Asset Factsheet

Shramsansar- A labour market Information System

Shramsansar (translates into World of Labor) (https://shramsansar.koshi.gov.np/) is an all-in-one Labour Market Information System (LMIS) developed and launched with the support of Swisscontact. Available both as a web portal and a mobile application, Shramsansar disseminates information about job and entrepreneurial opportunities. It facilitates increased interaction and information exchange among public and private labour market service providers, training providers, employers, and unemployed youths.

Developed in consultation with key actors of the labour market system in the Biratnagar-Industrial Corridor, Shramsansar addresses constraints and bottlenecks in the employment ecosystem that limit the integration of target groups into the labour force. An initial system and stakeholder analysis, along with scoping studies conducted by Swisscontact Nepal in the Biratnagar–Itahari corridor, highlighted the need for a local-level information system to bridge gaps

CONTEXT

Prior to project implementation, Job searches largely relied on informal networks, and many unemployed individuals were unaware of industry skill requirements, available training, and business startup resources. Both public and private employment service providers faced operational challenges, and there was a notable lack of skilled workers in local industries, which often relied on foreign labor.

Additionally, small businesses struggled with accessing comprehensive, updated information on policies and regulations, and there was a shortage of support services for business development and entrepreneurship. An LMIS centralized and streamlined labor market data, improved job matching, enhanced skill development, and supported economic growth by providing critical information and resources to all stakeholders.

DEVELOPMENT CHALLENGES
- Digitalisation
- Gender Mainstreaming
- Skills Development

STEP UP

Implemented by: Swisscontact, Nepal
Funded by: The Step Up project is financed by the Happel Foundation, among other donors. It is part of the Swisscontact Development Programme, which is co-financed by the Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation (SDC), Federal Department of Foreign Affairs FDFA.

SHORT DESCRIPTION

The Step Up project improves existing support services in the employment ecosystem and facilitates entrepreneurship and self-employment in thriving economic clusters.

COUNTRY/PROVINCE
Three municipalities of Koshi province: Biratnagar, Dubahi, Itahari.

IMPACT
- 11,000+ jobseeker have registered in the platform.
- 200 have found employment.
- 500+ have accessed training opportunities.
- 82 Training providers enrolled.
- 100+ Employers registered.
- 130 municipalities enrolled.

WHAT MAKES THE ASSET UNIQUE?

Shramsansar provides comprehensive, real-time data and analysis on employment trends, job vacancies, and workforce demographics, enabling informed decision-making for policymakers, employers, and job seekers. All other existing platforms focus on job matching only and are being operated by private sector.

Additionally, government ownership adds trust and credibility compared to privately run job portals.

PARTNERS

- Ministry of Social Development (MoSD), Koshi Province
- Employment Information Centre, MoSD
- Employment Service Centers (ESCs)
- Training Providers
- Industries, business associations
- BDS Providers

TARGET GROUPS

Unemployed youths from Koshi province actively seeking for employment.

POTENTIAL FOR REPLICATION

- 130 additional municipalities are already enrolled in the platform as of June 2024.
- Endorsement of LMIS implementation guideline has clearly defined roles and responsibilities of all the stakeholders.
- There is also increasing interest from other development agencies to replicate the intervention in Madhesh Province.

Pre-conditions for replication:
- Constitutional mandate for developing a Labor Market Information System.
- Alignment with provincial government priorities aimed at reducing unemployment, promoting skill development, and fostering entrepreneurship.

APPROACHES AND ACHIEVEMENTS

Approaches
- **Scoping study**: to understand the need of the target group.
- **User-Centered Design:** focusing on the needs of jobseekers, Employment Service Centers (ESCs), and service providers to ensure the platform is intuitive and accessible.
- **Collaboration with the Government**: aligning with national and local labor policies to ensure the platform supports public employment goals and services.
- **Pilot testing:** among 2500 jobseekers and 50 service providers to assess the platform's usability, user experience, and accessibility. The feedback were incorportated to refine the system.
- **Training**: providing training for end users (provincial government, local government, training providers, employers, BDS providers.
- **Promotional activities:** workshops, awareness campaigns, and media engagement to raise awareness.
- **Private Sector Engagement:** involving service providers early in the process to ensure that their needs are integrated into the platform's design.
- **Continuous updates and improvement:** continuous updates, incorporating user feedback to improve functionality, enhance user experience, and adapt to labor market changes.

