



# NAAMII

INTERNAL NEWSLETTER

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# EDITORIAL

## Welcome to the NAAMII Newsletter

Hello Team,

Welcome to the second edition of NAAMII's internal newsletter!

This month's activities demonstrate NAAMII's multifaceted approach to building AI capacity in Nepal through education, research, community engagement, and institutional development. From grassroots community building through Open Houses to strategic organizational strengthening, each initiative contributes to NAAMII's mission of democratizing AI access and fostering innovation rooted in local contexts. NAAMII continues to balance immediate community needs with long-term strategic positioning, ensuring sustainable impact across Nepal's evolving AI landscape.

Every month, we'll be releasing the newsletter at the end of every month to keep everyone connected, updated, and inspired. This is your platform to share your stories, highlight your projects, and celebrate the milestones that shape our community.

Have something to share? We'd love to feature it! Whether it's a research achievement, a project update, or a new discovery, send it to **[brand@naamii.org.np](mailto:brand@naamii.org.np)** and we'll include it in the next edition.



# AI Webinar Series

As part of the AI Webinar Series, TOGA Research Assistant Mahesh Shakya coordinated a session on Neuro-Symbolic AI (NSAI) featuring Nijesh Upreti, PhD Candidate at the University of Edinburgh.

The talk provided a deep dive into the foundations, applications, architectures and taxonomies, and core mechanisms of NSAI, situating the field within the three historical waves of AI: symbolic systems, neural networks, and today's hybrid approaches. The session unpacked how neural learning contributes statistical generalization and pattern discovery, while symbolic reasoning offers structure, logic, and systematic inference.

This series reflects NAAMII's effort to bring frontier AI research into open discussion, strengthening both our internal community and the wider ecosystem by regularly conducting webinars that create a consistent platform for learning, dialogue, and collaboration on critical AI topics.

## Expanding Global Health Opportunities

The Obstetric Ultrasound AI Hackathon is an upcoming event bringing together innovators from Nepal, Uganda, Kenya, Nigeria, and Pakistan to develop AI-driven solutions for maternal healthcare challenges in resource-constrained settings. Participants will work on practical applications aimed at improving ultrasound diagnostics and maternal care.

NAAMII is promoting this opportunity to ensure innovators across the Global South can participate, gain mentorship, and connect with international platforms. The event also provides a pathway for winning teams to present their solutions at the Africa Health AI Conference 2025 in Uganda, helping local innovations gain global visibility.



The poster for the Obstetric Ultrasound AI Hackathon features a header with logos from IDRC-CRDI, CARTEL, CHAAMI, PHC GLOBAL, and others. The main title is 'Obstetric Ultrasound AI Hackathon - Call for Applications'. Below the title, it describes the hackathon as a unique opportunity for innovators to use Machine Learning and Federated Learning to improve maternal and fetal health diagnostics in low-resource settings. It mentions that multidisciplinary teams from five countries will receive training and compete for an all-expenses-paid trip to participate in the person finals in Uganda during the 2nd AI in Health Africa Conference 2025 from 6th - 7th November. A circular image shows a person's hand holding a small object, possibly a fetus, during an ultrasound. The poster is divided into sections for 'Who is eligible to apply?', 'Application process', 'Team members', and 'Application deadline'. It also includes a QR code and a link to the application form.

**Who is eligible to apply?**  
Applicants must be residents or citizens of Uganda, Kenya, Nigeria, Nepal, or Pakistan.

**Application process**  
Complete the eligibility form and submit a short statement of interest to be considered for the hackathon.

**Team members**  
Applications must be submitted by teams of 3–5 members with at least 1 health worker & a member with knowledge or experience in machine learning, data science, or software development.

**Application deadline**  
20th August 2025

Apply: <https://forms.gle/ja12pKDkdy4m8zBE8>

Scan this code to review the eligibility criteria to ensure your team meets the required qualifications



# AI-assisted Disease Screening Bootcamp & HealthHack 2025

NAAMII, in collaboration with the **BP Eye Foundation (BPEF)**, is hosting the **AI-assisted Disease Screening Hands-on Bootcamp & Hackathon 2025** from **August 15 – September 12, 2025**, at BP Eye Foundation, Thimi.

