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**CONSULTANT’S ORGANIZATION**

Stock Gurus LLC is a US based consulting firm which provides a broad range of advisory services in **institutional capacity building, training, and coaching.** The company was established in 2019. Our team consists of highly experienced experts with institution-building and technical assistance backgrounds in **Capacity Building and Training, Economic Analysis, Staffing Solutions, and Information Technology (IT) Solutions.**

**Core Services and Areas of Expertise**

Training

and

Capacity Building

Economic Analaysis

Staffing

Solutions IT Solutions

**CORE BUSINESS**

Founded in 2019 and headquartered in New York, Stock Gurus LLC is a consulting firm renowned for its comprehensive services in institutional capacity building, economic analysis, staffing solutions, and IT solutions, boasting a significant footprint in emerging and developed markets. Our expertise is deeply rooted in facilitating public and private sector development, advocating for localization, diversity, gender equality, and social inclusion, and integrating technology to drive sustainable outcomes. Our team comprises seasoned professionals with extensive experience in private and public sector engagements, capable of delivering tailored training and advisory services. We specialize in enhancing leadership, negotiation, and communication skills, underpinned by a commitment to fostering inclusive development and leveraging our global insights for local impact. Our approach entails a unique blend of technical assistance, strategic communication, and the ability to nurture talent, ensuring our clients succeed in diverse and challenging environments.

2



**CONTEXT**

**USAID/Nepal is shifting towards locally led inclusive development, which demands processes, culture, and mindset alterations.** The initiative aims to equip staff with the necessary skills, knowledge, and information, aligning with broader agency-wide priorities like localization1, Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, and Accessibility (DEIA)2and the empowerment of local staff (FSN)3. The context involves creating an enabling environment where the skills and talents of FSN leaders are recognized and utilized effectively within the Mission's framework, ultimately contributing to sustainable development outcomes.

**Diversity, Equity,**

**Empowerment Localization**

**Inclusion, and Accessibility**

**Sustainability**

USAID/Nepal is shifting towards locally led inclusive development, which demands processes, culture, and mindset alterations. However, challenges exist in adapting internal processes and fostering an enabling environment where FSN expertise is fully recognized and utilized. Despite these challenges, there are numerous potential benefits. Local leaders often possess a deeper understanding of community needs, potentially leading to more effective development strategies. Additionally, locally owned projects are more likely to be sustained in the long run, while empowering FSNs can boost staff morale and engagement.

Our approach begins with an Inception Phase, encompassing a thorough document review and a pre-survey to assess USAID's local staff's needs and baseline knowledge. The core of our proposal, the Proposed Main Activities, includes tailored Interactive Learning Sessions, a Conversation Series, and a comprehensive Coaching program featuring a Train-the-Trainer (TOT) initiative, all designed to foster skills development and empowerment. A post-survey will evaluate the impact of these activities, providing essential data to measure their effectiveness and inform a roadmap for ongoing employee performance improvement. This holistic Feedback Loop approach ensures a deep, impactful engagement with staff, aligning with the mission's goals for sustainable development and empowerment.

1 As per Statement of Work, shifting towards locally led development, with a focus on engaging local actors, including FSNs, to respond to development challenges, create partnerships, engage with local systems, and promote inclusion of historically disempowered communities. USAID’s local staff play a crucial role in this shift towards greater local ownership and sustainable development results.

2 As per Statement of Work, ensuring a diverse, equitable, inclusive, and accessible workforce that reflects the countries in which USAID operates, with a focus on empowering local staff and recognizing their skills.

3 As per Statement of Work, empowering local staff to excel by providing leadership pathways, fostering an enabling environment, and recognizing the skills and talents of FSN leaders within the Mission.

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**1 TECHNICAL APPROACH**

Our overall approach (

**Figure** 1) spans three phases: Phase 1, which involves Desk Research and a Pre-Survey; Phase 2, Main Activities, encompassing Interactive Learning Sessions, a Conversation Series, and Coaching; and Phase 3, a Feedback Loop via Post-Survey Assessment. This structure effectively equips USAID's local staff with the required knowledge and skills.

**Figure 1: Overall Technical Approach**

**Phase 1:**

**Inception**

**Document Review**

**Pre-Survey**

**Assessment**

**Customize and Tailor Curriculum and Training**

**Materials**

**Phase 2:**

**Proposed Main Activities**

**Interactive**

**Learning Sessions**

**Conversation**

**Series**

**Coaching:**

**Train-the -Trainer (TOT) Initiative**

**Phase 3:**

**Post-Survey Assessment**

**Measure Main Activities Impact**

**Roadmap for**

**improving**

**Employee**

**performance**

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**Phase 1 – Inception**

In the inception phase, our paramount objective is to lay a solid foundation for understanding the FSN staff's current proficiencies, areas for improvement, and obstacles that may hinder their empowerment. Stock Gurus will adopt a multifaceted approach (**Figure 2**) encompassing extensive desk research*,* and a comprehensive pre-survey will be employed.

Desk research will serve as the preliminary stage, wherein we will analyze existing reports and datasets pertinent to the FSN staff's development requirements. Document review will afford us a historical and contextual framework within which the staff operates and insights into previously identified challenges and achievements. Examining secondary data will ensure that our approach is grounded in the actual context of USAID/Nepal's operational environment.

Simultaneously, our team leads Nischal Dhungel, along with distinguished experts, will meticulously design and roll out a pre-survey to capture the FSN staff's current skill levels, workplace attitudes, and self-identified areas for development, particularly concerning leadership, facilitation, negotiation, trust-building, conflict management, performance management, interview preparation, media engagement, and communication. This proactive engagement with staff will aid in revealing the nuanced needs and expectations of the staff, which may not be fully evident in existing documentation.

**Figure 2: Phase 1 Approach**

****

**Survey**

**Preparation and Design**

Conduct extensive desk research and pre surveys to grasp FSN staff needs.

Design surveys with a blend of qualitative and quantitative

questions focused on leadership, DEIA, wellbeing, and more, in English and Nepali using Survey Monkey or Google/Microsoft Forms.

**Customized**

**Training**

**Development**

Surveys aim to identify skill gaps in areas like leadership, negotiation,

conflict management, and communication.

Development led by Survey Specialists in consultation with the

USAID FSN Advisory Committee.

**Data Analysis and**

**Management**

Systematic collection, management, and analysis of survey data using advanced

statistical software.

Process overseen by experts like Sunny Gurung to ensure data integrity and

confidentiality.

**Feedback and Program**

**Tailoring**

Analysis results in a inception report with clear recommendations for training

adjustments.

Curriculum

customized to address staff's significant skills gaps and delivered in both Nepali and

English for

effectiveness.

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To ensure the inclusivity and accuracy of our survey, it will comprise a balanced mix of short qualitative and quantitative questions specifically fashioned to extract meaningful insights across the thematic areas crucial to our assignment, including wellbeing, working conditions, and DEIA principles. Our team will select the survey instrument among the best available online platforms, such as Survey Monkey or Google/Microsoft Forms, based on the criteria of relevance and efficiency.

Upon finalization, the survey will feature a clear introductory paragraph that elucidates its purpose and includes an informed consent form, underscoring our commitment to ethical standards and confidentiality. Furthermore, it will be accessible in English and Nepali, ensuring no language barriers hinder participation. Using Nikunjan Gc and Sunny Gurung's extensive data management tools experience, our Survey Specialists will formulate the survey questions to capture the intricate factors influencing the critical skills under review.

Once the survey is administered and responses are gathered, data will be meticulously collected, managed, and scrutinized using advanced statistical software to guarantee the highest confidentiality and data integrity standards. The insights drawn from this data will be synthesized into an inception report, encapsulating the core findings, and distilling clear, actionable recommendations for refining the training program following the USAID’s Foreign Service National (FSN) Advisory Committee (UAC) and staff's expressed needs and preferences.

This tailored need assessment will illuminate the most pronounced skill gaps and developmental aspirations the local staff perceives. The inception report will guide the curriculum in bridging these gaps. Still, it will also influence the mode of content delivery, ensuring that it is rendered in Nepali and English to accommodate participant comfort and requirements.

**Phase 2 – Proposed Main Activities**

In Phase 2, the findings from the inception phase directly shape our main activities, meticulously designed to address the identified needs and build upon the strengths of USAID's local staff. These findings inform the structure and substance of the Interactive Learning Sessions, Conversation Series, and the Coaching and TOT (Training of Trainers) initiative. To operationalize a framework for USAID's Mission Action Plan for FSN Empowerment, we propose an integrated approach that includes Interactive Learning Sessions, a Conversation Series, and a Coaching and TOT (Training of Trainers) program.

We propose a ***hybrid approach***, where most sessions will be in-person, focusing on USAID staff based in Kathmandu. We will incorporate virtual tools like Google/Microsoft/Zoom to deliver the sessions. The coherence of Phase 2 activities ensures that each component synergistically contributes to the overarching goal of empowering local staff. The Interactive Learning Sessions will boost skill levels; the Conversation Series will create a shared understanding of core empowerment and inclusivity principles; and the Coaching initiative will secure these advances for the future by empowering staff to lead the way forward.

Our team will consult with USAID’s Foreign Service National (FSN) Advisory Committee (UAC) regarding the specific content, duration, and scheduling of these activities. Hence, we will refine the particular matters to ensure they perfectly align with the staff's needs and the mission's strategic

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objectives. This collaborative approach will guarantee that the programs meet the current requirements and are adaptable to evolving circumstances and priorities.

**Table 1: Phase 2 Approach**

|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Component Objective Activities Frequency**  **Target**  **Team Lead**  **& Duration**  **Audience** | | | | | |
| **Interactive**  **Learning**  **Sessions** | Enhance FSN staff's practical skills in  essential areas such as  leadership,  facilitation, and negotiation. | These will be  dynamic sessions involving  simulations and  gamification to  encourage hands-on learning, with  particular focus  areas like interview preparation  receiving additional one-on-one follow up support. | Monthly  sessions,  each lasting 2-3 hours,  will be  delivered  using a  hybrid  format. | Local  USAID  staff | Uttam Upreti and Sunny Gurung  will lead these  sessions, drawing on their extensive experience in  high  performance  training  programs. |
| **Conversation Series** | Deepen staff  understanding and  implementation of  empowerment, DEIA, and  localization  principles. | This series will  consist of  progressive  sessions that build upon one another, establishing a  foundation of trust and open  communication. | Monthly, in person  sessions of  1.5-2 hours each,  facilitating  an ongoing dialogue. | All  interested USAID  staff | Uttam Upreti,  Swechchha  Dahal, and  Nischal Dhungel will facilitate  these  conversations,  leveraging their expertise in  gender equality and social  inclusion. |
| **Coaching:**  **Train-the**  **Trainer**  **(TOT)** | Cultivate  internal  facilitation  capacity,  thereby  ensuring the  sustainability of training efforts. | Targeted coaching for up to 15 staff members in  facilitation skills, enabling them to lead subsequent  training sessions. | Sessions  will be  tailored to  specific  program  needs and  conducted  in person. | A select  group of  up to 15  USAID  local  staff. | Uttam Upreti,  with his  experience in  training design and facilitation, will guide these sessions. |
| Stock Gurus team will finalize the specific duration, topic, and timeline in consultation with USAID’s Foreign Service National (FSN) Advisory Committee (UAC) | | | | | |

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**1. Interactive Learning Sessions**

The Interactive Learning Sessions will be meticulously curated to address the skill gaps identified in the inception phase's pre-survey findings. Our selection of topics for these sessions reflects where staff members have expressed a desire for growth or where data has revealed the need for enhanced capabilities.

The Interactive Learning Sessions, led by the combined expertise of Uttam Upreti and Sunny Gurung, are designed to bridge the skill gaps identified through a meticulous pre-survey analysis conducted in the inception phase. The sessions will harness Uttam Upreti's extensive experience in organizational capacity assessment and development, alongside Sunny Gurung's instructional and workforce development expertise, to create a comprehensive learning experience.

