

DIGO NEWSLETTER

SWISS
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What's inside this newsletter?

- Why Sustainable Tourism Matters?
- About DIGO
- Driving Change Through Our Interventions
- How We Have Been Approaching Collaboration
- Upcoming Activities

Dear readers,

We are delighted to present the first edition of the DIGO Newsletter.

Tourism is an important sector for Nepal's economy, offering significant opportunities for income generation while creating positives for the environment. As we are progressing the activities of the DIGO project, this edition of the newsletter will give you a glimpse into how. We are gearing up for promoting sustainable tourism in the Gandaki Province of Nepal.

DIGO is already achieving steady momentum by solidifying key partnerships and launching foundational activities across targeted project areas. We are truly grateful for the welcoming support that we have received and look forward to form meaningful partnerships in the future.

Tapas Neupane
Programme Manager, DIGO

Sustainability lies at the heart of DIGO

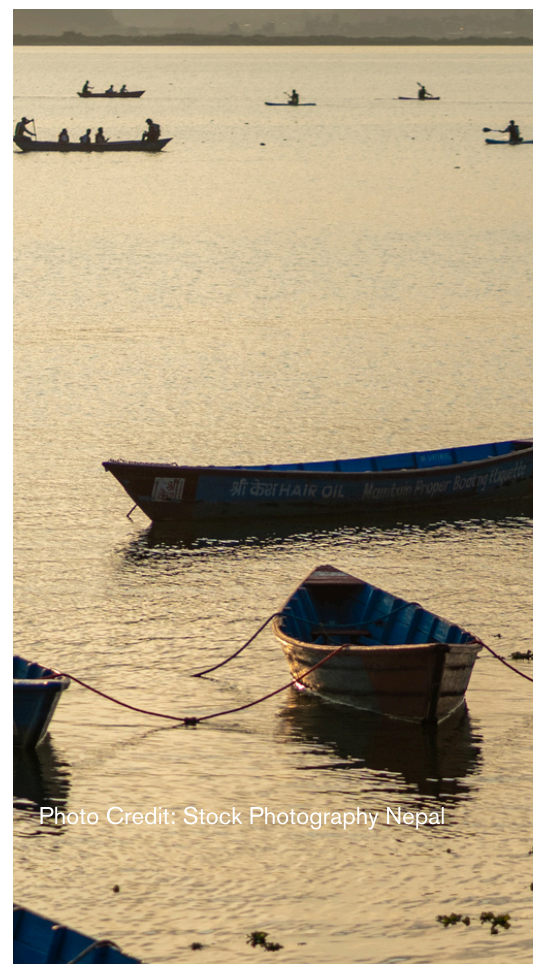


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WHY SUSTAINABLE TOURISM MATTERS?

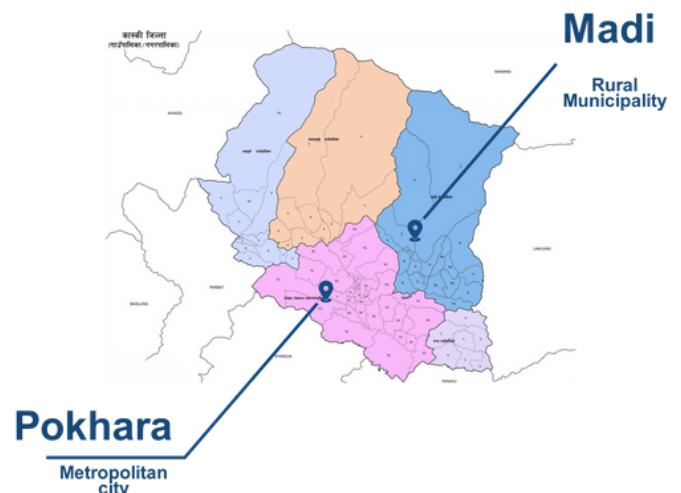
Around the world, there is growing recognition that tourism can flourish while caring for the environment and protecting local cultures. This global shift has placed sustainable tourism in the spotlight. This means taking holistic approach to tourism that safeguards the natural resources, celebrates local culture, and creates lasting benefits for communities. Travelers are increasingly prioritizing immersive experiences and sustainability when choosing destinations.