Achievements
- Platform is now officially owned by Ministry of Social Development, Koshi Province.
- Garnering significant interest from the public sector, private sector, and beneficiaries, 130 municipalities, 11,000+ job seekers, 110 employers, 82 training providers, have registered with 200 individuals receiving jobs through the platfrom.
- The provincial government of Koshi province has allocated CHF 13,250 to promote and expand the platform.

LESSONS LEARNT

Stakeholder Engagement is Crucial: Engaging stakeholders from the initial phase of designing a Labor Market Information System (LMIS) is essential for its success. This early involvement allowed for the identification of diverse needs and requirements, built ownership and trust among stakeholders, ensured the system's relevance to local labour market dynamics, improved usability through user feedback, anticipated implementation challenges, and fostered collaboration across sectors. By integrating stakeholder insights from the start, the LMIS was tailored effectively to address specific labour market challenges, enhance user experience, and facilitate impactful outcomes for all involved parties.

The Importance of Government Ownership: A key lesson learned from the Shramsansar platform's success is the critical role of government ownership in ensuring the initiative's success and sustainability. The active involvement of provincial and municipal governments fostered a sense of responsibility and commitment to supporting the platform's ongoing operations. During the launch, government representatives emphasized their dedication to bridging the gap between job seekers and employment opportunities, enhancing the platform's credibility, and encouraging community engagement. This strong leadership was essential for driving the initiative forward, ensuring Shramsansar remains a vital resource for economic opportunities in the region.

Embracing Adaptability: A Strategic Approach to Platform Scaling: Initially, the platform was intended to be handed over to three municipalities, with less priority given to the provincial government. However, it soon became clear that a user level was needed to regulate municipalities. Additionally, partnering with the provincial government could facilitate the expansion of the platform to all 137 municipalities, aligning with the government's digitalization priorities and regulatory authority. Therefore, it is crucial to thoroughly analyze the scaling potential when selecting partners.

BENEFICIARY STORY

From Homemaker to Helping Hand: Rita's Journey to Employment:

Finding meaningful employment can be a daunting challenge, particularly for individuals who have been out of the workforce for an extended period or are seeking to reinvent themselves professionally. Rita Bhattarai, a resident of Biratnagar, has faced such a challenge. As a homemaker for nearly eight years, she devoted her time to managing her household and raising her family. However, when she decided to re-enter the workforce, she encountered significant barriers. Despite her persistent efforts, the traditional job-hunting methods—asking friends, family, and acquaintances for leads—yielded no opportunities.

Rita's situation is common for many women who have struggled to secure employment in a competitive job market after years of homemaking. The gap in her employment history coupled with limited access to reliable job information, made the task even more daunting.

Her breakthrough came when she attended an employment fair in Biratnagar, where she was introduced to Shramsansar, a Labour Market Information System (LMIS) that partners with local Employment Information Centres (EICs) to connect job seekers with employers. Given the platform's potential to reach a wider network of opportunities, Rita registered with Shramsansar. This decision marked a turning point in her journey.

Today, Rita has been employed for over a year, a feat she attributes to the assistance she received from Shramsansar and the EIC.

"I was staying home as a housewife, taking care of my family for almost eight years. I was looking for a job but could not find one. I had lost all hope, but after registering with Shramsansar, I was able to find this job, and I am grateful to Shramsansar for this," says Rita.

Rita Bhattarai, employed as a help staff at Neuro Hospital, Biratnagar (May I Help You?)

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