**Content Development and Session Focus:**

The curriculum for these sessions will draw on the significant contributions of Uttam Upreti in enhancing organizational capacities and leadership roles in various sectors, including his work with USAID, FHI 360, and UNICEF. This experience and Sunny Gurung’s proficiency in creating and delivering high-performance training programs globally will ensure the sessions are rich in content and methodology. Topics such as trust-building, conflict resolution, effective media engagement, and strategic planning will be covered, focusing on practical application and developing actionable skills.

**Implementation Strategy - Interactive Learning Sessions:**

Our experts will implement interactive learning sessions through a dynamic blend of methodologies, incorporating simulations, role-playing, and gamification to cater to diverse learning preferences. This strategy aims to make the learning process engaging, interactive, and memorable.

**Blended Learning Approach:** Utilizing both in-person and virtual formats, the sessions will offer flexibility and ensure wide accessibility. This hybrid approach, enriched by Upreti's and Gurung's experience in both physical and digital realms, will cater to the diverse needs of USAID staff, offering materials and interactions in both English and Nepali to accommodate all participants.

**Customized Learning Pathways:** Training will include personalized development options recognizing each participant's unique needs. Particular emphasis will be placed on one-on-one coaching sessions, particularly for skills requiring deeper exploration, such as strategic communication and leadership. Uttam Upreti will leverage his experience conducting participatory organizational assessments to tailor these pathways, ensuring they align with individual career goals and organizational objectives.

**Engagement and Evaluation:** The effectiveness of the Interactive Learning Sessions implementation will be continuously evaluated and refined using the Kirkpatrick model and the ADDIE framework, methodologies in which Sunny Gurung is well-versed. These sessions will employ innovative techniques, such as Gurung’s application of Bloom's taxonomy in eLearning, to ensure the learning experience is structured systematically and leads to tangible outcomes.

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**Scheduling and Accessibility:** Following the Scope of Work, each session will last between 2-3 hours monthly, designed to fit into the busy schedules of USAID staff while ensuring sufficient depth of learning.

**Broad and Inclusive Participation:** Aimed at USAID’s local staff, the sessions are crafted to be universally accessible and inclusive, capitalizing on the bilingual capabilities of Gurung and Upreti. This approach guarantees that the sessions are not just educative but also culturally sensitive and respectful of the local context.

**Expected Outcomes:** Implementing these Interactive Learning Sessions is anticipated to markedly enhance the skill set of participants, fostering a more inclusive, empowered, and proficient workforce. The direct impact of these sessions will be evident in improved leadership, negotiation, and communication skills among staff, contributing to better performance and a more progressive organizational culture. Ultimately, the legacy of leadership and training excellence established by Upreti and Gurung will be instrumental in driving USAID's strategic goals and fostering a culture of continuous improvement and development.

The topics for the Interactive Learning Series will closely align with the agency’s strategic objectives and the insights gained from the Phase 1 pre-survey, ensuring that each session is relevant and impactful in addressing staff development needs and driving the desired cultural evolution within USAID.

**Figure 3: Potential topics for small and large group learning-oriented sessions**

**Leadership** 

• Sessions focused on developing visionary thinking, enhancing emotional intelligence, honing decision-making skills, fostering adaptability, and mastering the art of delegation.

**Negotiation** 

• Training on rigorous preparation and planning, maintaining emotional control, mastering persuasion skills, cultivating problem-solving techniques, and upholding ethics and reliability.

**Performance Management** 

• Focus on goal setting, providing feedback, fostering coaching and development, utilizing analytical skills to interpret performance data, and boosting motivational skills.

**Communication** 

• Developing clarity and conciseness, honing active listening, understanding and using non verbal cues, practicing empathy, and engaging in constructive feedback.

**Facilitation** 

• Workshops on active listening, employing effective questioning techniques, managing group dynamics, resolving conflicts, and ensuring proficient time management.

**Trust Building** 

• Sessions to reinforce the value of consistency, the importance of transparency, the practice of active listening, the principle of integrity, and the power of empathy.

**Interview Preparation** 

• Comprehensive preparation including company research, self-reflection, mock interviews, preparing insightful questions, and mastering non-verbal communication.

**Media Engagement** 

• Building skills in message development, media training, handling crisis communication, leveraging social media effectively, and understanding audience engagement.

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**2. Conversation Series**

The Conversation Series aims to immerse USAID's local staff in GESI, DEIA, and localization principles. These sessions will help to translate complex concepts into actionable strategies that enable staff to contribute more effectively to USAID's mission. This initiative aligns directly with USAID's mission, emphasizing an inclusive culture and deeper insights into critical areas for effective mission contribution. Led by Dr. Swechchha Dahal, Uttam Upreti, and Nischal Dhungel, the series will provide a robust platform for exploring these concepts, ensuring that the sessions resonate with broader agency priorities and commitments.

**Facilitation and Expertise:**

Dr. Dahal, with her formidable background as the Asia & Europe Regional Gender Equality & Social Inclusion Advisor at Mercy Corps, alongside her pivotal role in gender and peacebuilding with International Alert, brings a wealth of knowledge and practical insights into GESI and DEIA advocacy. Uttam Upreti and Nischal Dhungel complement this with their extensive experience in organizational capacity building, gender inclusivity, and empowerment within diverse developmental sectors. Their collective expertise will underpin the series, fostering an environment where empowerment and equity are not just discussed but ingrained into the operational ethos of USAID.

**Implementation Strategy – Conversation Series**

The series will adopt an engaging, multifaceted approach incorporating dynamic workshops, panel discussions, and case studies. This strategy is crafted to foster a participatory learning environment that informs and empowers USAID staff to integrate GESI and DEIA principles into their everyday tasks and strategic visions.

**Participatory Workshops:** Interactive sessions where staff can apply GESI and DEIA principles through practical exercises facilitated by the Stock Gurus Team. These workshops will focus on real-world applications, enabling participants to visualize how these principles can be embedded in their work.

**Panel Discussions:** Led by Dr. Dahal, panel discussions will feature experts in GESI, DEIA, and localization, offering diverse perspectives and fostering a deeper understanding of these areas. These panels will serve as a knowledge-sharing conduit, allowing USAID staff to engage with thought leaders and practitioners.

**Case Studies:** Drawing from real-life scenarios where GESI and DEIA principles have been successfully implemented, these sessions will demonstrate the tangible impact of such practices. Led by Dr. Dahal, with insights from Upreti and Dhungel, the case studies will highlight challenges, strategies, and outcomes of integrating these principles into development work.

**Scheduling and Format:** The series will be conducted monthly over a year, each lasting approximately 1.5 to 2 hours. This schedule ensures consistent engagement and allows for gradually assimilating GESI and DEIA principles into the organizational culture. Our team will

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deliver these sessions in person to maximize interaction and facilitate meaningful dialogue among participants.

**Expected Outcomes:** The ultimate goal of the Conversation Series is to catalyze a cultural transformation within USAID, aligning closely with its mission while enhancing its internal and operational frameworks. Through the leadership of Dr. Dahal, Upreti, and Dhungel, the series aims to foster an organizational environment where inclusivity, diversity, equity, and empowerment are embraced and actively practiced. This cultural shift is expected to lead to improved organizational effectiveness, sustainability of development efforts, and a more substantial commitment to locally

led development initiatives.

The topics for the Conversation Series will be directly influenced by the agency's strategic goals and the pre-survey findings from Phase 1, ensuring relevancy and alignment with staff development needs. Our team will carefully select each topic in consultation with USAID’s Foreign Service National (FSN) Advisory Committee (UAC) to address the gaps identified, which

will be instrumental in driving the desired cultural transformation within USAID. **Figure 4: Potential Topics for Conversation Series**

**Empowerment**

•**Gender Equality :**

Sessions on Gender Equality and Empowerment, tapping visionary thinking for

fostering leadership among marginalized genders.

•**Capacity Building**:

Sessions on empowering professionals at USAID with skills and tools for advocacy and leadership, and support for civil society

strengthening.

**DEIA**

•**Inclusivity Workshops**: Workshops on creating spaces that reflect USAID's DEIA commitments, in fostering inclusive

environments for diverse populations, including women and the LGBT+ community.

•**Accessibility Audits**: Sessions on Integrating social inclusion in program design. Accessibility audits will be instrumental,

ensuring that programs are accessible, reflecting

USAID's dedication to accessibility for people with disabilities.

**Localization**

•**Cultural Competence in Programming**:

Sessions will delve into cultural competence,,

fostering USAID's locally led development approach and building on local

insights to inform

programming.

•**Local Staff Leadership**: Encouraging local

leadership, these sessions will champion local staff to assume leadership roles, equipped with skills for effective management and advocacy.

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**3. Coaching Series**

The Coaching Series, framed as a Train-the-Trainer (TOT) program, is integral to our strategy for enhancing USAID's institutional capacity for sustainable training and development. Led by Uttam Uprety (Capacity Building Specialist), this initiative will harness his considerable expertise in capacity building to fortify the organization's ongoing training capabilities.

The selection of local staff members for the TOT initiative will be strategic, aiming to include individuals who not only show potential and enthusiasm for developing their facilitation skills but also occupy positions where they can maximize the impact of their newfound capabilities. Local staff members will be chosen based on criteria developed from the insights garnered in the Inception Phase, ensuring a match between the training offered and the developmental needs within USAID.

Under Uprety's guidance, the TOT will focus on imparting robust facilitation skills, enabling participants to conduct their sessions subsequently—the peer-led model designed to foster a self reinforcing training ecosystem within USAID. Uprety will employ his experience from diverse training environments, including USAID's Monitoring, Evaluation, and Learning (MEL) Activity, and his extensive role in curriculum development and training facilitation to ensure the TOT program is comprehensive and impactful.

**Implementation Strategy – Coaching Series**

Our team will develop the TOT curriculum to address the specific needs of USAID's staff and the agency's strategic goals. It will incorporate adult learning principles, interactive methodologies, and best practices in facilitation to equip participants with the necessary tools and confidence to train others.

Training delivery will be highly interactive, leveraging in-person sessions to maximize engagement and ensure practical skills transfer. Uprety's facilitation will include hands-on exercises, role-playing, and scenario-based learning to mirror real-world challenges the trainees may face.

Post-training support is critical to the long-term success of the TOT initiative. This will involve follow-up sessions, peer-to-peer learning opportunities, and access to a knowledge management system that Uprety will help establish. This system will provide resources for continuous learning and serve as a platform for trainers to share experiences, challenges, and best practices.

The topics covered in the TOT initiative will encompass critical areas crucial for effective training delivery, such as instructional design, engagement strategies, and feedback mechanisms. These will be selected to bridge any identified skill gaps and align with the broader training objectives of USAID. Through this initiative, we aim to catalyze a cultural shift within USAID towards greater self-sufficiency and resilience in training and development practices, contributing to the overall mission success and the long-term sustainability of development outcomes.

The anticipated outcome from the coaching series will be a knowledgeable cohort of internal trainers within USAID, equipped with advanced facilitation skills and ready to contribute to a

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culture of learning and empowerment. This transformative approach is designed to have a multiplier effect, with each trained facilitator extending their knowledge to others, reinforcing USAID's capacity for sustainable development and enhancing the effectiveness of its programs.

**Figure 5: Potential Topics for Coaching Series**

**Assessment of Training**

**Needs**: 

Determine the specific facilitation skills and knowledge gaps among the USAID staff.

**Interactive Training Delivery**:

Conduct in-person, hands on training sessions to local staff, ensuring engagement and effective learning. 

**Ongoing Support and Mentoring**:

Provide continuous support and mentorship to TOT participants as they begin to facilitate their own 

sessions.

**Curriculum Development**: Create a comprehensive TOT curriculum tailored to address identified needs. 

**Monitoring and**

**Evaluation**:

Session on importance of M&E strategy to assess the effectiveness of the TOT initiative and make 

adjustments as needed.

**Knowledge Management**: Develop a repository of training resources and materials, capitalizing on Uprety’s experience in knowledge management for sustainable learning.

**Phase 3 – Post-Survey Assessment and Recommendations**

As we approach Phase 3 – Post Survey Assessment and Recommendations, we anticipate a comprehensive review of the outcomes from the Interactive Learning Sessions, Conversation Series, and Coaching series. This phase is pivotal as it ensures that the activities undertaken during Phase 2 meet their intended objectives and contribute to the broader mission of empowering USAID’s local staff.