In Nepal, the post-COVID-19 recovery of the tourism industry offers a timely opportunity to transition to sustainable tourism practices. Embracing sustainable tourism practices can enrich visitor experiences, boost local economies, and preserve the beauty and traditions that make Nepal unique. This is the right time to shape a tourism sector that supports livelihoods today while protecting the resources for generations to come.

ABOUT DIGO

Developing Inclusive and Green Opportunities (DIGO) is a Swisscontact Development Programme being implemented in Pokhara and Madi Rural Municipality of the Gandaki province. DIGO aims to create additional jobs and income in the tourism sector in Nepal while generating positive environmental impacts. The project intends to achieve this by enhancing the sustainable tourism offer of tourism destinations and enterprises in Gandaki Province by guiding their transition towards responsible and sustainable tourism practices.



DRIVING CHANGE THROUGH OUR INTERVENTIONS



A.

*Strategic
Visitor Flow
Workshops*

A workshop participant brainstorming to track visitor flow of a destination

What is Strategic Visitor Flow?

Strategic Visitor Flow (SVF) is a map-based tool that helps understand how visitors move, what motivates them, and how they spend within a destination. More than data, SVF workshop fosters collaboration among local stakeholders to shape smarter, more sustainable tourism planning.

SVF Workshops

Through interactive workshops, stakeholders:

- Collect data on visitor segments, flows, spending, and length of stay
- Map how different types of visitors move within a destination
- Explore visitor motivations, attractions, services, and marketing channels
- Strengthen cooperation among tourism stakeholders

So Far

Two SVF workshops have been held in Pokhara, engaging municipalities, Hotel Association Nepal Pokhara (HAPN), Trekking Agencies Association Nepal (TAAN), Nepal Association of Tour and Travel Agents (NATTA), hotels, Pokhara Tourism Council, trekking agencies and tour operators.



The workshop showed me how important it is to offer the right experiences to guests and market them at the right time.

Chinta Gautam

Operations Manager, Hotel Barahi



DIGO Team with the participants of the second SVF Workshop held on July 2025 in Pokhara

What is Community Coaching on Sustainability?

Community Coaching on Sustainability (COCOS) is a transformative approach developed by Swisscontact that empowers local communities to understand sustainable tourism, develop tourism products and services, strengthen local tourism governance, enhance service quality, and improve the promotion and marketing of their destinations.

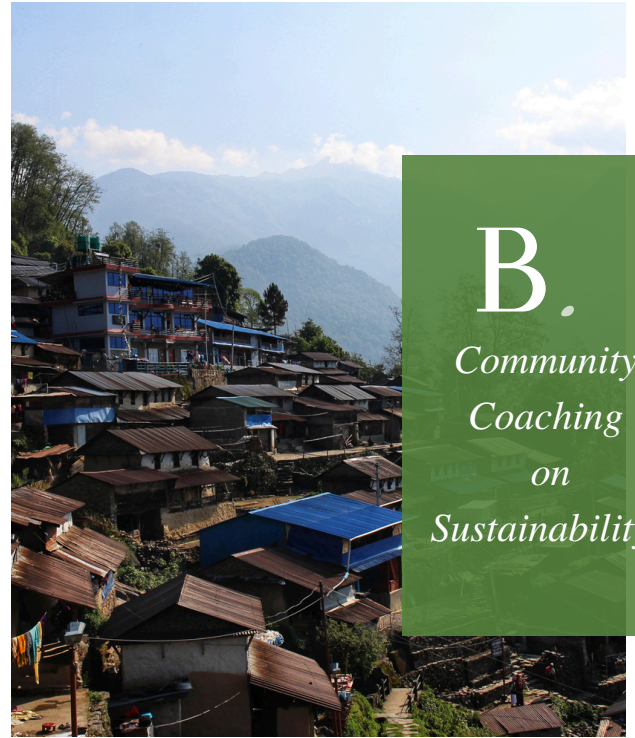
COCOS Orientation to Team, Partner NGO and Other Stakeholders

On May 12, DIGO team welcomed Christin Laschinger, COCOS expert from Swisscontact, who oriented our project team and implementing partner NGO United Community Nepal (UniCoN) and Gate Polytechnic Academy on COCOS.

