



Cooperative Education Report

Implementation Support to Bagmati River Basin Improvement Project

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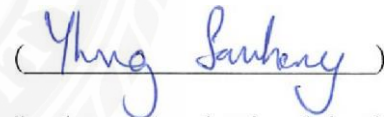
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Abstract

This cooperative report contains the information about four-month internship carried out at the project named 'Bagmati river basin improvement project'. The report contains pictures, information about the project, role of ADB and some recommendations. And also the work performed throughout the month from 16th August to 16th December. A study conducted in Finance and promotion of BRBIP. BRBIP conserves the river environment in the Kathmandu valley, which was finalized in the late 2016, under the Ministry of urban development. Learning about the account keeping and financial management system of the project was the core objective of this internship program. Upon the completion of the internship, it is found that the problem encountered during the program was resolved by means of self-learning and understanding the core of the problem and then via the guidance of supervisors, solving them. For the project to be completed on the time, key main key things should be focused that is persistence, efficiency and vision. The problem happened in this project should be solved immediately because in such government led projects reaching the budget target is the most important aspect. Without the aforementioned key factors, the project is not viable.

Keywords: ADB, Persistence, Efficiency, Vision

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IMPACT OF COVID

The continuing rise in positive tests and reported deaths caused by the new corona virus (COVID-19) in other countries has sparked significant alarm in Nepal. Due to the outbreak of this virus, Nepal is seeing the most abrupt and broad stoppage of economic activities. According to the Asian Development Bank, the emergence of this terrible disease will affect practically every sector of the Nepalese economy, slashing 0.13 percent of the country's GDP and displacing up to 15,880 people.

Tourism, commerce and manufacturing links, supply, and health are just a few of the industries that have already felt the effects. The whole service industries, particularly tourism, aviation, and hospitality, have been severely impacted by the outbreak. The country hoped to lure two million visitors with the launch of the Visit Nepal 2020 campaign in January, but the campaign was canceled because to the corona pandemic, shattering the hospitality and tourism industries.

Similarly, the current Bagmati River Basin Improvement Project has suffered numerous setbacks as a result of the pandemic, including transportation of construction materials being disrupted, contractors being forced to halt work during the strict lockdown period, and technical team and labor force mobilization being severely hampered. This led to overall completion of the project being delayed. Thus, overall due to this crisis, my whole internship period was online based which restrained me into learning so many tangible things. However, I hope to work on this project in the near future after this pandemic ends.

Abbreviations

ADB – Asian Development Bank

BRBIP – Bagmati River Basin Improvement project

DMF – design and monitoring framework

DOI – Department of Irrigation

DSS – decision support system

HPCIDBC – High Powered Committee for the Integrated Development of the Bagmati Civilization

IWRM – Integrated Water resources Management

MOF – Ministry of Forestry

MOI – Ministry of Irrigation

MOUD – Ministry of Urban Development

PIU – project implementation unit

PCMU – project coordination and management unit

RBO – river basin organization

TOR – terms of reference

VDC – village development committee

WECS – Water and Energy Commission Secretariat

Table of Contents

| | |
|--|----|
| Abstract..... | 3 |
| Acknowledgement..... | 4 |
| IMPACT OF COVID..... | 5 |
| Abbreviations | 6 |
| 1. Introduction..... | 9 |
| 1.1. Company Profile | 9 |
| SWOT ANALYSIS | 10 |
| 1.2. Organizational Structure | 10 |
| 1.3. Statement of the report..... | 11 |
| 1.4. Objectives of the study..... | 11 |
| Broad Objective..... | 11 |
| Specific Objective..... | 12 |
| 1.5. Scope of the study..... | 12 |
| 1.6. Limitations of the report | 13 |
| 2. Literature Review | 14 |
| 2.1. Degradation of Bagmati River..... | 14 |
| 2.2. Impact of Degrading Bagmati River on Civilization..... | 15 |
| 3. Methodology | 16 |
| 3.1. Roles and responsibilities | 16 |
| 3.2. Project details (Special assignments) | 17 |
| 4. Results and Discussion..... | 18 |
| 4.1. Contribution made during the internship | 18 |
| 4.2. Details of learning process and knowledge received..... | 19 |
| 5. Conclusion | 21 |
| 5.1. Recommendations | 21 |
| 5.2. Self-assessment as future professional | 22 |
| 5.3. Comparison of practical learning vs. theory | 23 |
| Bibliography | 24 |
| Annex..... | 25 |
| Bio Data..... | 28 |

Table of Figures

Figure 1. SWOT Analysis.....10

Figure 2: Organization Structure.....10

Figure 3: Online meeting.....25

Figure 4. Vision of Thapathali26

Figure 5. Vision of Teku.....27

Figure 6. Bagmati from Thapathali.....27



1. Introduction

1.1. Company Profile

For the people of Nepal, the Bagmati River Basin (BRB) has significant cultural and economic significance. The Bagmati River's water is regarded sacred, and it is used for cultural and religious events at the river's numerous notable temples. The river flows through Kathmandu Valley, the country's administrative and commercial hub as well as Nepal's tourism gateway. The river's upper basin provides the majority of the city's drinking water, while the upper and middle basins generate electricity and the bottom basin is used for large-scale agriculture.

The Nepalese government has long worked to remedy the BRB's deterioration.