In this final phase, we will engage in a meticulous evaluation of all training series. Utilizing both qualitative feedback and quantitative data obtained from post-training surveys, we will thoroughly analyze the impact of the programs. The heart of this phase is the Feedback Loop via Post-Survey Assessment, which is indispensable for evaluating training effectiveness and shaping further recommendations.

Our evaluative process will delve into several key areas: knowledge retention, skill application in practice, and the influence of the training on both organizational culture and the empowerment of individual staff members. The aim is to capture an encompassing view of employee satisfaction and the extent of engagement post-training, thus informing immediate improvements and contributing to strategic decisions for future development initiatives.

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The insights drawn from this survey will serve as a blueprint for augmenting organizational capabilities and promoting the intended transformation within USAID's operational practices. Notably, the feedback will identify success stories and pinpoint areas that require further enhancement, thereby detailing the overall influence of the training on USAID’s mission.

Based on the analysis, our team will provide actionable recommendations and augment the effectiveness of the training programs. These recommendations will be integral to the design of subsequent training programs, ensuring that they are well-aligned with evolving needs and continue to foster an environment conducive to continuous learning and adaptation. This iterative process is critical to embedding a culture of ongoing development and agile learning within the framework of USAID.

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**2 WORK PLAN AND TIMELINE**

Our proposed work plan is carefully aligned with the comprehensive approach detailed earlier, adhering to the steps outlined in the Statement of Work (SoW). We have structured our team and workflow to ensure an efficient and seamless execution over the project's twelve-month span. The timeline below is contingent upon the official project commencement date, timely data provision from participating entities, and the receipt of organizational structure details and additional data required for execution.

**Phase 1 – Inception.** The inception phase will commence with a kick-off meeting involving the Stock Gurus Lead, three Technical Experts, the participating entity project team, and any pertinent stakeholders. This initial gathering is crucial for articulating project goals, clarifying objectives, and confirming the approach, ensuring unanimous stakeholder buy-in. This stage is also vital for setting shared expectations for the design of the main activities: Interactive Learning Sessions, the Conversation Series, and Coaching. Following this, we will engage in a meticulous collection of detailed information concerning the USAID Local Staff, which will encompass functional units, age demographics, managerial positions, and departmental divisions essential for the tailored design of the survey. Concurrently, our team will conduct desk research to evaluate prior training initiatives focused on localization, DEIA, and FSN empowerment, among other relevant themes. By the conclusion of week 1, the Stock Gurus team will produce a comprehensive Work Plan outlining the intended work plan, tools, consultation, and communication protocols and processes. Culminating this phase, Stock Gurus will draft a brief inception report summarizing the essential findings and finalizing the session schedule, primed for the execution of subsequent phases.

**Key Deliverables:** Work Plan and Inception report with pre-survey findings.

**Phase 2 – Proposed Main Activities.** The second phase is the engine room of our operation, where we will utilize strategic insights from Phase 1 to design and execute training activities carefully. With the foundational work in place, we will introduce the Interactive Learning Sessions under the seasoned leadership of Uttam Upreti and Sunny Gurung, our Instructional and Workforce Development Expert and Capacity Building Expert. Mr. Gurung's extensive background in crafting high-impact training programs will be instrumental in delivering sessions that merge theoretical insights with practical exercises, effectively addressing the skill gaps identified in the initial survey.

Alongside the learning sessions, the Conversation Series, led by our DEIA Specialist Swechchha Dahal, Capacity Buiding Expert Uttam Uperti, and Project Lead Nischal Dhungel, will seek to enrich the staff's understanding and application of core agency principles, such as inclusivity and localization. Ms. Dahal's proven expertise in facilitating open and impactful dialogues on complex DEIA topics will be pivotal in advancing the organizational culture toward a more cohesive and inclusive future.

Simultaneously, Uttam Uprety, our Capacity Building Specialist, will spearhead the Coaching and TOT initiative, selecting and grooming a cadre of local staff to become the next generation of trainers within USAID. This endeavor aims to cultivate a sustainable training infrastructure encouraging peer-led development and knowledge transfer. Mr. Uprety's experience with USAID's

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Monitoring, Evaluation, and Learning (MEL) Activity provides him with the necessary insight to tailor the coaching program to the unique context and needs of the staff.

To support these activities, Nischal Dhungel, our Project Lead and Survey Specialist, will ensure that data collection and analysis continue to inform our activities. Mr. Dhungel will manage the regular collection of feedback, applying his analytical skills to interpret data and translate it into actionable intelligence that can guide the ongoing refinement of the training programs.

Nikunjan GC, our IT and Digital Transformation Expert, will be critical in integrating technological tools and platforms that facilitate in-person and virtual learning experiences. This ensures that our hybrid approach is efficient, engaging, and accessible to all staff members. Their expertise will be pivotal in designing an interactive online environment that supports the dynamic exchange of ideas and knowledge.

Monthly, we will gather feedback, which will be critical for the iterative refinement of the sessions. At each milestone, corresponding session reports will be compiled, documenting major themes, participation engagement, and potential areas for further development. Through this iterative process, we will foster a continuous learning and improvement culture that resonates throughout the organization.

By intertwining the expertise of our diverse team with the programmatic activities, we are poised to ensure that the Proposed Main Activities not only achieve their intended outcomes but also resonate with and support the long-term strategic objectives of USAID.

**Key Deliverables:** Monthly Interactive Learning Sessions reports, Monthly Conversation Series reports, and Midterm and final Coaching Series progress reports.

**Phase 3 – Post Survey Assessment and Recommendations.** As we progress into Phase 3, our team will comprehensively assess all training activities. This pivotal phase ensures that the cumulative efforts from the Interactive Learning Sessions and the Conversation Series have met their designated objectives and concretely contribute to USAID's mission. This phase will distill insights into knowledge retention, skill application, and the broader organizational impact by leveraging qualitative and quantitative data from post-training surveys. During this phase, a feedback loop comes full circle, integral for measuring the efficacy of the training and for shaping continuous improvements.

Our team shall submit an all-encompassing final report at the culmination of our twelve-month commitment. This document will encapsulate the journey, and the transformation engendered through our efforts and delineate actionable steps for sustained development and empowerment of USAID’s local staff. The report will thus serve as both a reflection of the progress made and as a beacon guiding the path forward, ensuring that the growth and learning cultivated through this project are preserved and perpetuated. A finalized report, synthesizing all feedback and learnings, will be crafted to serve as a roadmap for future training endeavors and organizational development.

**Key Deliverables:** Consolidated final report with comprehensive takeaways, action points, and recommendations.

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**Figure 6: Work Schedule and Timeline**

**Activity/Deliverable Mar-24 Apr-24 May-24 Jun-24 Jul-24 Aug-24 Sep-24 Oct-24 Nov-24 Dec-24 Jan-25 Feb-25 Phase 1: Inception**

Kick-off Meeting

Submission of Work Plan

Inception Report Preparation

Draft Inception Report Submission

Inception Report Review by USAID

Final Inception Report and Work Plan Submission

**Phase 2: Proposed Main Activities**

Main Activities Preparation including finalizing participants

Initiate monthly Interactive Series

Initiate monthly Conversation Series

Initiate Coaching Series (8 staffs)

Draft First Six Session Reports & Follow-up Submission

Follow-up consultations for participants requiring 1-1 sessions.

First Six Session Reports Review by USAID

Draft Midterm Coaching Report

Midterm Coaching Report Review by USAID

Final First Six Sessions and Coaching Reports Submission

Continue with monthly Interactive Learning Sessions and Conversation Series.

Continue Remaining Coaching Series (7 staffs)

Draft Remaining Session Reports Submission

Remaining Session Reports Review by USAID

Draft Coaching Session Conclusion with comprehensive Reports Submission

Coaching Session comprehensive Reports Review by USAID

Final Coaching Session comprehensive Reports Submission

**Phase 3: Post Survey Assessment**

Post Survey Assessment Finalization

Final Report and Recommendations Preparation

Draft Final Report and Recommendations Submission

Draft Final Report and Recommendations Review by USAID

Consolidated Report & Recommendations Submission

*Note: The proposed timeline is tentative.*

**Virtual**

**Deliverables**

**On-site**

**Review by USAID**

\* The detailed work plan for each week over the 12 months and the timeline will be determined in consultation with USAID’s Foreign Service National (FSN) Advisory Committee (UAC).

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**3 RELEVANT PAST EXPERIENCE**

**The Relevant Past Experience of Proposed Team Member:**

**1. Uttam Upreti (Capacity Building Specialist)**

**Organizational Capacity Assessment and the Organizational Development Support**

**Client: USAID, FHI360/USAID Partners, VSO, Parliament Support Program/UNDP, World Wildlife Fund, UNICEF's**

Uttam Upreti, a seasoned Capacity Building Specialist, has significantly enhanced organizational capacities within various sectors. His expertise was particularly evident in his leadership role during the Organizational Capacity Assessment of FHI-360 and USAID partners, including the National Society for Earthquake Technology (NSET) Lifeline Nepal/RTI. In 2012, he spearheaded the FHI-360 initiative to adapt the Technical and Organizational Capacity Assessment Tool (TOCAT) to the Nepali context, facilitating comprehensive capacity assessments and the development of tailored capacity-building plans for 11 project partners. This initiative marked a significant stride towards strengthening organizational frameworks and enabling sustained development impacts.

Furthermore, in 2005, Uttam led the Organizational Development Support for VSO Nepal partners in the far-western development region. This initiative focused on participatory organizational capacity assessments and formulating strategic capacity development plans. By providing technical support for policy formulation and delivering targeted training based on a thorough needs assessment, he played a crucial role in enhancing the operational capabilities of partner organizations. Through these endeavors, Uttam Upreti has demonstrated exceptional leadership in capacity building, significantly contributing to the growth and effectiveness of organizations within Nepal's development sector.

Uttam Upreti, as a Learning and Capacity Building Specialist with USAID's MEL Activity, played a crucial role in enhancing organizational capacity and knowledge management. He spearheaded the development and implementing of the Knowledge Management Plan and various capacity development trainings, focusing on crucial M&E areas. Uttam's efforts in facilitating learning events, managing the online Nepal MEL learning portal, and providing technical backstopping contributed to promoting a continuous learning and improvement culture within USAID and its partner organizations. His leadership ensured effective knowledge dissemination and capacity building, aligning with USAID's mission to improve development outcomes.

Uttam Upreti's comprehensive approach to capacity building and institutional development is evident through his targeted interventions across various sectors. He specifically designed and facilitated organizational capacity-building training sessions for the Federal Parliament, Provincial Parliaments, and municipalities under the aegis of the Parliament Support Program/UNDP. These sessions aimed to enhance these vital political institutions' operational efficiencies and governance capacities.

In addition to his work with governmental bodies, Upreti extended his expertise to various development organizations, including the World Wildlife Fund, UNICEF's Country Office in

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Nepal, and the UNICEF Regional Office for South Asia. He crafted and led team-building events tailored to each organization's unique needs and objectives, focusing on fostering a collaborative culture and strengthening internal capacities.

His significant contribution to the Department of Civil Registration involved leading a team to develop and implement a Results-based Monitoring and Evaluation Framework in collaboration with UNICEF. This project was pivotal in building the capacity of line agencies (municipalities) to effectively utilize the system, thereby enhancing the administrative and operational competencies at the municipal level. Each of these projects showcases Upreti's strategic approach to capacity building, underscored by a deep commitment to fostering sustainable development and institutional resilience.

**2. Nischal Dhungel (Project Lead and Survey Specialist)**

**MCC Women Economic Empowerment in Kosovo Energy Sector**

**Client: Millennium Challenge Corporation (MCC)/ World Bank Group**

Nischal Dhungel, serving as the Economist, spearheaded the ambitious "MCC Women Economic Empowerment in Kosovo Energy Sector" project in 2023 for the Millennium Challenge Corporation (MCC). This project aimed at revolutionizing Kosovo's energy sector by promoting a reliable energy supply, enhancing governance transparency, and fostering women's participation in energy-related fields. The initiative was structured around three pivotal projects: the American Catalyst Facility for Development (ACFD), the Energy Storage Project (ESP), and the Just and Equitable Transition Acceleration Project (JETA), each designed to mitigate Kosovo's electricity supply issues and stimulate economic growth. Dhungel's role was critical in formulating a recommendation report for ACFD, ESP, and JETA, focusing on inclusive procurement, elevating women's roles in battery storage, and advocating for women's energy transition. He was instrumental in developing a Gender Inclusive Plan Template, outlining mentorship, networking, training, education, and advocacy activities to support women in energy trading and battery storage. His contributions were pivotal in setting a framework for gender inclusivity and empowerment within Kosovo's evolving energy landscape, aligning with broader objectives for sustainable development and economic empowerment.

