LISP
Local Infrastructure Support Programme

ISSUE #4

Newsletter

May & June 2026

The Fourth Edition

Across diverse local contexts, the Local Infrastructure Support Programme's (LISP) integrated approach supports the Local Governments (LGs) to strengthen systems, enhance inclusion, and develop capacity of all those involved in implementing the infrastructure projects.

This fourth edition features two stories of project schemes implemented in the 25/26 Fiscal Year, whose users are already reaping the benefits. Both these pieces feature stories about water schemes - with lift irrigation in Rapti Sonari and drinking water 'One house, One Tap' project in Sandhikharka. Water infrastructure is not only about supply, it is the back bone of public health, agricultutre productivity, and ensuring reliable access where systems, equity, and sustainability intersect.

In this newsletter

Vegetable growth in a field as a result of the Rapti Sonari Lift Irrigation Scheme

Reviving Farming in Rapti Sonari with reliable irrigation

Rapti Sonari lift irrigation system

For generations, Sikta area's 78 farming households in Rapti Sonari Rural Municipality (RM) relied entirely on unpredictable rainfall for their fields, restricting farming to the monsoon season and leaving much of their land unused for the rest of the year. This dependence often led to food shortages and unstable incomes.

A targeted investment by the Rapti Sonari RM and LISP is transforming irrigation in the once rain-dependent farming system to a reliable, productive, and resilient source of livelihood. LISP supported the community through planning discussions, coordination with Rapti Sonari RM, and practical guidance on system operation and maintenance. The RM, community, and LISP worked closely to design the 'Sikta Irrigation Operation Plan' through a participatory approach. They identified key irrigation points to maximise coverage and ensure water access. This collaborative process strengthened local ownership and ensured that the infrastructure could be sustained.

Before the intervention, farmers had minimal control over their production as insufficient or delayed rainfall often led to crop failure. Many households could harvest crops such as corn, paddy, wheat and vegetable only once a year, which was often inadequate to sustain them throughout the year. Dry seasons forced families to purchase food from the market at high prices, deepening financial stress. Women bore the burden of managing household food shortages, while young people increasingly saw little future in agriculture, leading to concerns about migration. Despite having fertile land, the absence of a reliable irrigation system kept the community trapped in a cycle of low productivity and recurring food insecurity.

"Before irrigation, we could only wait for rain. Now we grow vegetables even during the dry months, and my children eat better. We are also earning extra income from selling our produce." — Lok Bahadur Dangi, beneficiary farmer.

The project constructed new electrical lift irrigation systems, that extract groundwater through deep boring and pumps, in this fiscal year (25/26) across nine strategic locations covered 21.09 hectares and connected 78 households to a consistent and year-round water supply. The transformation is both immediate and visible. Fields that once lay idle for months are now green and productive throughout the year. Farmers now cultivate produce beyond the monsoon season, leading to a steady supply of fresh food for their families. This scheme succeeded in significantly improving food security, with reduced dependency on market dependency. Additionally, the ability to produce surplus crops opened new income opportunities with many households now selling vegetables in local markets. It also strengthened the local food system with consistent availability of fresh vegetables and stabilised market prices. The lift irrigation scheme, powered by electricity from the local grid, contributed to reducing vulnerability to delayed monsoons and helped secure livelihoods against future shock as the water access enables farmers to maintain production despite climatic variability.

The success of the irrigation scheme inspired neighbouring communities, who are now exploring similar solutions for their own areas. Responding to this growing demand, the RM with support from LISP is implementing irrigation schemes in Gavar, Ojhkhola, Kusum, and Chhapragaudi areas of the same ward. This expansion reflects a scaling-up of locally proven solutions and demonstrates the RM's commitment to strengthening climate-resilient agriculture across the region, and it aligns with

the Municipality's periodic and sectoral plans. Farmers from these new intervention areas expressed their optimism about the changes underway: "In Ojkhakhola, we depend entirely on rain, and we could not even grow food for our families in the dry seasons. With the incoming irrigation support, we are hopeful that our fields will stay productive throughout the year. We want to grow vegetables and improve our livelihoods just like farmers in Sikta," Bartamani Kumal, Farmer, Ojhkhola, Rapti Sonari RM.