The High-Powered Committee for Integrated Development of the Bagmati Civilization (HPCIDBC) was established in the 1990s to enhance river management by embracing the concepts of integrated water resource management. The government's approval of the Bagmati Action Plan in 2009 laid the groundwork for the Asian Development Bank's (ADB) engagement in the BRB upgrading initiative.

The government and MOUD have guaranteed ADB that the project would be implemented in accordance with all applicable ADB rules, including those relating to anticorruption, safeguards, gender, procurement, consultancy services, and disbursement, as detailed in the loan papers. The government and MOUD have committed to specific project agreements with ADB, which are set forth in the loan agreement

The present Bagmati River Basin Improvement Project (BRBIP) aided in the formulation of a new Federal Integrated Water Resources Policy, which was approved in late 2018 under the Ministry of Urban Development (MOUD). Civil society groups were developed and have been active partners in the conservation of portions of the upper Bagmati River in the Kathmandu Valley as part of the present initiative, the Bagmati River Basin Improvement Project (BRBIP).

The following impact is connected with the project:

VISION: a clean, green, and healthy Bagmati River system that is full of life and valued by all.

The project will have the following outcome: river health and flood management improved.

SWOT ANALYSIS

| | |
|---|---|
| <p>Strengths:</p> <p>Availability of budget</p> <p>International contractors</p> <p>Link with well renowned consultancy firm</p> | <p>Weaknesses:</p> <p>Late completion of works</p> <p>Target not met</p> <p>Inadequate mobilization of equipment</p> |
| <p>Opportunities:</p> <p>Recognition</p> | <p>Threats:</p> <p>Political instability</p> <p>Local residents obstructing the river beautification plan</p> |

Figure 1. SWOT Analysis

1.2. Organizational Structure

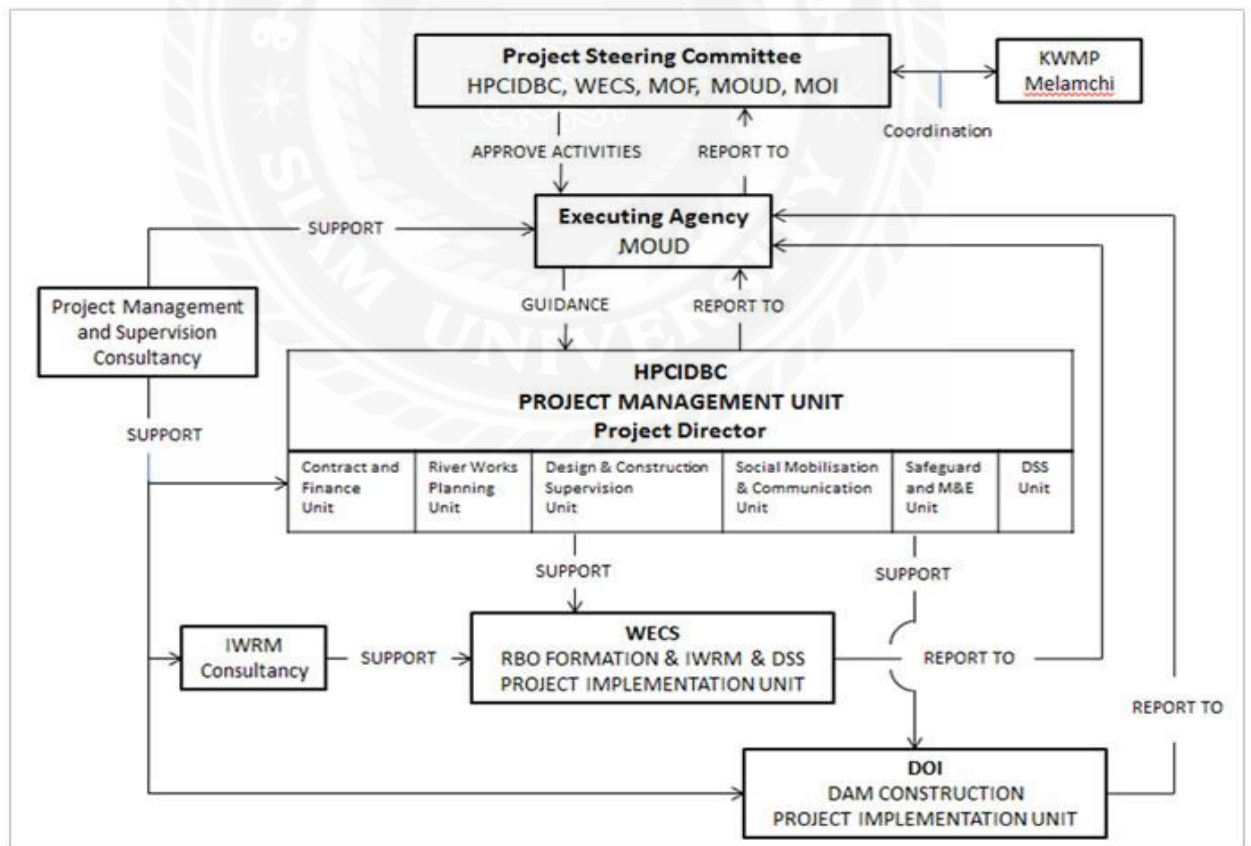


Figure 2: Organization Structure

I, as an intern worked under the Project Management Unit that is river works planning unit. However, my supervisor introduced a little about other units as well. The Water and Energy Commission Secretariat (WECS) and the Department of Irrigation (DOI) will each have their own Project Implementation Units (PIUs) within the project implementation framework. The Project Coordination and management unit (PCMU) and PIU of DOI will be placed at High Powered Committee for the Integrated Development of the Bagmati Civilization (HPCIDBC), while the WECS PIU will be in WECS office. Under the direction of the PCMU, each executing agency will be responsible for managing its procurements and payments. All formal interactions with the ADB (requests for payment, procurement approvals, etc.) must go through the PCMU and the Project Director. The PIU heads will report to their immediate supervisors in their respective companies, while keeping the PCMU's Project Director up to date. The PCMU will receive quarterly reports from each PIU, which will be compiled into a project quarterly report and delivered to ADB. Each PIU head will get an annual performance review from the Project Director.