Nischal Dhungel served as the Economist for the "Capacity Building and Access to Financial Services for Small and Medium Enterprises" project in 2023, a critical initiative funded by the Reserve Bank of Malawi and the World Bank. This project aimed to empower MSMEs with high growth potential, focusing on youth and women-owned businesses, by providing them with necessary training and connecting them to market opportunities. Nischal's primary responsibilities included designing a quantitative survey and developing a comprehensive questionnaire manual to survey 2500 enterprises. He effectively coordinated with the World Bank and the survey company in Malawi to ensure the smooth execution of the baseline survey. Additionally, Nischal provided extensive training to the survey team in Malawi, oversaw data quality control using the World Bank's Survey Solutions, and conducted in-depth data analysis using R programming. His efforts culminated in the preparation of final reports that highlighted vital insights and recommendations to enhance the equality of business support provided by BDS providers, contributing significantly to the project's success and the empowerment of MSMEs in Malawi.

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**3. Sunny Gurung (Instructional and Workforce Development Expert) Training/Instructional Design**

**Client: United Health Care/ Northern Virginia Family Service**

Sunny Gurung has carved a niche as an exceptional Training Manager and Instructional Design Specialist at United Healthcare, a Fortune 500 company. Since January 2022, he has been at the forefront of transforming educational methodologies within the healthcare industry, leading a dedicated team to deliver over 500 comprehensive training programs annually. These programs span technology operations and IT systems adaptation, offered in diverse formats, including eLearning, self-learning, and live sessions, catering to a global audience of over 6,000 learners across 11 countries. Under his leadership, applying the Kirkpatrick model and collaborating with stakeholders across the organization have been pivotal in identifying performance gaps and measuring training effectiveness. Gurung's adept use of the ADDIE model and Bloom’s taxonomy in Storyline 360 has led to the creation of over 30 eLearning and 20 assessment courses annually, showcasing his commitment to programming accuracy and educational excellence. A master of multimedia tools like Camtasia and Replay 360, Gurung has produced over 50 IT system adaptation and process walkthrough videos each year. His proficiency in software and learning management systems, including Oracle Learn and SharePoint, underscores his role in enhancing learning accessibility and resource management. Gurung's initiative in standardizing training materials and his innovative "Train the Trainer" sessions underscore his dedication to elevating the proficiency of training team members, ensuring consistent and high-quality learning experiences. Recognized with 32 performance and leadership awards in 2023 alone, Gurung's strategic planning and execution skills have successfully navigated the team through multiple learning platform transitions, ensuring seamless adaptation. His commitment to personnel development, evidenced by his role in coaching emerging leaders and significantly improving training resource design, has markedly reduced user complaints and increased production efficiency, positioning him as a pivotal figure in healthcare education and digital transformation.

Sunny Gurung has demonstrated exceptional workforce development and training expertise during his tenure at Northern Virginia Family Service from January 2016 to June 2021. Leveraging the ADDIE framework, Sunny pioneered the creating of 20 virtual training programs that seamlessly transitioned the organization to remote and online training in response to COVID-19 challenges. His collaborative efforts with Northern Virginia Community College led to the revitalizing of 45 training modules, updating content across critical areas like quality operations, records management, and workplace communication, ensuring trainees received education with direct workplace applicability.

Sunny's innovative approach to learning saw the development of 220 self-paced interactive nano learning solutions, significantly enhancing trainee performance effectiveness by 80%. His ability to engage learners through five live sessions per week, reaching over 120 trainees annually, has consistently earned him a learning satisfaction score above 95%. Recognized for his creativity and problem-solving skills in designing scenario-based exercises, Sunny has effectively prepared a diverse range of end-users for real-world challenges. His efforts have been instrumental in enabling career growth for more than 76% of trainees, as reflected in his perfect performance appraisal scores year after year. Sunny Gurung's contributions have notably advanced workforce training and development, significantly impacting trainees' career paths and organizational effectiveness.

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**4. Dr. Swechchha Dahal (Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, and Accessibility Specialist) Gender Equality & Social Inclusion**

**Client: Mercy Corps and International Alert**

Dr. Swechchha Dahal's distinguished contributions as Asia & Europe Regional Gender Equality & Social Inclusion Advisor at Mercy Corps highlight her unparalleled dedication to promoting Localization, Empowerment, Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, and Accessibility (DEIA) across various global contexts. Through her leadership, Dr. Dahal has steered gender integration and social inclusion into the core of agency-wide strategies, enabling localized solutions that cater specifically to the unique needs and strengths of communities, mainly focusing on women and marginalized groups in sectors such as peace and conflict resolution, climate resilience, and economic opportunities.

In her role as a Gender & Peacebuilding Adviser with International Alert, Dr. Dahal adeptly facilitated cross-country projects aimed at transforming discriminatory gender norms and advancing the Women, Peace, and Security (WPS) agenda in conflict settings across Nigeria, Nepal, Kyrgyzstan, and the Philippines. Her innovative approach to inclusion, emphasizing LGBT+ inclusive strategies and gender-sensitive conflict analysis, underscores her commitment to broadening the scope of empowerment and equity in peacebuilding efforts.

Dr. Dahal's strategic program designs and implementations have been pivotal in ensuring gender sensitive budgets and staffing plans, effectively integrating gender and social inclusion into program development. This alignment with theories of change, indicators, and log frames, coupled with her collaboration with monitoring, evaluation, and learning teams, has propelled the learning on DEIA topics, significantly enhancing organizational capacity and impact.

Her efforts in enhancing Mercy Corps' and International Alert's profiles in DEIA thought leadership demonstrates her exceptional ability to engage with stakeholders, from internal teams to global partners and donors. By focusing on key thematic areas, she has fostered environments where Localization, Empowerment, and DEIA principles are not just strategic priorities but are ingrained in the operational ethos, driving sustainable and inclusive development outcomes globally.

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**4 OUR PROPOSED TEAM**

Stock Gurus has a strong team of specialists, each with cutting-edge experience in their areas of competence, combined with Localization, Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, and Accessibility (DEIA), and the empowerment of different sectors. The exact composition and responsibilities of the team members will be fine-tuned, depending on the technical needs specified in the detailed terms of reference. Below, we set out short biographies for each proposed team member. Detailed CVs are included in the Proposed Team Members Section below.

**Nischal Dhungel (Project Lead and Survey Specialist)**

Nischal Dhungel is a distinguished Program Manager and Survey Specialist with extensive experience in development economics, project management, and strategic implementation of development projects worldwide. With a Master's degree in Economic Theory and Policy, his career spans over seven years, marked by significant contributions to monitoring, evaluation, research, and learning (MERL) in diverse international contexts. Dhungel has effectively led Stock Gurus, LLC teams, designing and executing major development initiatives to enhance organizational effectiveness and client satisfaction. His expertise in developing precise survey methodologies and conducting in-depth data analysis has guided evidence-based decision-making. His work with A2F Consulting LLC and the Foundation for Development Management highlights his involvement in international economic projects and capacity-building efforts with prominent organizations like the Millennium Challenge Corporation (MCC), the World Bank, and USAID. These roles underscore his commitment to gender-sensitive development, DEIA, localization, and empowerment. An advocate for economic inclusion, Dhungel has organized policy events and engaged with the US Senate Office and State Department, emphasizing economic development in Nepal compared to South Asian counterparts. As a columnist for the Kathmandu Post and contributor to the Economist Intelligence Unit, he has published extensively on economic issues, further establishing his expertise and dedication to fostering inclusive economic growth and empowerment.

**Sunny Gurung (Instructional and Workforce Development Expert)**

Sunny Gurung is an accomplished instructional and workforce development expert based in Baltimore, MD, with an MBA and over 12 years of experience crafting high-impact learning solutions for teams globally. His expertise spans developing and leading over 500 annual training programs at United Healthcare. In this Fortune 500 company, he enhances skills in training processes, technology operations, and IT systems adaptation through eLearning and live formats. Gurung's proficiency with tools such as Adobe Captivate, Articulate 360, and Learning Management Systems, combined with his knowledge of ADDIE and Kirkpatrick models, ensures the delivery of effective training solutions. His role has significantly impacted learners across 11 countries, proving his ability to manage large-scale training initiatives and foster a culture of continuous learning and improvement. Notably, Gurung's leadership in instructional design and his strategic approach to training have led to substantial reductions in user complaints and seamless transitions between learning platforms.

Furthermore, his previous experiences as a Senior Instructional Designer and Workforce Development Trainer highlight his diverse skill set in designing technical courses and virtual training programs, enhancing organizational performance and employee satisfaction. Gurung's

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bilingual proficiency in English and Nepali, along with his certifications from ATD, underscore his commitment to professional development and excellence in education. His innovative strategies in training development and execution exemplify his dedication to empowering individuals and organizations, making him a pivotal figure in instructional design and workforce development.

**Uttam Upreti (Capacity Building Specialist)**

Uttam Upreti, a Capacity Building Specialist with over three decades of experience in the development sector, has a rich history of collaboration with USAID/Nepal and a focus on civic space in Nepal. His expertise encompasses monitoring, evaluation, learning, knowledge management, and extensive capacity building of civil society organizations. Upreti has worked with international bodies like DANIDA, DFID, and the Swiss Embassy, where he has excelled in program cycle management, organizational development, and strategic planning. Upreti has significantly contributed to capacity building by developing and managing training curricula for ELD Training in the UK, designing tailor-made courses for development organizations, and leading over 500 public training courses. His academic background, with master's degrees in Statistics and Anthropology, complements his advocacy for participatory approaches and social accountability tools. Upreti has played a pivotal role in designing Kathmandu University's master's degree in Sustainable Development, marking a first in South Asia. His career is marked by leading evaluations and assessments across various developmental projects, demonstrating a robust ability to navigate complex challenges. His work has significantly influenced USAID/Nepal's mission by developing and rolling out a knowledge management plan and facilitating numerous learning events. Upreti's expertise extends to policy analysis, strategic planning, and facilitating organizational capacity assessments, showcasing his commitment to fostering civic freedom and enhancing the legal environment for civil society organizations in Nepal. His involvement in high level workshops, seminars, and conferences underscores his dedication to advancing the development sector.

**Dr. Swechchha Dahal (Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, and Accessibility Specialist)**

Dr. Swechchha Dahal is a renowned Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, and Accessibility (DEIA) Specialist with a dynamic career advocating for gender equality and social inclusion. Her role as Asia & Europe Regional Gender Equality & Social Inclusion Advisor at Mercy Corps exemplifies her commitment to integrating gender into developmental strategies, emphasizing inclusive growth in peace and conflict resolution sectors. Dahal's efforts in promoting the Women's Peace & Security agenda and her leadership in strategic program design underscore her expertise in gender-sensitive approaches. Previously, as a Gender & Peacebuilding Adviser at International Alert, Dahal spearheaded projects addressing discriminatory gender norms in conflict settings and fostering LGBT+ inclusive strategies. Her tenure at Saferworld as Asia Conflict & Security Adviser highlighted her adeptness in gender program support, particularly in humanitarian crises. Dahal holds a Doctor of Philosophy in Conflict Peace & Development Studies from Tribhuvan University, specializing in women's inclusion in state-building processes. This academic background complements her professional experience, fortifying her as a leader in DEIA. Her published works and active participation in international conferences on gender-responsive policymaking and women's political participation post-conflict amplify her contributions to the

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field. Dahal's influence extends beyond policy and programmatic levels, advocating for inclusive development practices globally, making her an invaluable asset in fostering environments that champion diversity, equity, inclusion, and accessibility.