The Rapti Sonari Lift Irrigation Scheme stands as compelling demonstration of LISP's approach to turning an important and simple investment to increased opportunities, self-reliance, resilience, and sustainability. This scheme proves that well-planned infrastructure, combined with strong community engagement, and local government collaboration can deliver rapid and meaningful change.

Sandhikharka one house one tap systems

Bringing water to Ghochhakot, Sandikharka Municipality

Gacchakot ward no. 8 of Sandhikharka Municipality, Lumbini, Nepal, is home to an approximate 350 households with an estimated population of 800, a diverse community of Dalit, Janjati, Chhetri, and Brahmin families. Despite its richness in culture, the settlement remained overlooked when it came to basic services – water defined life here, but not in an easy way. Everyday women walked 30 minutes to an hour to fetch water from distant streams and springs or spent around NPR 500 each month buying water delivered through tanker tractors to meet their daily needs. This lack of reliable water access limited agriculture, vegetable farming, and livestock rearing; pushing many families to migrate. Poor hygiene and unsafe water sources led to frequent outbreaks of waterborne diseases. Despite repeated appeals to local, provincial, and federal authorities, the community's demands remained unmet for years.

In March 2025, during a settlement-level planning meeting facilitated by LISP in collaboration with Sandhikharka, the community along with local leaders prioritised a drinking water project. The proposal moved swiftly through the planning process, gaining approval at ward level and later from the municipal executive and assembly. The project is a priority project included in both Sandikharka Municipality's Periodic Development Plan and the Municipal Water Supply Sector Plan.

The construction began by May 2025 following signing of the agreement in April 2025, site survey and feasibility study including ; the municipality implemented it with LISP's technical assistance, and the community strongly engaged at every stage. The detailed survey and feasibility study, including water testing in a lab, ensured the design met local needs, and construction work through contractor modality created employment opportunities for local laborers, including women who received equal wages, which is not a common practice in rural communities. Several households share a single tap as many houses are located close to one another, in many cases two to three families live within the same household compound. In addition, some houses already had existing tap connections that the project integrated into the improved water supply systme. As a result, the project successfully provided reliable and safe drinking water access for 350 households despite of installing 115 new tap connections.

Under a "one house, one tap" approach, 115 taps were installed, directly benefiting all 350 households in the settlement, and a local school which has an enrollment of 55 students. For the first time, clean and safe drinking water became accessible at home in Gacchakot ward no.8.

Ms. Lila Bhusal, an executive member of the ward, reflects the community's optimism, "after years of hardship, the arrival of clean drinking water has brought renewed hope and opportunity. Beyond infrastructure, the project has strengthened the capacity of local representatives and community members." She further emphasised that the project achieved results that previously seemed unattainable.

Today, the change is transformative. Residents no longer spend hours collecting water, and household hygiene has improved significantly. The risk of waterborne diseases has decreased. After years of enduring severe drinking water challenges, the community experienced a renewed sense of hope and transformation. This significant milestone encouraged the residents to look beyond immediate needs and plan for future development, including expansion of agriculture, livestock rearing, poultry farming, plantation, and gardening activities.

The visible success of the initiative has also drawn the attention of neighboring communities, many of whom are now advocating to implement similar projects in their own settlements after witnessing the positive outcomes of LISP's initiative.

Ms. Lila Bhusal, Ward Executive Member

LISP is funded by the UK Government and implemented by the Government of Nepal with technical assistance from DT Global UK International Pvt Ltd, in partnership with CARE Nepal.

Use of AI Tools

Copilot AI has been used in preparing this report. All AI assisted content has been thoroughly reviewed, contextualised, and edited for accuracy and relevance to the programme.