1.3. Statement of the report

The initiative will complement ongoing efforts by the Nepalese government and civil society to enhance water management and river environment in the Bagmati River Basin (BRB). The Project will engage in developing a river basin organization with appropriate competence and decision support systems for integrated water resource management (IWRM). To enhance the river ecosystem, it will support the construction of upstream water storage, riverfront beautification, and community initiatives in the Kathmandu Valley. Furthermore, the Bagmati River Basin Improvement Project, which is now underway, will improve river health and flood management in the BRB.

The current project, which involves (i) the unification of water management institutions, (ii) the expansion of riverside beautification works, (iii) community mobilization, and (iv) the design, building, and operation of a wastewater treatment plant, requires more money. The extra funding is also needed to address cost overruns on the present project.

1.4. Objectives of the study

The objectives of my internship are enlisted below:

Broad Objective:

The broad objective of the report is to fulfill the requirement of the course designed by the SAIM University and Kathmandu College of management. Every student is required

to complete their internship for 3 and half month in a well-reputed organization after completing the 1st year. After internship period every student had to submit the report containing their work experience and about the organization.

Specific Objective

1. To Learn about the account keeping and financial management system of the project
2. To understand ADB's loan and grant utilization status of the project
3. To the understand the design and monitoring framework(DMF), the performance indicators and progress made against each of the indicators
4. To engage in the Bagmati River Basin Youth Program

1.5.Scope of the study

This report is based on the study conducted on the project called Bagmati River Basin Improvement Project. This report covers the initiative behind the project activities which include roles and involvements of ADB and MOUD as well as the further risks and mitigations of the project and some accounting work. This report is an attempt to show how BRBIP conduct their activities and meetings with different contracting agents and financiers. In this attempt, I tried to apply my theoretical knowledge which I had got from my college to the real corporate world. Due to which I got to know about the match and difference between theoretical and practical knowledge. Here this project aims to understand the ongoing effort of Government of Nepal as well as the project's establishment, organizational structure, strategies that have been used by BRBIP, also to know about the advantages and impacts of this project on the civilization of Bagmati corridors. . Basically, this report presents a short description of the project. Whereas, some topic related to this ADB funding is also mentioned below inside different topics. This report includes information and concept about improving the Bagmati basin in Nepal and scope for a better environment for a new generation. Special assignment assigned to interns as well as some suggestions and recommendation for the project is also mentioned in this report.

1.6.Limitations of the report

In the tenure of my internship, there were some challenges that I faced as an intern during the first few weeks. The challenges are enlisted below:

1. Many technical terms that I found quite difficult to understand while reviewing the documents of the project. However, with many reports being studied I was able to understand quite a few abbreviations.
2. During my first days of internship, I was facing socializing struggles. Trying to know the organizational culture was quite a challenge for me initially. By the time, I didn't find it as an issue as I was engaging in a lot of online meetings directly facing my teammates. My supervisor played a very crucial role in making me understand what the project holds currently and about its target.
3. Too much information came at such a velocity that before even processing one part came the other as I needed to review lots of progress reports and TORs.
4. Much information was not disclosed due to the project's policy. And for the better understanding, short time limit and the virtual program due to the pandemic were my biggest limitations.

2. Literature Review

A literature review is an assessment report of information which is found in the literature related to the certain selected area of study. Here it is said that the review should be able to describe summaries, appraise and simplify the literature. It should give a theoretical base for the research and help the writer determine the essence of the research. Basically, the main aim of the literature review is to critically evaluate the concept relating to the topic under analysis.

2.1.Degradation of Bagmati River

This article is written by Madison Wrobley in the magazine of The Times Nepal. The article states that 'Across South Asia, rivers are regarded as sacred and are often worshipped as gods and goddesses, revered for the way they link heaven and earth. Some believe the rivers are homes to the divine, while others pray to the life-giving power inherent in the water. As a result, rivers have always played an important part in the everyday lives of the people who live along their banks.' She claims that the communal pilgrimage along the rivers facilitated contact with the holy river's sacredness, but that due to the water's degraded quality, even the most devout worshippers no longer want to make that connection. In some places, worship is not possible due to the accumulation of solid waste on the banks.

This is especially true in Kathmandu, where the history of life in the valley is inextricably linked to the rivers that define the terrain, to the point that its citizens are sometimes referred to as members of the "Bagmati Civilization." While river water is regarded the most sacred in Hinduism, any running water is considered clean. When this phase of urban expansion began in the 1980s, sewer and storm water lines were purposefully routed to the Bagmati River in the hopes of washing away any impurities. Although the Bagmati naturally suffers huge swings in flow rates since it is a seasonal, monsoon-fed river, the river's diluting capacity is currently so poor that it does not matter what season it is in. In many places in Kathmandu Valley, the river is considered dead, meaning it can no longer support biodiversity. Many say that with the death of the Bagmati, the Bagmati Civilization has also been lost.