**Nikunjan GC (IT and Digital Transformation Specialist)**

Nikunjan GC is a distinguished IT and Digital Transformation Specialist renowned for leading advanced software development initiatives and digital transformation endeavors. His expertise spans from 2019 to the present, during which he has orchestrated the development lifecycle of intricate software solutions and has adeptly utilized Google Cloud Platform to develop scalable machine learning models employing libraries such as Scikit-Learn and Pandas for comprehensive data analysis and predictive modeling. In his role at Arvest Bank since August 2022, Nikunjan has showcased his proficiency in Agile methodologies, Python for innovative contract development, and the seamless integration of banking systems with Thought Machine libraries, further enhancing the bank's digital capabilities. His contributions have streamlined operational processes and fortified the bank’s infrastructure on the Google Cloud Platform, demonstrating a commitment to innovation and efficiency. Beyond his technical prowess, Nikunjan has played a pivotal role in fostering empowerment and localization by organizing and leading over 30 training sessions to enhance IT and digital skills among adults and professionals. These sessions have covered many topics, including algorithmic trading, machine learning applications, interview preparation, and media engagement, highlighting his dedication to knowledge sharing and professional development. Nikunjan's academic journey includes a Bachelor of Science in Computer Science from Queens College, and he is pursuing a Master of Arts in the same field, which he will complete in December 2024. His commitment to applying technology for transformative change, bolstering organizational capabilities, and propelling positive outcomes underscores his visionary leadership and strategic innovation in the IT and digital landscape.

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**5 PROPOSED TEAM MEMBER’S CV**

**NISCHAL DHUNGEL**

Project Lead and Survey Specialist

Rockville, Maryland | +1 (845) 453-8289 | nischal.dhungel@stockgurus.us

**CAREER SUMMARY**

Dynamic and experienced Program Manager with over seven years of experience in global development policy, economic research, and project management. Expert in coordinating international projects across diverse geographical regions, including Asia, Africa, North America, and Europe. Recognized for exceptional skills in stakeholder management, financial and strategic planning, and communication. Known for a commitment to equity and inclusion, competent team player, organized with strong work ethics.

**WORK EXPERIENCE**

**Stock Gurus, LLC Rockville, Maryland, USA** *Program Manager November 2023 – Present* ● Lead and manage cross-functional teams in planning and executing large-scale development projects to enhance organizational performance and client satisfaction.

● Develop comprehensive survey methodologies to gather critical data and oversee the data collection, ensuring accuracy and reliability in data-gathering efforts.

● Conduct in-depth data analysis to extract actionable insights, aiding in evidence-based decision-making and strategic planning.

● Present analytical findings and strategic recommendations to stakeholders, communicating complex information to facilitate informed decisions.

● Coordinate and organize training sessions and workshops, enhancing team competencies and stakeholder understanding of project goals, methodologies, and outcomes.

● Foster an environment of continuous improvement, leveraging project feedback to refine processes, methodologies, and training programs.

**A2F Consulting LLC Rockville, Maryland, USA** *Economist September 2022 – February 2024* ● Managed, coordinated, and implemented international economic projects in developing countries,

ensuring smooth project execution, stakeholder engagement, and timely delivery of project outcomes. ● Generated knowledge products for multilateral institutions and government counterparts, producing insightful reports, studies, and evaluations to inform evidence-based decision-making and policy development.

● Collaborated with a diverse, multicultural team spanning North America, Europe, Asia, Africa, and Latin America, leveraging diverse perspectives and expertise to drive successful project outcomes. ● Led the creation, pilot testing, and refinement of survey tools, impacting 10+ projects and enhancing their design and implementation strategies in partnership with GESI leads.

● Delivered 20+ presentations to diverse stakeholders, improving comprehension of project findings and fostering engagement in project outcomes and strategies.

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**Relevant Projects:**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Client** | **Project Name** |
| Millennium Challenge Corporation (MCC) | Women's Economic Empowerment in Kosovo Energy Sector |
| European Bank for Reconstruction and Development (EBRD) | Demonstration of the impact and sustainability of the outcomes from the EBRD-SECO Inclusion Technical Cooperation Programme in Egypt and Tunisia |
| World Bank | Capacity Building and Access to Financial Services for Women-led Small and Medium Enterprises |
| Development Bank of Nigeria | Feedback and Improvement Survey on Participating Financial Institutions (PFIs) |
| Development Bank of Nigeria | Institutional Assessment and Capacity Building of select Participating Financial Institutions (PFIs) onboarded by Impact Credit Guarantee Limited to improve the uptake of Credit Guarantee Products for Micro, Small, and Medium Enterprises in Nigeria |

**Nepal Institute for Policy Research New York, USA** *Policy Research Consultant December 2021 – August 2022* ● Developed Nepal Competitiveness Index and Digital Competitiveness Index, assessing the

competitiveness of provinces and providing data-driven insights for economic policy formulation. ● Analyzed Nepal’s vital economic sectors, such as health and education, during pre and post-pandemic periods, examined COVID-19 policies' impact on different gender and social groups, and recommended policy changes in the “Nepal Risk Outlook Annual Policy Compendium” report. ● Conducted capacity-building sessions for 10+ stakeholders (local/provincial /central governments), enhancing GESI principles understanding and application.

● Engaged in strategic networking to promote GESI-focused research findings and tools at international forums.

**Foundation for Development Management Kathmandu, Nepal** *Research Associate October 2019 – September 2020* ● Sourced and managed project proposals, which led to securing three large-scale evaluation projects of

USAID, Asia Foundation, and British Council, and successfully monitored key results regarding timeliness, quality, and accuracy in line with project indicators.

● Conducted evaluations for USAID’s Communication Strategies for Freshwater Conservation in Nepal project, applying GESI-sensitive data collection and analysis methods, aligning with the responsibility to develop, pilot test, and revise study tools and methodologies.

● Facilitated dissemination of evidence-based research findings and knowledge generated across programs by developing a strong relationship with the CEO, project coordinators, and multilateral development organizations.

**Relevant Projects:**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Client** | **Project Name** |
| USAID | Communication Strategies for Freshwater Conservation in Nepal |
| Voluntary Service Overseas (VSO) | Enhancing Educational Equity and Quality in Baglung District in Nepal |

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**Mogul Media Pvt Ltd Kathmandu, Nepal** *Advocacy Officer June 2018 – August 2019* ● Supported documentary production on donor projects, showcasing program successes in enhancing community social inclusion through compelling narratives and visuals.

● Crafted policy notes with international partners, leading advocacy for economic empowerment and gender equity, focusing on marginalized groups.

● Strengthened partnerships through effective networking with NGOs, government, and international organizations, promoting GESI initiatives.

**Nepal Economic Forum Kathmandu, Nepal** *Research Fellow June 2017 – May 2018* ● Conducted research supporting USAID's Nepal Private Sector Engagement Assessment, 2020,

contributing to analyzing key opportunities and challenges in private sector partnerships for development initiatives.

● Conducted a UNDP-led qualitative analysis on the Micro-Enterprise Development Programme (MSMEs), identifying gender issues and aligning strategies with GESI principles. ● Managed a World Bank project, collecting and compiling traffic accident data from 13 districts and interviewing over 15 government and private stakeholders, culminating in evidence-based reports and the organization of a national-level policy dialogue.

● Facilitated stakeholder workshops and forums on economic policies and GESI integration, enhancing awareness and promoting inclusive policy development.

**EDUCATION**

**Bard College**, **Levy Economics Institute Annandale-on-Hudson, New York** *Master of Science, Economic Theory and Policy May 2022* Relevant Course: Advanced Macroeconomics, Research Methods, Gender and Social Policy, Intersecting Inequalities

**University of Delhi New Delhi, India** *Bachelor of Commerce with Honors, Business Administration May 2027*

**CERTIFICATIONS**

**Accenture *September 2023*** *Project Management*

• Acquired a deep understanding of diverse project management approaches, including Plan-Driven, Agile, Scrum, and Hybrid methodologies, enabling effective project selection and execution.

**WRITING AND PUBLICATIONS**

**The Kathmandu Post *November 20207 - Present*** *Op-ed Writer*

• Ensure a high standard of writing quality in each published piece (over 25), combining data-driven insights with clear and coherent narratives to make complex economic concepts accessible and relevant to readers.

o Nepal's Climate-Gender Nexus. The Kathmandu Post. 2023

o A green techno-economic paradigm. The Kathmandu Post. 2023

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● “Effects of Forced Formalization in the Indian Economy.” Levy Economics Institute of Bard College. 2023

● “Gender Inequalities in the Allocation of Time to Household Production in Nepal.” Master Theses - Graduate Programs in Economic Theory and Policy, 2022

● “Nepal Competitiveness Index 2024 and 2022.” Collaboration of Nepal Institute for Policy Research and University of Singapore.

**GUEST LECTURE, CONFERENCE AND COURSE**

● **Guest Lecture:** Delivered four presentations on Economic Development focusing on Gender Inequality in Nepal compared to South Asian Countries for the **US State Department’s** entry-level diplomats to mid-career officials.

● **Conference:** Presentation on “Gender Inequalities in the Allocation to Time to Household Production in Nepal” International Conference on Sustainable Development (ICSD). September 2022 ● **Course:** Re-Thinking Gender in Social Development, World Bank Group, April 2022

**SKILLS, LANGUAGES, AND GLOBAL EXPERIENCE**

● **Skills:** Proficiency in Microsoft Office Applications, Qualitative and Qualitative Research, Training & Capacity Building, Project Management, Stakeholder Engagement, Policy Advocacy, and Coordination.

● **Languages:** English (Fluent), Nepali (Native), Hindi (Professional)

● **Global Experience:** Exposure to multiple regions including, North America (United States, Mexico, Canada), Asia (Nepal, India, Cambodia), Africa (Malawi, Nigeria), Europe (multiple countries), South America (Colombia, Brazil)

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**UTTAM UPRETI**

Capacity Building Specialist

Kathmandu, Nepal | +977 9851089315 | uttam.uprety2010@gmail.com

**SUMMARY OF QUALIFICATIONS**

Thirty-two years of professional experience in development sectors, including more than a decade-long experience in civic space in Nepal and substantial working experience with USAID/Nepal and its partners as a learning and Capacity Building Specialist with Nepal MEL Activity. More than ten years of experience in monitoring, evaluation, learning, and knowledge management, and more than 15 years of experience in leading capacity building of civil society organizations. Work experience with donor-funded governance projects (DANIDA, DFID, and the Swiss Embassy) and meeting additional donor reporting requirements. Critical areas of capacity-building expertise include program cycle management, organizational development, and strategic planning. Developed training curriculum on various public training courses for ELD Training, a UK-based organization, and designed several tailor-made courses for various development organizations—abundant experience managing several public training courses in Nepal, Thailand, and Kenya. Apart from managing 500 public training courses, I have more than 1000 training courses as a lead resource person. Developed and rolled out a capacity-building plan for USAID/Nepal's MEL Activity. Supported various civil society organizations in their organizational capacity assessment and prepared action plans to monitor the progress. A good combination of academic qualifications with two master's degrees – in quantitative (Statistics) and qualitative (Anthropology) streams and a long-time practitioner/advocate of participatory approaches, including social accountability tools. Team member in designing master's degree in Sustainable Development (MSD), the first course of its type in South Asia, for Kathmandu University School of Education and developed a complete course on 'Participatory Approach to Development' for the third semester of MSD. Designed a master's degree course on Training and Development for Kathmandu University, the first course of its kind in Nepal.

**Institutional Capacity Building**

• More than two decades of professional experience in building civil society organizations' individual and institutional capacity, as well as the government and donor partners in 12 countries from South and South East Asia and Africa.

• Designed several courses, including tailor-made training, and facilitated more than 500 training events on various topics such as Project Manager's Toolkit, Results-based M&E, Participatory Monitoring and Evaluation, Project Cycle Management, Professional Report Writing, Case-study Writing, Participatory Rural Appraisal, Project Proposal Writing, Evidence based Advocacy, Training of Trainers (ToT), Facilitation Skills, Presentation Skills, Rights based Approach to Development, Leadership Development Workshop, and Participatory Strategic Planning.