The program brings together **30 participants** to work on health-focused AI projects, supported through a series of structured learning sessions. Weekly **Friday workshops** cover topics ranging from clinical problem formulation to AI methods, deep learning pipelines, and deployment strategies, while **Wednesday online sessions** provide additional guidance.



A highlight of the program is **HealthHack Week (September 5–12)**, culminating in the **Final HealthHack on September 12** (10 AM – 4 PM, on-site).

This initiative is made possible through the dedication of the NAAMII team, **Mahesh, Ranjana, Bishram, Kanchan, Nishant, Prasiddha, Prekshya, and Angelina**, who will guide participants in turning ideas into impactful solutions.

## AI-Health Fellowship Launched

NAAMII has welcomed **Dr. Saraswoti Gurung** as a fellow under the **AI-Health Fellowship**. Beginning on **18th August**, her three-month fellowship is centered on the TOGAI project *AI-powered Task-Shifting for High-Quality Fetal Ultrasound Service in Community Healthcare Settings*.

Dr. Gurung will be actively engaged in **observation and shadowing** throughout different stages of the project. The fellowship is designed to bring clinical expertise into AI research, strengthening the bridge between healthcare practice and AI-driven innovation.





# Progress Updates of the Ultrasound Project

Regular project meetings for the Ultrasound initiative with AI-Sarosh and BMGF continue to be held at TUTH (T.U. Teaching Hospital), bringing together a diverse group of stakeholders including the TUTH data collection team, radiologists, research assistants, and the TERAHS team.

These sessions serve as a platform to:

- Review ongoing project activities
- Share progress updates across all teams
- Discuss challenges and bottlenecks
- Present and discuss preliminary findings

The collaborative discussions have strengthened coordination across teams and are helping to ensure that project milestones are met efficiently.



## Dr. Bishesh Khanal Invited to Speak at the AI in Health Africa Conference

Dr. Bishesh Khanal, Research Scientist leading the TOGAI research group at NAAMII, has been invited this November to speak at the **2nd AI in Health Africa Conference at Makerere University** in Uganda.

The conference, hosted by the **Makerere University AI Health Lab, Health AI for All Network**, and the **Infectious Disease Institute**, brings together experts, policymakers, researchers, and healthcare innovators to discuss AI-driven solutions tailored to Africa's healthcare needs. Key discussions will include South-to-South collaboration, integration of AI with local knowledge systems, and the role of Generative AI in healthcare innovation.





# Open House Series Builds Momentum

NAAMII's monthly Open House sessions continue to demonstrate strong community engagement, with consistently high registration numbers and diverse participation from across Nepal's professional landscape. Held every last Friday of the month, these sessions have established themselves as a vital platform for knowledge exchange and community building in AI.

This month's session featured Bijayan Bhattarai, Co-founder of Diyo.ai, highlighting one of NAAMII's startup incubations. The discussion centered on language model development and the critical challenges of working with Nepali language data. With Nepal's 113 recognized languages, participants engaged in substantive dialogue about representation gaps and the complexity of developing inclusive AI solutions for multilingual contexts.

The session reinforced NAAMII's commitment to ensuring AI benefits remain accessible, equitable, and responsive to local needs. Attendees included researchers, industry professionals, and students, reflecting the institute's growing role as a central hub for AI discourse in the region.



*Venue partner: Alliance Française de Katmandou, Jhamsikhel*



# Insights from Alumni as ANAIS 2025 Preparations Advance

Following her great experience at ANAIS 2024, European participant Agota Vass visited Nepal this year and also took the opportunity to meet the NAAMII team. As a PhD student studying in Hungary, her perspective offers valuable insights for shaping improvements in the 2025 edition of the program.

Agota emphasized how ANAIS stood out compared to other international programs she attended: a combination of world-class faculty, talented participants, and Nepal's inspiring environment created an energy that was both personally and professionally transformative. She noted that the program's diverse applications helped broaden her perspective on AI beyond her core field.

Constructive feedback included creating separate research and startup hackathon tracks, providing optional evening slots for deeper engagement with faculty, and expanding international participation to enhance global exchange.



These insights are now informing the final preparations for ANAIS 2025, ensuring the program continues to grow as a premier AI education platform in South Asia, combining expert faculty, talented participants, and opportunities for meaningful international engagement.

[Full Conversation Here](#)

## ANAIS 2025 Preparations Advance

Preparations for **ANAIS 2025** are in full swing, led this year by **Aayushma**. Ambassador interviews concluded in August, and the **application process will open soon**, inviting aspiring AI learners from across the region.