To summarize, despite the Bagmati's ecological and spiritual demise, the rivers have become focal places for infrastructural expansion in the name of modernisation. The BRBIP is now using the building of walled river corridors as the principal solution to

control floods in the urban centre. These corridors are also meant to help improve the flow of traffic and to reduce congestion in other parts of the city.

2.2. Impact of Degrading Bagmati River on Civilization

The article is written by Jinesh Sindurakar in the Himalayan Times. The uncontrolled growth of our nation is a key contributor to the environmental damage that we see all throughout. Anyone possessing a plot of land near the city may cut it up into little pieces and sell them for a profit. Basic services such as sanitation, water supply, road access, power, and communications receive little attention. In the past, there were many wells and stone waterspouts across the Kathmandu Valley, giving a constant supply of water to the locals. However, due to unforeseen building near the water conduits, water delivery has been disrupted and has completely ceased flowing. Every time the inhabitants of the landfill cause a disturbance, heaps of waste accumulate on the streets of Kathmandu. The health and social problems faced by the local people of the landfill site are another side of the story, to which the Kathmandu Metropolitan City always listens but solves only temporarily.

The Bagmati and Bishnumati rivers face a similar plight.

To take advantage of the monsoon's natural flow changes, early towns in the valley were concentrated on hilltops with farms below on the river floodplains. Despite the fact that rivers were used for agricultural purposes, they were seen as more than just natural economic assets. These relationships are now being broken as a result of pollution and modernization concepts that rely on the exploitation of natural resources and places. But what happens when the inhabitants of Bagmati Civilisation can no longer stand on the banks of their precious river?

Shiv Kumar Basnet, the Executive Director of the Water Resource, Research, and Development Centre at the Ministry of Energy, Water Resources and Irrigation says that encroachment on the rivers and settlement in the rivers' right-of-way has made it so that normal flooding events now cause property damage and seem even more devastating. He wondered about one thing: "Can modernisation exist without culture?" Cities like Kathmandu must preserve centuries-old cultural rites and rituals associated with rivers in order to grow in harmony with natural ecological systems. These rites and rituals incorporate knowledge of both spiritual beliefs and sustainable land-use practices accumulated over thousands of years.

3. Methodology

The study materials in this report have been collected from two sources:

- I. Primary Sources: Direct observation and practical work, Direct conversation with the team of the project and my supervisor
- II. Secondary Sources: Internet and Websites, Project documents

3.1.Roles and responsibilities

Below mentioned includes all the roles and responsibilities of the activities I had to do during my internship period:

| | |
|----------------|---------------------------------------|
| Job Title | Intern |
| Role | Implementation support to the project |
| Duration | 16 weeks |
| Job supervisor | Mr. Ram Babu Prasad |

Responsibilities:

1. Read project materials such as the project administration manual, quarterly project reports, project tri-partite review meeting materials, and consulting firms' and individual consultants' terms of reference.
2. Virtually attended meetings with project officials, including the project's account officer.
3. Examined the project's loan and grant usage status.
4. Examined the project's design and monitoring framework (DMF) and the progress achieved against it.
5. Assisting my supervisor and other officials in preparing for a project review meeting with the Ministry of Urban Development (MOUD) and the Asian Development Bank (ADB)
6. Assisting the project's account officer in preparing a summary financial status report for the project review meeting.
7. Participated in the Bagmati River Basin Youth Program's "A Cross-Generational Consultation on Bagmati and Youth Opportunity" conference as a volunteer.

8. Contributed to the feasibility assessment and design of additional riverbank improvements.

3.2. Project details (Special assignments)

Everything in my Internship duration was very new for me. Thus every single tasks given as aforementioned excited me into learning some more. However, the most special assignment was to attend the 6 week program called the Bagmati River Basin Youth program. I volunteered in conducting “A Cross-generational Consultation on Bagmati and Youth opportunity” meeting, as a part of the Bagmati River Basin Youth Program and engaged in this six-week program. Bagmati Youth Campaign is a youth led approach to build the capacity of the youths to make the Bagmati River healthy and sustainable. It is an initiative created by Project Everyone in partnership with UNICEF to teach young people about the river basin management. I was able to attend all the meetings during this period.

The Bagmati River Basin Youth Program’s meeting highly interactive, that arranged key stakeholders and young people to demonstrate and promote the benefits of cross-generational meaningful youth engagement. I personally found the program very fruitful as it was focusing on how youth can collaborate and help in fulfilling the future action plans for the betterment of the Bagmati river. I got the opportunity to aware youth about the activities that has been done in Bagmati river and the future plan, which helped me boost my communication skills during the meeting. I also developed leadership skills by guiding them and giving them an insight on how youths can engage/collaborate for the betterment of the Bagmati river based on the progress status presented in last progress review meeting with ADB. By engaging in the Bagmati Youth Campaign meeting along with more than 250 participants I got the chance to interact with so many youths and jot down their point of views. During the meeting we got to learn about the sustainable lifestyles to be adopted by the youths for better Bagmati river management that is 3R(Reduce, Reuse, Recycle).