• Led Organizational Capacity Assessment of FHI-360 and USAID partners, including National Society for Earthquake Technology (NSET), Lifeline Nepal/RTI, and coordinated the FHI-360 initiative of adaptation of Technical and Organizational Capacity Assessment Tool (TOCAT) in the Nepali context for its partners' capacity assessment and building capacity development plan of 11 project partners in 2012.

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• Designed and facilitated five organizational capacity-building training sessions for the federal parliament, provincial parliaments, and municipalities, which the Parliament Support Program/UNDP organized.

• Designed and facilitated team-building events for various development organizations, including the World Wildlife Fund, UNICEF Country Office in Nepal, UNICEF Regional Office for South Asia, Health Sector Support Project/GTZ, CARE Nepal, AIDS Health Care Foundation (AHF), and Nepal Unilever Limited.

• Led a team to develop institutional capacities and prepare a Results-based M&E Framework for the Department of Civil Registration and capacity building of line agencies (municipalities) in using the system in partnership with UNICEF.

• Led Organizational Development Support to VSO Nepal partners in the far-western development region 2005, including participatory organizational capacity assessment, organizational capacity development plan formulation, technical support in formulating policies, and providing training to the partners based on the needs assessment.

**Planning and Review**

• Facilitated Participatory Strategic Planning for Nepal Bar Association, Nepal Television, Nepal Participatory Action Network, KIRDARC Nepal, Aasaman Nepal, The Story Kitchen, SAHAS Nepal, and ECARDS Nepal.

• Facilitated periodic planning process for Kankai Municipality, Nuwakot and Parbat District Development Committees, Khudunabari VDC.

**WORK HISTORY**

**Consultant**

*October 1, 2020 - Present*

• Delivered strategic planning consultancy for various organizations, including KOSHISH, ACORAB Nepal, and FIAN Nepal, focusing on long-term goal-setting and actionable strategies. • Developed MEAL plans for Saathi, FIAN Nepal, and other NGOs, ensuring effective monitoring, evaluation, accountability, and learning frameworks.

• Conducted training on the Theory of Change, baseline surveys, Planning, Monitoring & Evaluation for organizations such as Kaaruna Sechen and The Asia Foundation.

• Led final evaluations and strategic development projects for international collaborations, including the European Union and UNDP-funded initiatives.

• Authored knowledge management guidelines and evidence-based best practices documentation for projects funded by the Norwegian Embassy and the European Union.

• Served as Team Leader for evaluations and development of academic courses, including a Master's Degree course on Training and Development for Kathmandu University School of Education. • Designed and facilitated province-level workshops on 'Artificial Intelligence and Human Rights' in partnership with the International Center for Not-for-Profit Law.

**Learning and Capacity Building Specialist**

*USAID's MEL Activity, April 1, 2018 – September 30, 2020*

• Prepared annual work and Knowledge Management Plans for USAID, enhancing organizational learning and capacity building.

• Designed and implemented knowledge management tools, facilitating learning events and summits for capacity development.

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• Coordinated the development of training materials on MEL topics and hosted online learning portals for the Nepal MEL community.

• Provided technical assistance for producing CLA cases and hosted communities of practice on MEL for USAID Nepal's Development Offices.

**Freelance Consultant**

*March 15, 2017 – March 30, 2018*

• Executed project evaluations, developed M&E systems, and documented lessons learned for organizations, including INSEC, UNICEF, and the Department of Civil Registration, Government of Nepal.

• Conducted third-party monitoring, baseline studies, and capacity assessments for educational and disaster risk reduction projects.

**M&E, Knowledge Management, and Communication Specialist**

*The Governance Facility, October 2014 – March 14, 2017*

• Led the development of program frameworks, coordinated partnership selections, and provided M&E training and technical assistance.

• Developed web-based GESI disaggregated MIS, prepared M&E frameworks, and contributed to annual reports and knowledge products.

**Training Manager**

*ELD Training, June 2001- September 2014*

• Identified capacity-building needs and designed training programs addressing organizational learning needs in Nepal, Thailand, and Kenya.

• Developed training materials and led courses on project management, proposals, reports, and M&E plans.

**Program Coordinator**

*Institute of Cultural Affairs, September 1996- May 2001*

• Coordinated socio-economic empowerment projects, prepared training manuals, and facilitated workshops on various developmental topics.

**OTHER EXPERIENCES**

Monitoring, Evaluation, Learning, and Knowledge Management

• Led an assessment on civic space in Nepal after the introduction of federalism, Royal Norwegian Embassy Kathmandu.

• Led ‘Final evaluation of Strengthening the Right to Food and Food Sovereignty in Nepal – Project’ for FIAN Nepal/ Bread for the World (BftW) and Misereor, Germany.

• Led final evaluation of a project, ‘Strengthen the capacities of Tibetan refugees from Nepal to defend their rights and improve their living conditions,’ Les Amis du Tibet, Luxembourg

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• Led end-line survey of "Enhancing Citizen's Participation in Sub-National Good Governance in the Context of New Federal System in Nepal," Terre des hommes Foundation in Nepal (Tdh)/European Union.

• Led final evaluation of education project in Madhesh Province, Aasaman Nepal/Norwegian Embassy.

• Led final evaluation of a project for UN Women, UNFPA, and Shakti Samuha/ChildHope, UK, focusing on COVID-19's impact on women.

• As a Learning and Capacity Building Specialist, led component three (Knowledge management and capacity building) of USAID's MEL Activity managed by CAMRIS International Inc. and facilitated various learning events, training and developed and rolled out Knowledge Management Plan, produced knowledge products and knowledge management tools for the USAID Nepal Mission.

• Led a team to develop a Results-based M&E Framework for the Department of Civil Registration and built the capacity of line agencies to use the system in partnership with UNICEF.

• Coordinated with the Embassy of Denmark, Switzerland Embassy, and DFID to design a call for proposal, proposal application guidelines, and proposal selection guidelines, and developed Results-based M&E Framework and tools, web-based MIS, reporting formats, and guidelines for the Governance Facility.

• Supported 27 project partners of the Governance Facility in finalizing their project document, including Project logframe, Results-based M&E Framework, and Risk Management Plan, and developed their institutional capacity in rolling out their RBM&E system.

• Provided feedback to 27 Governance Facility project partners' periodic (quarterly, half-yearly, annual) reports and various knowledge products.

• Coordinated evaluations of inception-phase projects funded by the Governance Facility, including developing standard ToR and providing feedback to the consultants on their evaluation plans and draft reports.

• Process documentation of the 'Inclusive Education Project' for Aasaman Nepal/UNICEF and Lessons Learning Documentation for KIRDARC/Mission East in 2017.

• Developed M&E Framework and guidelines for Poverty Alleviation in Selected Rural Areas of Nepal (PASRA/GIZ), ADRA Rwanda, ADRA Burundi, Pourakhi Nepal, and National Association of People Living with HIV/AIDS in Nepal (NAP + N).

• Designed and led team evaluating development projects funded/implemented by multilateral and bilateral development agencies in last 15 years included: Evaluation of Knowledge Products (Enabling State Program/DFID), Final Evaluation of Finnish Sub-component to the Peace Support Project/GoN (Finland Embassy), Girls Power Program (Plan International), Access to Justice Project (IHRICON/Breakthrough India), Global School Program/Connecting the Classroom Project (the British Council), Social Action Project (the British Council), Strengthening Human Rights Defenders (HRDs) and Civil Societies for the Promotion of Economic, Social and Cultural Rights of Discriminated Groups in Nepal (INSEC/European Union), Conflict Mitigation through Empowerment of Local Communities (INSEC/EU), Quality of Care Project (Samjhauta Nepal/UNFPA), Reproductive Health Initiative for Youth in Asia (RHIYA/UNFPA/EU), Support for Peace & Development Initiative (SPDI/UNDP), NGO CBO Capacity Building Project (NPLAP/DFID).

• Carried out baseline Knowledge, Attitude, and Practice Survey of the Project "Promoting and Strengthening Disaster Risk Reduction (DRR) and School Safety throughout the Education Sector of Nepal" for Save the Children led Child-Centered Disaster Risk Reduction (CC DRR) Consortium in 2017.

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**WORKSHOPS/SEMINARS/CONFERENCES PARTICIPATED**

• Asia NPO Regional Consultation: Best Practices in Countering Money Laundering and Terrorism Financing While Preserving Civic Space, Organized by EU Global Facility on Anti Money Laundering and Countering the Financing of Terrorism, Bali, Indonesia, July 25-27, 2023.

• South Asia Litigation Surgery on Freedom of Expression, organized by Media Defence UK and ICNL, USA, Kathmandu, July 19-21, 2022.

• Evaluation at a Watershed: Actions and Shifting Paradigms for Challenging Times, European Evaluation Society Biennial Conference, Copenhagen, Denmark, June 6-10, 2022 • Tech Camp for Civic Space Defenders, organized by Stanford University and ICNL, California, February 2-4, 2020.

• 5th Joint Nordic Conference on Development Research, Copenhagen, 27th-28th June 2019. • Workshop on CSO's Right to Access International Donor Funding, co-organized by National Endowment for Democracy (NED) and International Center for Not-for-Profit Law (ICNL), Washington DC, November 2018.

• Roundtable on 'Protecting Civic Space and the Right to Access Resources,' organized by the Community of Democracies, Seoul, Republic of Korea, November 2015.

• Global Forum 2015: Shaping Civic Space, Stockholm, Sweden, May 10-12, 2015. • Asia Regional Civil Society Experience Summit, Jakarta, Indonesia, September 8-10, 20. • South Asia Regional Meeting on 'Legal Constraints to Foreign Funding and the Freedom of

Association' organized by ICNL and Forum Asia, Bangkok, Thailand, 1-2 July 2013. • Global Forum on Civil Society Law, Stockholm, Sweden., August 21 - 23, 2011. • Resource Center for Participatory Learning & Action Workshop, Cairo, Egypt, March 4-6, 2008.

• Regional Conference on Ageing, organized by Help Age International, UK, Cambodia, Nov.14- 18,2005.

• "Environmental Education for Children: What, Why and How?" organized by Center for Environment Education, Ahmedabad, India, March 21-25, 1995.

• Regional Conference on Environment and Biodiversity, organized by Ecological Society, Nepal (ECOS), Kathmandu, March 7-9, 1994.

• Asia Facilitator's Conference on "Emerging Role of Facilitation," organized by The International Association of Facilitators,3-5 Nov.2000, Malaysia.

• National Conference of Youths on Environment and Development", organized by Youth in Environment, Nepal, Kathmandu, June 3-5, 1994.

**OTHER SKILLS**

• Microsoft Word, Excel, PowerPoint, Microsoft Project, Mindjet Mind Manager, and SPSS

• Driving license – car

**PROFESSIONAL AFFILIATION**

• Civic Freedom Monitor in Nepal for International Center for Not-for-Profit Law (ICNL), Washington DC.

• Member, European Evaluation Society (EES).

• External Consultee, Freedom Online Coalition's (FOC) Task Force on Artificial Intelligence and Human Rights (T-FAIR).

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• Member, Gender and Equity Network South Asia (GENSA).

• Member, Task Force on South Asia for Freedom of Association (TF-SAFOA). • Ex-Chairperson, Nepal Participatory Action Network (NEPAN) (2016 – 2018) and life member - Volunteered as a Program Committee coordinator of NEPAN and designed and coordinated various programs to promote the rights of senior citizens, including advocacy campaigns, participatory research supported by the Help Age International and Help the Aged,

**EDUCATION**

Ongoing PhD (Development Studies; Thesis entitled ‘Capacity building factors in describing governance in CSOs: An analysis of Nepali NGOs’), Kathmandu University.

1999 M. A. (Anthropology), Tribhuvan University, Kathmandu.

1997 M.Sc. (Statistics), Tribhuvan University, Kathmandu.

**FELLOWSHIP**

Legal Enabling Environment Program (LEEP) Fellowship of USAID in 2010 to study the 'Legal Enabling Environment for Nepali CSOs.'

**PUBLICATIONS**

• Promoting Civil Society Organization's Governance through Capacity Building: A Review of Literature, Participation Journal, 22:1, September 2022.