The following day, May 13, DIGO team including Christin engaged in comprehensive discussions with community members in Sikles village, involving homestay committee members, women's groups, hoteliers, Annapurna conservation area project (ACAP), and other key tourism stakeholders.

On the Ground

After conducting thorough feasibility assessments in Sikles and Tangting villages of Madi Rural Municipality featuring stakeholder interviews and community focus group discussions, DIGO is now positioned to strengthen local capacities for implementing sustainable tourism practices across 3 villages in Madi Rural Municipality.



Homestays in Sikles, Madi



DIGO team along with COCOS expert consultant Christin Laschinger and the community stakeholders in Sikles after a discussion on how sustainable tourism practices can be integrated into their existing tourism activities

HOW WE HAVE BEEN APPROACHING COLLABORATION

- 1 Laying the Foundation Through Strategic Partnerships
- 2 Co-Financing Support from Local Government
- 3 Engagement with private sector stakeholders



Laying the Foundation Through Strategic Partnerships

As part of the preparatory phase, DIGO has onboarded United Community for Nepal (UniCoN), an NGO based in Pokhara, as the implementing partner. Project has also partnered with key government stakeholders such as Pokhara Metropolitan City and Madi Rural Municipality. These partnerships are crucial to enabling a coordinated and impactful tourism transformation in the region.



Co-Financing Support from Local Government

DIGO also secured co-financing support of NPR 400,000 (approximately CHF 2,581) from Madi Rural Municipality for 2025. This early support strengthens local ownership, builds public trust, and helps scale DIGO's sustainable tourism interventions.

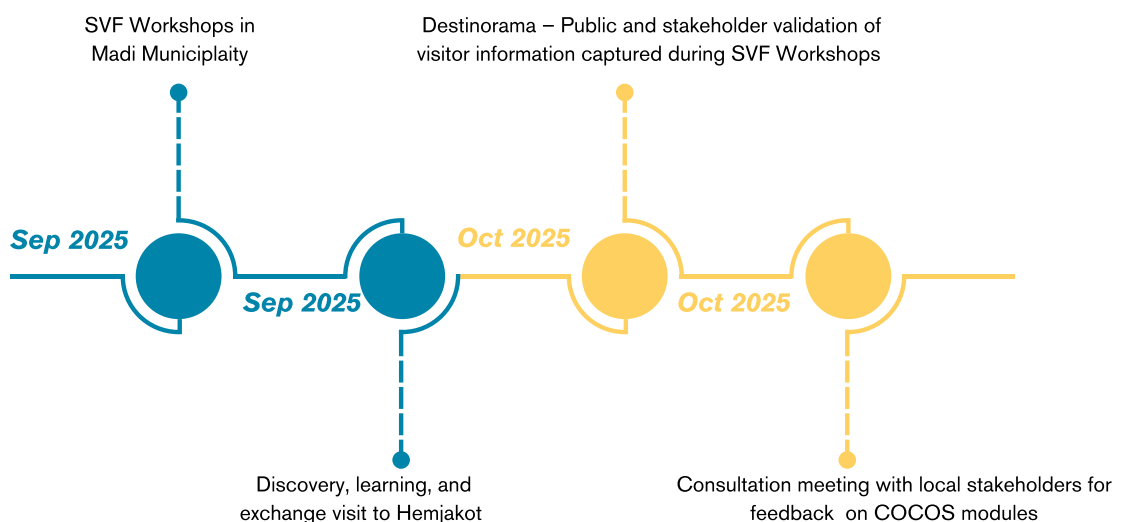


Engagement with Private Sector Stakeholders

DIGO has also been engaging with the private stakeholders including local chapters of the Trekking Agencies Association Nepal (TAAN), Nepal Association of Tour and Travel Agents (NATTA), Hotel Association of Nepal (HAN), and Restaurant and Bar Association (REBAN) and Pokhara Tourism Council and Women Tourism Entrepreneurs Forum (WOTEF).



UPCOMING ACTIVITIES



Let's build a sustainable tourism future together!
Stay connected with DIGO for more stories, insights, and updates.

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We create opportunities

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