4. Results and Discussion

4.1. Contribution made during the internship

With respect to the assigned roles and responsibilities, I was able to successfully make the following contributions during the internship:

1. I was able to provide BRBIP with management support as needed, such as assisting in the organization of fortnightly meetings with each of the contractors to discuss all issues raised and ways to resolve them, and coordinating with the Project Director and others, primarily HPCIDBC engineers and architects, as needed..
2. I provided my technical skills I learned in my collage to design and layout PowerPoint presentation and formatting the word file for the meeting. Two meetings were organized first with MOUD on 7 October and second among ADB, MOUD and project.
3. I was able to complete my assigned roles of working on the meeting agenda with the team, engaged in preparing the PowerPoint presentation for the meeting, involved during the interactive sessions of the Bagmati River Basin Youth Program and also prepared the online meeting notes as a summary.
4. Aided in the feasibility research and design of future riverbank improvement projects that would be selected and implemented.
5. As part of my study, I supplied research on the project's potential hazards and mitigation strategies. The most significant risks are I the lack of a complete internal audit function, (ii) insufficient variance analysis in financial and physical objectives, and (iii) financial management personnel turnover during implementation. The following measures will be taken to mitigate these risks: (i) a financial management specialist will be hired to provide support and capacity building to the project (ii) The project's financial management employees shall receive regular training on ADB's financial management processes and regulations., (iii) the quarterly and annual financial reporting will be improved, and (iv) the external audit's terms of reference will be strengthened in exploring the project's internal control framework.

4.2.Details of learning process and knowledge received

On a personal level, the internship as a whole was quite beneficial to me. In the first two weeks of my internship, my major responsibility was to serve as an introductory training for the project, learning about the present state of the project and its goals. I was able to complete the prescribed progress report and other documentation on time, which helped me better understand the project. It's been a fascinating few weeks for me to learn about the project's accounting and financial management system, which is a cash-based accounting system. The project has a dollar advance account with Nepal Rastra Bank, where the ADB reimburses the loan and grant amounts on a regular basis. It was fascinating to examine the ADB's loan and grant use structure.

It was my first-time hearing about DMF, which summarizes a project's overall goals using a variety of performance metrics. I discovered that the DMF gives a great foundation for a project to evaluate its own progress against each of these metrics.

My supervisor included me in the meeting preparation process, which provided me an understanding of how such a meeting is run. I discovered that the project's progress is reported to MOUD and ADB on a quarterly basis. Despite the fact that I am a learner, this provided me the chance to be a part of it, even if my involvement was restricted to meeting preparation. I also learnt how to create an s-curve to display the project's quarterly financial progress. As part of the Bagmati River Basin Youth Program, I offered to volunteer in a "Cross-generational Consultation on Bagmati and Youth Opportunity" meeting and participated in this six-week program. Bagmati Youth Campaign is a young-led initiative aimed at increasing youth ability to keep the Bagmati River healthy and sustainable. It is a project led by Project Everyone in collaboration with UNICEF that aims to educate young people about river basin management. During this time, I was able to attend all of the meetings.

The Bagmati River Basin Youth Program conference was very participatory and seemed like a one-on-one interview session that arranged key stakeholders and young people to demonstrate and promote the benefits of cross-generational meaningful youth engagement. I found the workshop to be extremely beneficial since it focused on how youngsters may contribute and assist in the implementation of future action plans for the development of the Bagmati River. I had the chance to inform young people about the actions that have taken place in the Bagmati River and the future plan, which helped me improve my

communication skills throughout the meeting. Based on the development status reported in the previous progress review conference with ADB, I also built leadership skills by mentoring them and providing them with an understanding of how adolescents may engage/collaborate for the benefit of the Bagmati River.



5. Conclusion

Bagmati River Basin Improvement Project has the vision of “a clean, green and healthy river system that is full of life and valued by all” and provides a long list of interventions that collectively aim to restore and conserve the river environment in the valley. Some of these interventions are already being implemented by the High Powered Committee for the Integrated Development of the Bagmati Civilization (HPCIDBC), however many of the plan suggestions have yet to be implemented owing to a lack of ability and money. Several ADB-funded initiatives have also been implemented by the government to solve drinking water shortage and enhance wastewater management in the Kathmandu Valley.

As an intern on this critical project, I gained in-depth understanding of the project's present performance, the role of the Asian Development Bank, and how the project is conducted. The present project's performance is deemed adequate. For the previous 12 months, the present project has been rated on track, with contract awards and disbursement predictions exceeding expectations. During this period my evaluation skills got sharpened and I did put some major issues or room for improvement further to my team.

5.1. Recommendations

I realized that Civil society groups must be reinforced and their operations expanded to include other parts of the river. Natural-based solutions have been applied in beautification projects, which have revived citizens' enthusiasm for the Bagmati River, however these projects only cover roughly half of the metropolitan area. Expanding the project's scope to encompass additional culturally significant river segments, as well as repairing riverbank historical structures, would have a huge impact. These ancient structures, which were extensively damaged after the 2015 earthquakes, are linked to the river and have considerable cultural significance for Kathmandu residents. The present project will boost river water availability by completing upstream water storage, allowing planned releases of water during the dry season, but further work is needed to catch and treat polluted water to enhance water quality for reuse. A method for flood forecasting and early warning has been created, but more end-user training activities are needed to enhance communities' response to flood warnings.

The need to expand the scope of the existing project was foreseen, and feasibility studies and detailed design preparation were done as part of the present project for this purpose, where I had the chance to participate in and assist with the feasibility study.