• Civil Society Roles and Challenges in SDG Localization: Experiences in Nepal, Participation Journal, 21:1, September 2021.

• Global Philanthropic Environment Index: Country Report – Nepal, Indiana University Lilly Family School of Philanthropy, 2021.

• Challenges of Participatory Research and Development in New Normal Situation: Practitioners’ Perspective, Participation Journal, 20:1, September 2020.

• (Shrinking) Civic Space in Nepal: Concerns Among Indigenous People's Organizations, Forum for Development Studies, 47:2, 243-260.

• Global Philanthropic Environment Index: Country Report – Nepal, Indiana University Lilly Family School of Philanthropy, 2018.

• Defending Civil Society: Report on Laws and Regulations Governing Civil Society Organizations In Nepal. International Center for Not-for-Profit Law (ICNL) & World Movement for Democracy, 2011.

• A Reflection on the Legal Framework for Civil Society in Nepal, The International Journal of Not-for-Profit Law, 13:3, June 2011.

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**SUNNY GURUNG**

Instructional and Workforce Development Expert

Baltimore, Maryland | +1 (571) 253-8319 | sunnychanda.gurung@hotmail.com

**HIGHLIGHT**

**Summary**: A US citizen with an MBA degree and 12 years of experience providing solution-oriented on the-job and off-the-job learning solutions to high-performing teams worldwide

**Software proficiency**: Microsoft Office suite, HTML5, Adobe Captivate, Audacity, Articulate 360 suite, PDF editor,

Camtasia, Photoshop, SharePoint, virtual delivery tools (Zoom, Teams, Adobe Connect, Webex)

**Adult learning techniques**: Blended learning, bite-size/nano learning, learning styles, andragogy, virtual learning, simulations, gamification, assessments, peer-to-peer training/mentoring

**HR tools**: PeopleSoft, Oracle, HRIS

**Instructional design practices**: ADDIE, ROPES, Kirkpatrick model, Bloom’s taxonomy, LMS system design

**Proven people and organizational skills**: Process improvement, total quality management, project management, resource standardization, employee empowerment, performance management, change management

**Language**: English, Nepali, Hindi

**Certifications**: ATD Certified Associate Professional in Talent Development (APTD), ATD Master Trainer, Coaching Certificate awarded by ATD

**WORK EXPERIENCE**

**Training Manager/Instructional Design Specialist Baltimore, MD (Remote) 01/2022 to Present** *United Healthcare (a Fortune 500 company)*

• Using the principle of total quality management and lean production, lead a high-performing team of six senior trainers to annually offer over 500 clinical processes, technology operations, and IT systems adaptation training programs in eLearning, self-learning, and live delivery formats.

• Using the Kirkpatrick model, collaborate with VPs, directors, managers, and individual contributors of 14 teams across the Medicaid and Medicare operation to analyze performance gaps and to evaluate posttraining effectiveness, supporting more than 6,000 learners spread across 11 countries.

• Using the ADDIE model and Bloom’s taxonomy, exploit Storyline 360 to design and annually publish over 30 eLearning courses and 20 assessment courses while ensuring 100% programming accuracy.

• Using Camtasia and Replay 360, design and publish over 50 demo videos that focus on IT systems adaptation and operational process walk-throughs each year.

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• Using MS Office suite and PDF editor, design and publish over 150 job aids and use guides per annum.

• Using HTML5, annually develop over 100 reference pages that are housed on a SharePoint platform.

• Oversee and administer Oracle Learn, EdCast, eVOD, and Intrepid LMS platforms to host all eLearning courses and demo videos; run and evaluate quarterly and end-of-season reports.

• As a super user, administer a SharePoint that functions as the Education & Training Resource Center.

• Manage the training team inbox, team calendar, shared drive, and team OneNote throughout the year.

• As the gatekeeper of formatting guidelines and brand standards, ensure all resources offered by our team are standardized, offering consistency and ease of learning across all training resources.

• Design and lead multiple “Train the Trainer” sessions to increase the proficiency of training team members in the use of articulate 360, MS Office Suite, Photoshop, Camtasia, LMS platforms, training delivery, HTML5 coding, SharePoint programming/administration, and job aid development.

• In 2023 - received a total of 32 performance and leadership recognitions from multiple stakeholders.

• In 2023 - planned, strategized, executed, and successfully led the team through four learning platform transitions while ensuring a seamless user adaptation.

• In 2023 - recruited, trained, mentored, and managed the efforts of three senior trainers and aided them in becoming top performers, setting higher benchmarks for the team.

• In 2022 - selected by the enterprise to coach a cohort of eight individual contributors for the emerging leader program due to established expertise in people development.

• In 2022 - received a perfect performance review for creating 15 processes geared toward effective design and development of training resources, which led to a 25% increment in production efficiency.

• In 2022 - introduced two instructional design best practices, i.e., accuracy of content and ease of learning, that resulted in a reduction of user complaints by 97%, compared to 2021.

• In 2022 - initially hired as a senior instructional designer and promoted within six months for helping the team prevent a crisis without compromising the publication deadline of 48 eLearning courses.

**Senior Instructional Designer, District of Columbia (Remote) 06/2021 to 01/2022** *ALTA IT Services, LLC*

• Analyzed, designed, and managed four technical courses built on Adobe Captivate to establish a process and system-oriented curriculum supporting 1,200 IT professionals located nationwide.

• Partnered with the Director of IT systems to re-design an eLearning course that walked users through the software development process lifecycle, reducing re-training needs by 50%.

• Designed, organized, and led the bi-weekly NHO training to ensure successful onboarding of new associates.

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**Workforce Development Trainer, Vienna, VA 01/2016 to 06/2021** *Northern Virginia Family Service*

• Using the ADDIE framework, spearheaded the design of 20 virtual training programs, which enabled a successful transition to remote/online training upon being impacted by COVID-19.

• Collaborated with the Northern Virginia Community College to revamp 45 training modules focusing on the area of quality operations, records management, office processes and systems, workplace communication, and organizational behavior, which ensured trainees had up-to-date workplace application.

• Designed and developed 220 self-paced interactive nano-learning solutions to provide trainees with on-time and as-needed resources, which resulted in increased performance effectiveness by 80%.

• Designed and delivered five live sessions, four days per week, to over 120 trainees per year and consistently received over 95% learning satisfaction score.

• Awarded by the Program Manager for being a creative problem solver while designing scenario based exercises that simulated work environments and better-prepared varieties of end-users.

• Achieved a perfect performance appraisal score, year after year, as over 76% of trainees reported career growth post-training and coaching.

**Communication Specialist**, **Chantilly, VA 07/2015 to 01/2016** *WRB Communications, Inc.*

• Recognized by the Senior Project Supervisor for taking the initiative to design a user manual and an eLearning course to capture the use of the Salesforce system to support 35 client representatives.

**EDUCATION**

**Master of Business Administration (MBA)**

**Northampton, UK 01/2009 to 12/2010** *The University of Northampton*

• Achieved **A** grade for a dissertation on “organizational performance improvement.” • Achieved **A** grade on projects such as leadership, branding, and total quality management.

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**Dr. SWECHCHHA DAHAL**

Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, and Accessibility Specialist

Lalitpur, Nepal | +977 9849626730 | swechchha.dh@gmail.com

**Professional Experience**

**April 2023 – ongoing Asia & Europe Regional GESI Advisor**

**Mercy Corps**

**Website: https://www.mercycorps.org/**

- Provide technical guidance for gender integration across agency-wide growth resources and plans, including strategy, donor guidance, promoting local partners, and strengthening relations, while contributing technical input to priority sectors such as peace and conflict resolution, climate resilience, and economic opportunities.

- Support teams in integrating the Women's Peace & Security agenda in programming and advocacy throughout the region in close coordination with stakeholders and sectors in humanitarian responses.

- Guide field teams in strategic program design and implementation aligned with agency priorities, ensuring gender-sensitive budgets and staffing plans, incorporating new insights, contributing to multi-team learning, and supporting the development of gender and social inclusion specialists.

- Integrate gender and social inclusion into program design by aligning with theories of change, indicators, and log frames, and collaborate with the Monitoring Evaluation and learning team and country teams to advance learning on these topics.

- Enhance Mercy Corps' profile and thought leadership by engaging with internal stakeholders, partner agencies, donors, and networks, focusing on thematic areas such as food security, peace, governance, water security, and economic opportunity while actively participating in internal relationship-building and providing updates across departments.

**Aug 2021 – April 2023 Gender & Peacebuilding Adviser**

**International Alert**

**Website:** https://www.international-alert.org/about/

As International Alert global gender team based in Nepal country office. My role includes providing program and technical support to thematic teams and country programs. Key engagement and achievements.

- Coordinated cross-country project ‘Towards a Global Programming Framework for transforming Discriminatory Gender Patriarchal Norms in Conflict Settings – Nigeria, Nepal, Kyrgyzstan & Philippines.’

- Coordinated cross-country project ‘LGBT+ inclusive approaches to conflict and the WPS agenda’ in Nepal & Myanmar.

- Supported Gender-sensitive conflict analysis in Syria and Lebanon.

- Supported development of organizational Gender strategy 2022-2023.

- Developed a learning paper for Nepal’s gender program 2021.

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**Feb 2019 April 2020 Asia Conflict & Security Adviser**

**Saferworld Website**: https://www.saferworld.org.uk

I worked as part of the regional team of the Saferworld Asia program. My role was to provide gender program support to country programs – Nepal, Bangladesh, Pakistan, Tajikistan, and Myanmar.

Key achievements;

- Supported project design on the Rohingya refugee crisis by providing gender and conflict sensitivity support to a humanitarian crisis.

- Contributed to testing Gender Sensitive Conflict Analysis toolkit development and testing. - Provided capacity-building training and workshops on gender sensitivity to CSO partners in Northern Rakhine, Myanmar.

- Developed learning paper for Nepal program on federalism and gender sensitivity program. - Developed training manual and trained facilitator in Tajikistan on programming on gender based violence and gender equality.

- Contributed to organizational consultation for Safeguarding policy and practices.

**Aug 2011 to March 2015 Project Manager**

**Shantimalika,** Kathmandu Nepal

**Website***www.shantimalika.org.np*

My role was to manage a project funded by UN Women focused on providing technical support to government agencies for effective implementation of the National Action Plan on UNSCR 1325 & 1820. Key achievements;

- Conducted 28 district orientation workshops in collaboration with the Ministry of Peace & Reconstruction.

- Developed four research reports focused on strengthening the Nepal National Women Commission’s focus on promoting women’s empowerment and gender equality work. - Coordinated high-level steering committee meeting of National Action Plan on UNSCR 1325 & 1820.

**May 2011 to Aug 2011 Intern**

**United Nations Regional Centre for Peace and Disarmament in Asia**

**and the Pacific (UNRCPD),** Lalitpur, Nepal

**Website** *http://unrcpd.org/region/nepal/)*

I was responsible for monitoring trends and developments in the area of peace and disarmament in the region through conducting research. Major activities performed are as follows;

- Draft background papers, communications, and content for reports.

- Assisted in organizing conferences, meetings, workshops, and other events on disarmament issues.

- Assist in administrative/logistical tasks related to the operation of the Centre and - Assist in designing tools and conducting research and surveys to develop funding applications.

**Research and Teaching Experience**

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**Aug 2020 – June 2021 Country Consultant**

*Gender financing Project*

**Publish What You Fund**, London

As a part of the global campaign for aid and development transparency, this Project seeks to improve the publication of gender-related financial and programmatic data to help donors (re)allocate their resources to meet funding gaps, individuals/organizations better identify gender-related resources and coordinate their work, and advocates in-country hold donors and governments accountable to their gender equality commitments. Using a country-based approach, I supported tracking the gender-related funding in Nepal by the top 5 donors to determine what information is available and what is missing. Key responsibilities;

- Conducting independent desk-based research

- Played a leading role in identifying relevant individuals for key informant interviews (KIIs) and possibly focus group discussions (FGDs) as relevant and arranged those interviews. - Writing up and translating KII and FGD notes

- Facilitating a smooth research process in-country.

- Contribute to feeding available findings into briefing material.

- Support in-country advocacy efforts to encourage the uptake of policy recommendations.

