green jobs through capacity building training programmes on entrepreneurship, business development, among others, improving the economic conditions of beneficiaries and community members.

**SDG 11** – Sustainable cities and communities and **SDG 12** – Sustainable consumption and production, and several cross-cutting goals such as promoting gender equity, tackling climate change, and reducing inequalities were also addressed.

# Impacts at a Glance

<b>Economic Impact</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 7 new innovative green products and services promoted in the market</li> <li>• 494 youths and women trained on skills related to food, hospitality, and woodcraft</li> <li>• 600 youths and women trained on entrepreneurship development</li> <li>• Tourism Development Plan and Tourism-based Entrepreneurship Plan supported the local government to boost economic activities through tourism and Bunga festival</li> </ul>
<b>Environmental Impact</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Local government is adopting Structured Solid Waste Management Plan of Bungamati for solid waste management.</li> <li>• Green Development Policy of Lalitpur Metropolitan City (soon to be adopted) will address the issues of environmental damage.</li> <li>• Eco-friendly tools and technology are used during infrastructure development</li> <li>• Guideline for Municipal Plan for Eco-tourism sector is addressing environmental issues</li> <li>• Street solar lights installed at major junctions of project area</li> <li>• Revitalization of ponds, regreening of open spaces, ground water recharge through eco-friendly tools</li> </ul>
<b>Social Impact</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Occupational health and safety trainings provided to woodcrafts.</li> <li>• The Project has supported and promoted green products made by women and youth.</li> <li>• More than 73% of participants in workshops and training programmes were women and youths.</li> <li>• Youths took part in community-based activities such as cleanup campaigns, festival celebrations, social work, among others.</li> </ul>
<b>Climate Benefits</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 1.68 KWh per day of solar energy produced through installation of solar lights at major junction of Bungamati</li> <li>• About 2.45 tons of CO<sub>2</sub> emission is reduced per year through this initiative</li> </ul>
<b>Green Finance</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Technical and financial support was provided to local level cooperatives</li> </ul>
<b>Target Group Engagement</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Youths and women are coming forward with new business ideas. Similarly, 59 tourism-related businesses have been established through project intervention</li> <li>• More than 10 stakeholders involved, including Ministry of Urban Development (MoUD), Department of Urban Development and Building Construction (DUDBC), Ministry of Culture, Tourism and Civil Aviation (MoCTCA), National Reconstruction Authority (NRA), Lalitpur Metropolitan City, Other municipalities with heritage settlements of Kathmandu Valley, Nepal Tourism Board (NTB), Bungamati Area Reconstruction and Development Council (BARDeC), MSMEs providing products and services related to sustainable tourism, Intermediary organisations such FHAN, NATTA, etc., youths, women and artisans from heritage settlements, and media professionals</li> </ul>
<b>Policy Development</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 3 policies for Lalitpur Metropolitan City are in process of approval from Lalitpur Metropolitan Council: Heritage Settlement Recovery Policy, Green Development Policy, Sustainable Tourism Development Policy</li> </ul>
<b>Europe-Asia Cooperation</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Project presentation at European Development Day 2022 in Brussels, to disseminate project learnings and experiences to wider audiences.</li> </ul>



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## DURATION

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## PARTNERS



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