Not only that, but as previously indicated, I was able to contribute to this project in a variety of ways. Despite the difficulties encountered, as previously said, the initiative was crucial in assisting me in comprehending the underlying relevance of our cultural values and how adolescents may preserve them for the sake of society. This internship also forced me to reconsider my own strengths and limitations, allowing me to refine my strengths even more and transform my deficiencies into assets. I was able to grasp the concept that opportunities and possibilities abound all around us. Communication, networking, multitasking, and social skills, all of which are essential of a future professional, are somewhat hindered in me and have been strengthened during my internship.

5.2. Self-assessment as future professional

For the students like us, an internship is one of the great opportunities to apply theoretical knowledge in the practical world which will surely be fruitful in our near future. These internship programs help the intern to adjust to a new environment and cope with new peoples which will be very helpful for the intern to improve their communication skills. By this internship program, I was able to know more about the cultural values of our country and made me feel good as I was working for something that contributes to the society which I am interested and thought about working in the near future.

By working in this company it had helped me to improve my communication skill and taught me more about real working environment in a project. Not only this had I got to know more about the ongoing funding processes for Bagmati improvement in Nepal as well. While working there; I got to know how hard is it to handle the work in real life and how important record keeping and accounting are to the company. As I got to know more about this project I can conclude that in case of Nepal there is a resource but it is lacking skilled manpower as well as new ideas. If youth and creativity come together in this field then there would be nothing to that will able to stop you from having a beautiful eco friendly modernization as well as preserved cultural values for our new generations.

Lastly, I got the chance to access my strengths as well as weaknesses for the real corporate world and I definitely see myself excel in all my qualities for being a better professional in this dynamic environment.

5.3. Comparison of practical learning vs. theory

According to my internship experience, I have previously worked as an intern in a variety of sectors. And, based on these experiences, I can claim that interning has aided me in better understanding the environment and the actual world of business. KCM and SIAM have taught me a lot, and I was able to do well in my internship and in the real world because of that theoretical knowledge. Theoretical knowledge has molded me in such a manner that I am able to change my behavior in the real world. We were taught numerous definitions and concepts in college concerning many topics such as economics, marketing, finance, consumer behavior, and so on. A thorough understanding of these disciplines was critical in the real world. We had to learn definitions by heart in college on occasion, and even in an exam. However, in real-world definitions, the meaning and actual notion were more significant. In this era, the internet has become one of our greatest allies, and we used to utilize it to look up definitions for various keywords and obtain immediate results. In this regard, the KCM method of instruction has aided me in a variety of ways. KCM has always trained us by presenting us with various tasks. I was able to manage the tasks, research, and internships that were allocated to me by the organization because of those tasks, research, and internships. As a result, for a student to enter the corporate sector, both practical and theoretical knowledge is critical. Both types of information aid in improving a person's performance. Theoretical knowledge is usually beneficial in learning more about a phrase or topic, whereas, practical knowledge shows the reality of life.