Building on the success of previous editions, ANAIS 2025 continues to position itself as **South Asia's premier AI education platform**, incorporating valuable feedback from alumni and stakeholders.

Key milestones already completed include:

- **Team Formation:** The organizing team has been fully onboarded.
- **Speakers Finalized:** A distinguished lineup of speakers has been confirmed.
- **Committees Established:** Core committees are in place to manage program logistics, outreach, and content.

Stay updated and learn more: [ANAIS 2025](#)





# Anju Chhetri Leads Industry Panel

On August 15, BBML Research Assistant Anju Chhetri served as moderator for “Leveraging Data Analytics for Impact in Nepal” during Fintech Friday, organized by Fintech Alliance Nepal in collaboration with The British College Kathmandu. The panel brought together industry leaders including:

- **Kailash Badu** – Vice President of Products, Genese Solution
- **Suresh Manandhar** – CEO/Chief Scientist/Co-Founder, Wiseyak Inc.
- **Sweta Karna** – Vice President of Data, Cedar Gate Services
- **Suresh Gautam** – CEO & Co-Founder, eXtensoData

Chhetri's role involved structuring discussion flow and facilitating expert dialogue across startup innovation, global best practices, government policy, and data privacy considerations. Her participation demonstrates NAAMII's growing influence in shaping regional data science discourse and reflects the institute's commitment to developing thought leadership capabilities among team members.

A key insight from the session highlighted the ongoing need to strengthen foundational data collection and management practices in Nepal's industry, alongside advanced machine learning implementations.






# Diyo.ai Selected as UNDP Civic Tech Innovation Challenge Finalist


Diyo.ai, an incubated startup at NAAMII, has been selected among the Top 15 Finalists of the Civic Tech Innovation Challenge organized by UNDP Asia-Pacific.

The Civic Tech Innovation Challenge recognizes solutions that advance transparency, inclusion, and accountability in governance. Diyo.ai's AI-powered multilingual chatbot, Muna, provides 24/7 digital access to government services in both Nepali and English. By automating frontline service delivery and offering real-time feedback loops, the platform aims to make public service delivery more responsive and citizen-friendly.

We're delighted to see Diyo.ai gain this recognition as it continues developing digital governance tools with the potential for meaningful impact in Nepal and beyond.



**Diyo.ai**  
AI Chatbot for Fast, Transparent, and Multilingual Public Service Access in Nepal




**DIYO.AI**

Market	Organization Type	Stage of Development
Nepal	For-Profit	Generating Revenue

**Problem Statement**  
In Nepal, citizens often encounter long wait times, language barriers, and a lack of transparency when accessing public services or submitting grievances. These systemic inefficiencies disproportionately affect rural and marginalized communities, reinforcing barriers to inclusion and limiting trust in government institutions.

**Solution Description**  
Diyo.ai's AI-powered chatbot - MUNA - provides 24/7 digital access to government services in both Nepali and English. This intelligent assistant answers citizen queries, processes and escalates grievances through automated workflows, and integrates with government databases via secure APIs. By automating frontline service delivery and providing real-time feedback loops, the solution improves responsiveness, transparency, and institutional efficiency.

**Focused Areas**  
Digital Governance, Multilingual Inclusion, Grievance Redressal



**Impact**  
With over 14,000 users to date, the chatbot has significantly improved access to information, streamlined public service queries, and reduced the friction of traditional grievance systems. Government partners benefit from cost savings, enhanced citizen satisfaction, and actionable data analytics. The project was a runner-up at the NYEF Startup Awards and a top 5 finalist at the Nepal ICT Awards.

<https://www.diyo.ai/muna>

## Regional Civic Tech Innovation Challenge on Governance

### 2025 Finalists Catalogue





# Cultural Integration Through Teej Celebration

[View Original Post](#)

NAAMII's women team members organized Teej festival celebrations, reinforcing the institute's commitment to maintaining cultural connections within its research environment. During the event, the team enjoyed games and shared a festive lunch, taking time to compliment and celebrate each other while honoring womanhood.

The event reflects NAAMII's values of fostering a workplace where cultural traditions and human connections are honored alongside scientific work.