**March 2018 to Dec 2018 Research Assistant/Consultant**

*Peace Research Project (PRP), “Inclusive Economic Development:*

*Engaging Private Sector in Promotion and Protection of Livelihood in*

*Nepal”*

**International Alert, London**

The three-year research program is a joint project funded by DFID and implemented by International Alert, Conciliation Resources, and Safer World. The broad objective of the research is to produce a high quality, evidence-based analysis of the links between inclusive economic development and stability. Research mainly focuses on generating new understanding, practical lessons, and actionable policy recommendations on the Livelihood approach, GESI in Livelihood program, and Inclusive economic growth and stability in Nepal. Major responsibilities.

- Designed research tools and reviewed related literature in consultation with the research team in Nepal and London.

- Managed data collection, and thematic analysis and contributed to data protection. - Contributed to research site selection and identifying respondents and stakeholders. - Took a lead role in coordinating and conducting interviews in both Kathmandu and the district, - Transcribing interviews and analyzing findings for the report.

- Contribute to validation through the workshop and sharing events.

**Aug 2017 to July 2019 Researcher/Consultant**

*Department of Development Studies*

***Birkbeck, SOAS, London University.***

The study aims to find the conditions and experiences of women construction workers in post-earthquake reconstruction work in Nepal. The study reviews the mobility and migration trend and accesses the informal economy and women's agency. The qualitative study uses different methods and tools to assess the risk, labor burden, migration, and identity concerning construction workers in Nepal.

Major responsibilities;

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- Design research tools and review related literature in consultation with the research team in Nepal and London.

- Contribute to research site selection and identifying respondents and stakeholders. - Take a lead role in coordinating and conducting interviews in both Kathmandu and the district, - Transcribing interviews and analyzing findings for the report.

**Education**

**2015 - 2021 Doctorate of Philosophy**

Department of Conflict Peace & Development Studies (DCPDS)

Tribhuvan University Specialization: Inclusion in Nepal's state-building

process from women's lived experience.

**2009 - 2011 Master of Arts in Conflict, Peace, and Development Studies**

*Department of Conflict, Peace and Development Studies (DCPDS),*

Tribhuvan University

**Published and Presented Papers**

**2023 Dahal, S., et al. (2023). Women construction workers in Nepal: Collectivities under precarious conditions**. *Gender, Work & Organization, 31*(2). **https://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/10.1111/gwao.13078**

**2019 Dahal, S; Gender Responsive Policy Making: A Study of Women Peace & Security Agenda in Nepal.** *The Next Era, Professional Help Desk Research Center,(pg 36-50)*

**2018 Dahal, S; Political Participation: Quest for Meaningful Participation of Women in Post Conflict Nepal. Dhristi,**

**2016 Dahal S; Political Transformation in Nepal and Women Peace & Security Issues.** *International Conference of the Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences,*

*University of Ruhana (p. 7). Matra, Srilanka: University of Ruhana*

**2015 Dahal, S; The narrative of Female Ex-combatants in Nepal.**

*Published in S. Sikhawat, Female Combatants in Conflict and Peace, Challenging Gender in Violence and post-conflict reintegration (pp. 185-199). Palgrave Macmillan.*

**2014 Dahal, S; Challenges of implementing National Action Plan on 1325 & 1820: A Case Study of Nepal.**

*Published in Journal of Conflict & Public Policy,* ***(page*** *52-65)*

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**NIKUNJAN GC**

IT and Digital Transformation Specialist

Woodside, New York | + 1 (404) 820-1342 | nik.gc@stockgurus.us

**PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE**

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**Stock Gurus LLC Manhattan, NY** *IT and Digital Transformation Specialist Aug 2019 –Present*

● Orchestrated the development lifecycle of software solutions, ensuring adherence to industry-standard processes and the delivery of robust applications, with a keen focus on financial trading platforms. ● Pioneered using Google Cloud Platform to develop scalable machine learning models, leveraging

libraries like Scikit-Learn, StatsModels, and Pandas for data analysis and predictive modeling. ● Conducted comprehensive training sessions on IT and digital transformation topics, including algorithmic trading, machine learning applications, and financial software solutions, to foster team development and stakeholder engagement.

● Proficiency in Oracle **eBusiness** Suite, providing expertise in database management systems for comprehensive software solutions.

● Facilitated knowledge-sharing and professional development opportunities, organizing workshops and seminars on the latest IT trends and tools, such as cloud computing, data visualization, and cybersecurity, to build a culture of continuous learning within the organization.

**Arvest Bank (Remote) Bentonville, Arkansas** *Software engineer* August 2022 - Current

● Followed **Agile** methodologies throughout the project and released the application in a 2-week **Sprint** using **SCRUM** methodology.

● Developed and deployed **smart contracts** for loan maintenance using **Python**, **streamlining** the **loan agreement** and **enforcement** process.

● Leveraged **Thought Machine libraries** to ensure seamless integration of **smart contracts** with Arvest Bank's core banking systems.

● Involved in end-to-end development, from **architectural design** to code implementation, ensuring a cohesive and scalable solution.

● Implemented **CI**/**CD** pipelines to **automate** testing and deployment processes, significantly improving development efficiency and product reliability.

● Utilized **Apache Kafka** for real-time messaging, facilitating event-driven interactions with smart contracts and enhancing system responsiveness.

● Deployed and managed infrastructure on **Google Cloud Platform** (GCP), leveraging cloud capabilities to achieve scalability and high availability.

● Integrated **PostgreSQL** for data storage, utilizing its advanced features to store and manage loan data and smart contract states efficiently.

● Ensured **security** and **compliance** with **smart contracts**, aligning them with **legal** and **regulatory** requirements in the **financial** sector.

● Collaborated with **cross**-**functional** teams to deliver a robust and secure smart contract solution for loan maintenance.

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● Leveraged **Java EE** platform **components**, **frameworks**, and **specifications** such as **Spring**, **Spring Boot**, **JPA**, **Hibernate**, and **JDBC** in developing and deploying critical **banking** applications at **Arvest Bank**.

● Utilized **Spring** and **Spring Boot** to connect different **microservices**, facilitating data **consumption** from Thought Machine **API** calls and seamless integration with Arvest Bank's core banking systems. ● Employed **JPA** and **Hibernate** for **ORM mappings**, efficiently mapping Java entities to **database** tables and executing **Hibernate** Criteria **SQL** queries for data retrievals.

● Wrote **Spring Configuration XML** files containing declarations and other dependent object declarations to ensure the smooth functioning of applications.

● Contributed to developing **Microservices** for all models, utilizing a combination of **Spring Boot** and **Spring Security** to enhance system security and reliability.

● Engaged in **continuous learning** and adaptation of **emerging** technologies to improve the efficiency and security of **smart contract** implementations.

● Involved in preparing the **Test Cases**, **Test Plans,** and **Test Scenarios** for executing the automation script.

**Tremor.Tech** *https://tremor.tech/* **Corona, NY** *Software Developer Apr 2019 –Dec 2020*

● Worked on Maratika Norling Hotel Management Software mainly focussing on **guest acquisition** solutions where users can book a room and **pay online** through **Maratika Norling's website** and **payment** system in the hotel itself.

● In hotel-side software, we worked on handling **5k** customers' data monthly, where we kept track of day to-day customers' **check**-**in** and **check**-**out**, their expense details, made **inventory** details, and customer payment integration using the **Khalti payment** gateway.

● Implemented two-factor verification to check if the user is legitimate and wants to make a reservation or just overflow the booking order.*https://maratikanorlinghotel.com/*

**New Amsterdam Property Management 80 5th Ave NY, NY** *Supervisor (Fire and Life Safety Director) Aug 2017 – March 2024*

● Direct and coordinate the activities of employees engaged in producing or processing **goods**, such as **inspectors**, **machine setters**, and **fabricators**.

● Planned work schedules and assigned duties to maintain adequate staff for the effective performance of activities and response to fluctuating workloads to keep the **fire code** implemented in the building as per the New York City code.

*Application Developer Oct 2018 – Dec 2020*

● **Sign**-**in** Application for 80 5th Ave, where people will touch the screen to enter the room number, and the sensor will take pictures simultaneously.

● Maintained the backend data, where we worked on handling **15k** data per month. Where all the data is meaningfully stored in a graph showing the peak hours of the building.https://github.com/nikunjangc/SignInApplication

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**EDUCATION**

**QUEENS COLLEGE** *B.S. in Computer Science (May 2020 )* **QUEENS, NY**

● I created a search **Engine Crawler** using **HTML**, **CSS**, **PHP**, and **Javascript**. Stored data using **XAMPP** and crawled the web using **NodeJS** to retrieve data from the web. Queries were optimized for the most relevant results from the database using SQLite. https://nikunjangc.github.io/SARA/

● Build Search Engine Optimization using **Java**. Stored all the queries using **InvertedIndex**, used **Potter's algorithm** for optimization of search, and used **stemming** to reduce common words to make search better.https://github.com/nikunjangc/Search-Engine

**QUEENS COLLEGE** *M.A. in Computer Science (Dec 2024 )* **QUEENS, NY**

● Built a program to detect different candlestick patterns from the available historical data of **S&P 500** companies.

Did both short trading and long trading whenever appropriate patterns were detected. Compare the success-to-failure ratio of multiple candlestick patterns.

**PURSUIT (C4Q)** *Android Application Development Software Engineering (Dec 2018)* **LONG ISLAND CITY, NY**

*Tools Used: Android Studio, Java, XML, Maven, Gradel, Android Emulator*

● Build a game called **SIMON application**, the popular game of the 1970s and 1980s. It has a series of tones and lights and requires a user to repeat the sequence. If the user succeeds, the series becomes progressively longer and more complex. The game ends once the user fails or the time limit runs out. https://github.com/nikunjangc/Simon

● Built a running calculator application that can perform all mathematical

operations like a **Google calculator**, with added features like generating

random numbers, checking if the number is prime, and finding the first n prime

numbers. The tools used are **Java**, **Maven**, **Gradle**, **XML**, and Android

Studio. https://github.com/nikunjangc/calculator

**PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE**

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● An expert **Python** and **Java** Developer with **5**+ Years of experience **designing**, **developing**, **testing**, and **implementing** various **stand**-**alone** and **client**-**server architecture**-based **enterprise** application software in **Python and Java** on different domains using **Django and Spring Boot** in multiple domains.

● Expertise in **statistical** data analysis and engineering to transform business requirements into **analytical models**, designing **algorithms**, and **strategic** solutions that scale across **massive volumes** of **data**.

● Good Experience in **bucketing**, **partitioning**, **multi**-**threading** computing, and **streaming** (**Python**, **Java**, **PySpark**)

● Good experience developing projects using **HTML**, **CSS**, **JavaScript**/**JQuery**, **Angular**, **XML**, **XSLT**, **SOAP**, **RESTful**, **SQL**, and **IDEs** (**PyCharm**, **Eclipse**).

● Experience creating and maintaining **complex data**-**driven automation** and **queries** using **SQL** and **NoSQL** databases.

● Extensive experience in setting up **CI**/**CD** pipelines using **Jenkins**, **Maven**, **Nexus**, **GitHub**, CHEF, **Terraform**, and **AWS**.

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● Working with open-source relational database systems (**MySQL**, **PostgreSQL**) ● Experienced in creating **AWS IAM** and **SecurityGroup** in **Public** and **Private** Subnets in **VPC**. Created **AWSRoute53** to route traffic between different regions.

● Well-versed in analyzing& gathering the business and system requirements. ● Experience in **SQL Server** and **Oracle Server** Database. Good understanding of **NoSQL Database** Concepts and queries.

● Experienced in writing complex **SQL** Queries like Stored **Procedures**, **triggers**, **joints**, and **sub** **quires**.

● Experience with **MVC** frameworks, **microservices**, and **REST**.

● Familiar with working with container technologies like **Docker, Podman,** and **Kubernetes**. ● Working with **AWS** (**Lambda**, **Data Pipeline**, **Cloud Formation**, **API Gateway**) ● Experience with **Git**, Node.js, **Python**, **Java**, **HTML5**, **CSS3**, **Shockwave Flash**, or **Apache Tomcat**.

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