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Annex

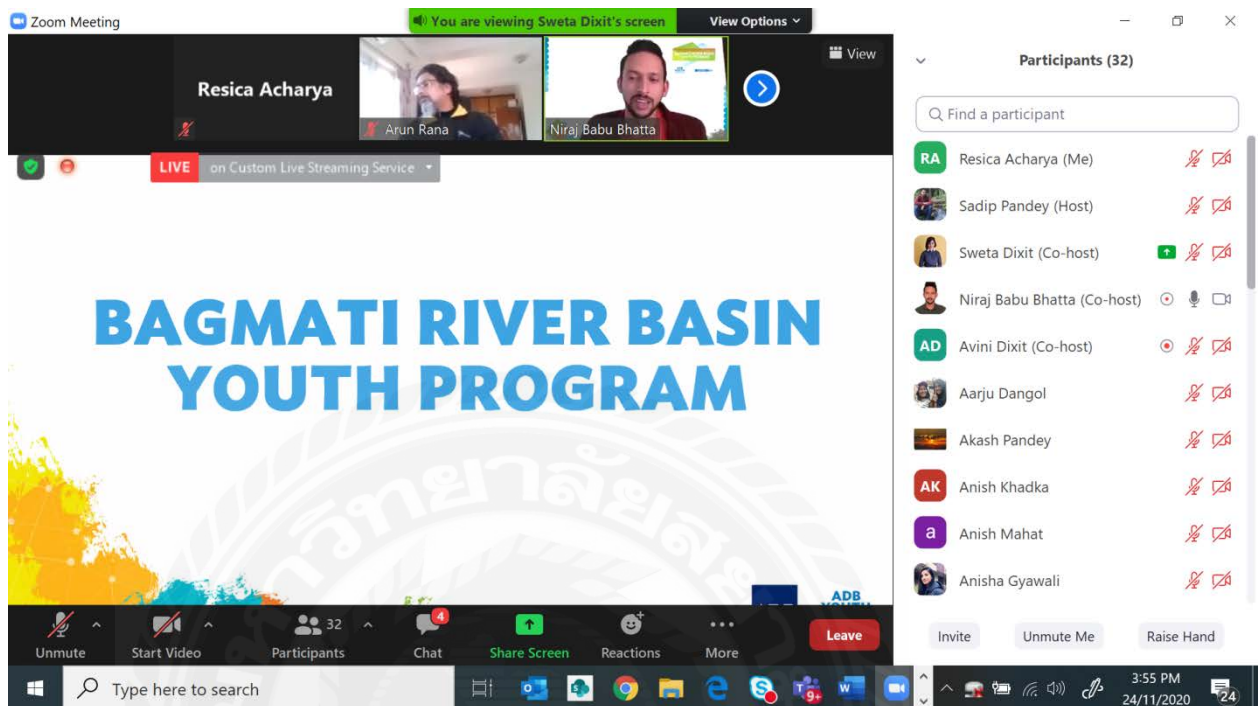


Figure 3: Online meeting

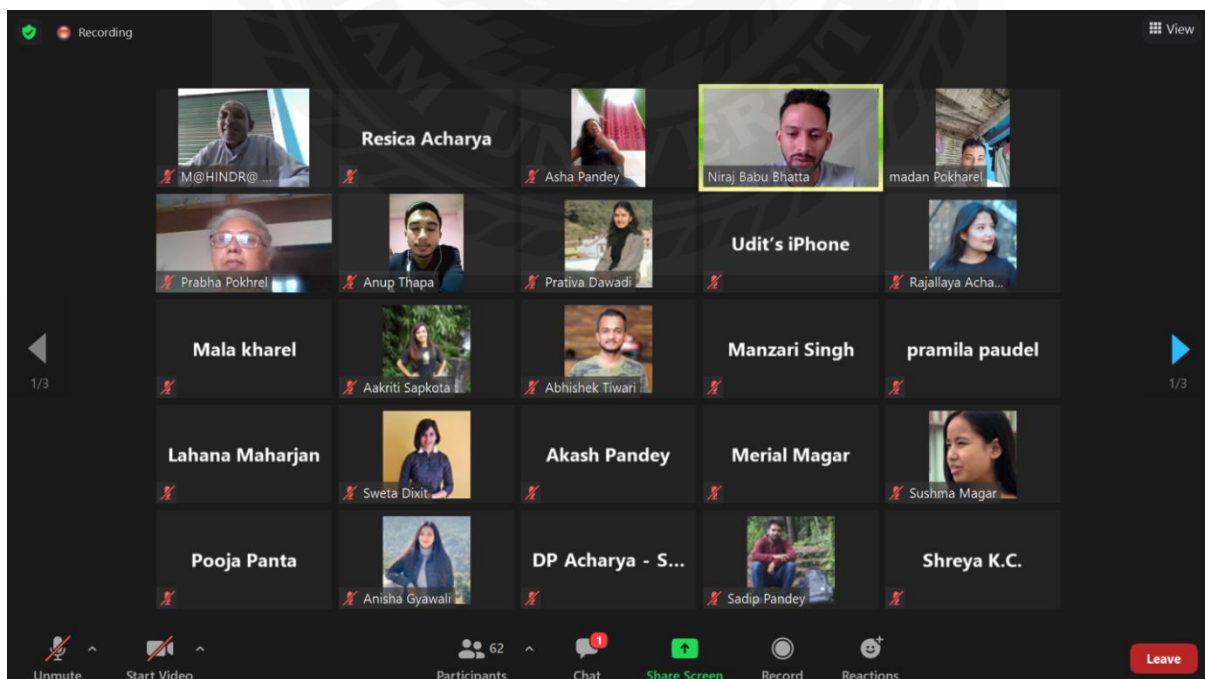


Figure 6: Online meeting

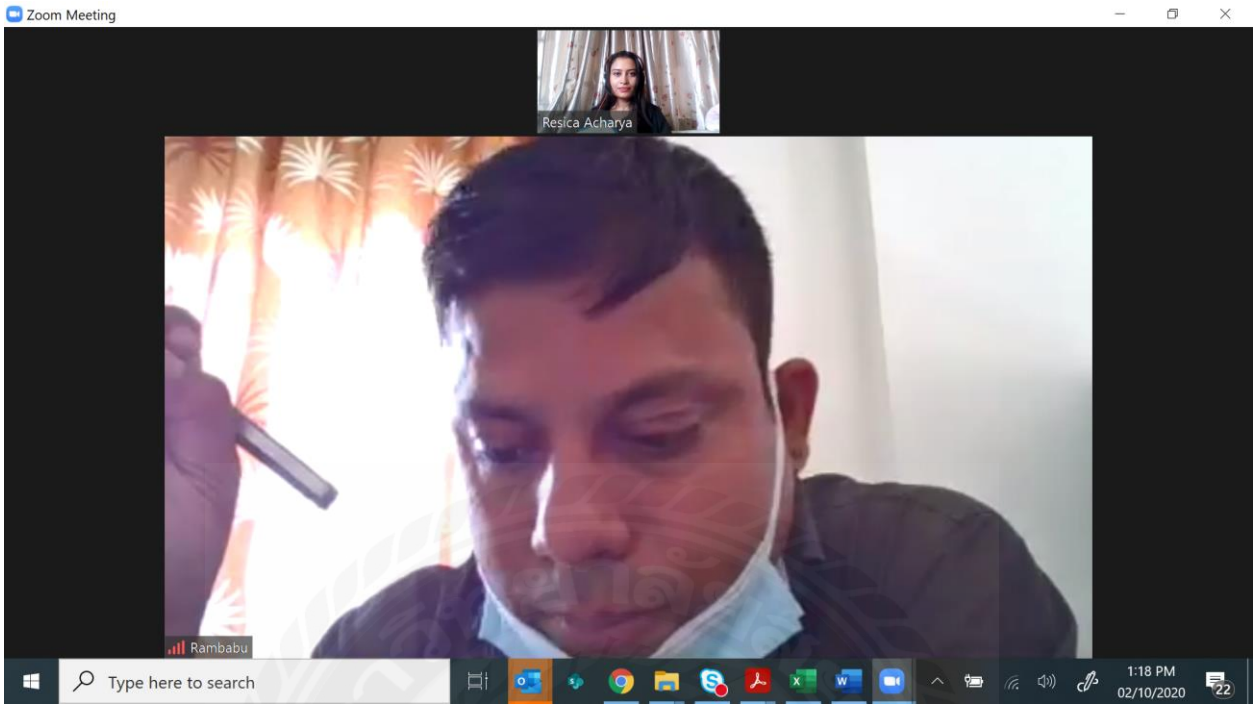


Figure7: Meeting with Supervisor