## Farewells and New Beginnings

We recently bid farewell to Udit, one of NAAMII's longest-serving team members. Over the past three years, Udit has been an integral part of NAAMII as Grants, Partnership, and Program Manager, contributing to nearly all of our key projects and enabling collaborations.

His dedication, hands-on approach, and ability to navigate complex initiatives have left a lasting mark on NAAMII's partnership ecosystem. As Udit embarks on this exciting new chapter, we look forward to building on the strong foundation he helped create and continuing to strengthen our collaborations and impact.





We are also glad to welcome two new Research Assistants to the MAPMED project, working under Dr. Suman Raj Bista.



**Swostika Basukala** recently graduated in Computer Engineering from Tribhuvan University (Thapathali Campus, 2023). She has prior experience as an AI and ML engineer and now joins NAAMII as a Research Assistant.



**Rahul Kumar Gupta**, a Computer Science graduate from CV Raman Global University, is now a Research Assistant at NAAMII focusing on medical image analysis. His research background spans deep learning applications in traffic sign detection, fraud detection, and sentiment analysis.

## Happy Birthday, Kanchan!

We're delighted to celebrate Kanchan didi's birthday this week. For the past three years, she has been an integral part of **TOGAI**, contributing as a research assistant to the team's journey and growth. Her commitment and cheerful spirit continue to inspire everyone around her.

Wishing you a wonderful year filled with happiness, health, and success ahead, Kanchan!





# Strengthening NAAMII:

## Governance and Strategic Planning Offsite

NAAMII's leadership recently held a residential workshop at Chandragiri Hills, focusing on strengthening our institution and planning for long-term sustainability. The workshop allowed the team to come together, review key operational areas, and set clear next steps for growth.

Key Development Areas:

- **Human Resources:** Moving forward, NAAMII is establishing structures and processes that clarify roles, improve recruitment and onboarding, and provide clear pathways for staff growth and well-being.
- **Governance and Compliance:** Policies and guidelines are being strengthened to ensure a safe and accountable work environment.
- **Financial Management:** Project accounting, procurement, and compliance systems are being standardized to provide clarity and stability for staff operations.
- **Strategic Planning:** Initiatives in AI ethics, staff capacity-building, and long-term sustainability are designed to equip the NAAMII team to contribute meaningfully.



The upcoming HR and finance updates, onboarding and training improvements, governance enhancements, and strengthened communication and team-building practices are meant to make work smoother, provide clearer guidance, and ensure the teams at NAAMII feel supported while contributing to the institute's mission.



# Looking Forward

We're here to celebrate your wins, share fresh ideas, and keep our community connected and inspired. Our commitment remains strong: advancing meaningful AI research, nurturing local talent, building partnerships, and creating solutions that make a real difference.

We'll keep bringing you fresh stories and updates in every issue. This newsletter thrives on your contributions.

If your work or activities fall under any of the listed categories, please share them under the respective division with us at [brand@naamii.org.np](mailto:brand@naamii.org.np).

## RESEARCH

- New Publications & Announcements – Recently published papers, book chapters, or featured articles.
- Conference Participation – Presentations, keynote talks, panel discussions, or awards received.
- Research Project Updates – Ongoing work, milestones achieved, notable breakthroughs.
- New Research Funding & Partnerships – Grants, collaborations, or institutional partnerships.
- Project Impact Stories – Tangible results, societal benefits, or community impact.
- Behind-the-Scenes of Research – Lab culture, team introductions, research process highlights.
- Researcher Spotlights – Interviews with team members about their work and career journey.
- Call for Collaboration – Opportunities for researchers, institutions, or students to engage.

## EDUCATION OUTREACH

- AI Workshops & Bootcamps – Announcements, highlights, participant feedback.
- New Partnerships & Collaborations – Education institutions, NGOs, or corporate partners.
- Alumni Success Stories – What past participants are doing now.
- Learning Resources & Tips – Guides, tutorials, and tool recommendations.

## INDUSTRY & INNOVATION

- R&D Project Highlights – Progress, innovations, and commercial applications.
- Startup Incubation Stories – Founders' journeys, funding wins, and growth milestones.
- Partnership Announcements – Collaborations with corporates, startups, or public sector.
- Case studies of deployed AI or tech solutions.
- Mentorship & Networking Events
- Pilot Projects & Trials



*Each issue celebrates NAAMII's collaborative spirit, where individual efforts come together to create collective impact.*

NAAMII

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