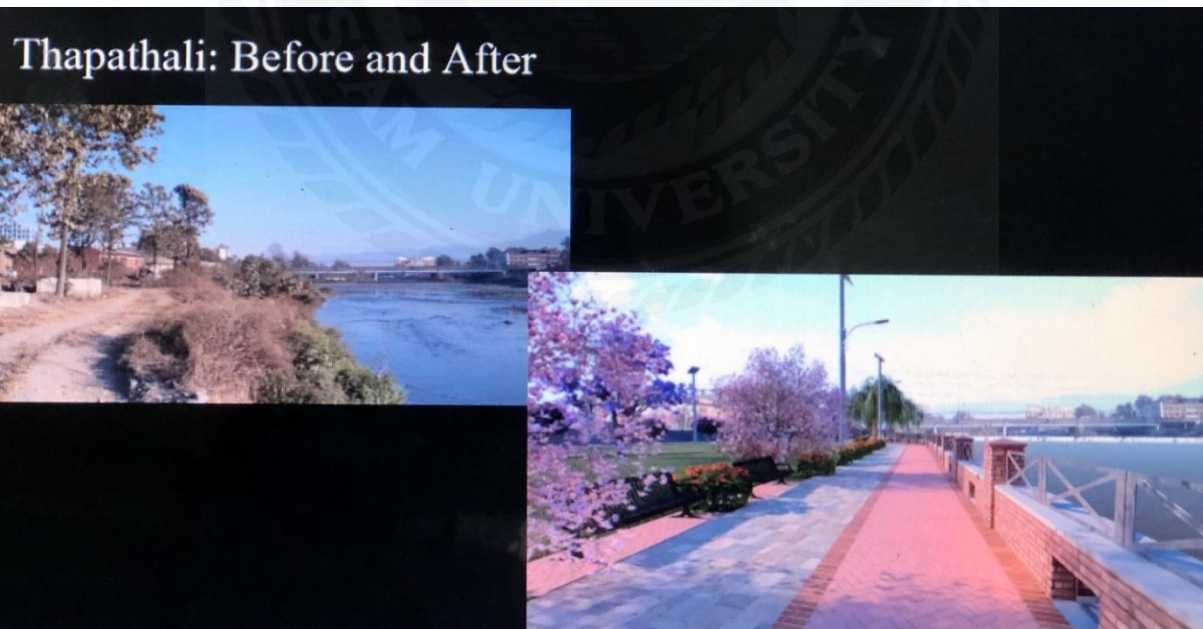


Figure 4. Vision of Thapathali

Teku Doban: Before and After

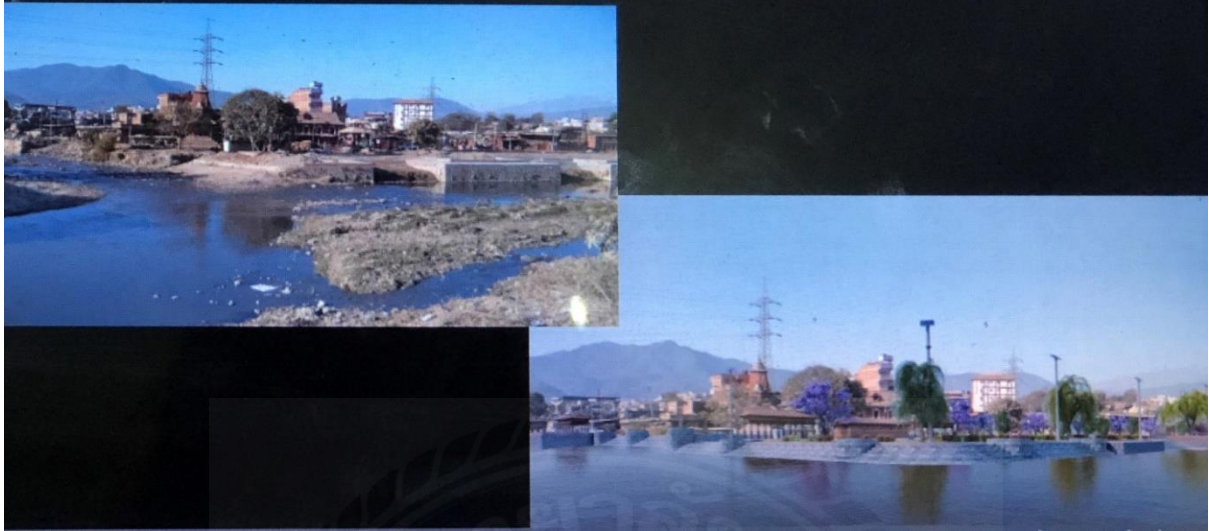


Figure 5. Vision of Teku

Bagmati River from the Thapathali Bridge



Figure 6. Bagmati from Thapathali

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