



Cooperative Education Report

"Managing expansion modalities and profile building for projects at Industry and Trade Solutions"

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Title: Managing expansion modalities and profile building for projects at Industry and Trade Solutions

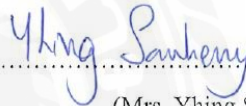
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Abstract

This cooperative report entitled “Managing expansion modalities and profile building for projects at Industry and Trade Solutions” is a report with the aim of studying how a project developer handles and manages different projects in real life. Objectives of the study include i) To experience the real working scenario of the business organization, ii) To get an insight about the operation of agro-tourism projects in Nepal, iii) To acquire knowledge about the profile building procedure and contents for the development of new websites. Industry and Trade Solutions is a portfolio management company. This report includes the roles and responsibilities carried out as an intern in the Project Identification Department at ITS. I was assigned to work on one of the most recent projects ‘Golden Agro Industry Pvt. Ltd’, where I was able to experience the functionality of an agro-tourism industry and the process of company formulation. The report, further, incorporates the problems encountered during the internship period and learning and knowledge gained and concludes with my self-assessment of the internship program and recommendations for the company. Upon the completion of this internship, it was found that the holistic development of an organization was largely dependent on the proper communication and coordination of the employees who work towards achieving common goals. This industry in Nepal has huge prospects for development and career possibilities for management graduates.

Keywords: Agro-tourism Industry, Profile building, Projects

Acknowledgement

The internship opportunity I had with Industry and Trade Solutions was a great chance for learning and professional development. Therefore, I consider myself as a very lucky individual as I was provided with an opportunity to be a part of it. I am grateful for having a chance to meet all the professionals who led me through this internship period.

I express my gratitude towards my job supervisor for taking useful decisions and giving necessary advice and guidance and arranging all facilities to make this internship period easier. I choose this moment to acknowledge the contribution of my supervisor and other coworkers at the company gratefully.

I would also like to prolong my gratitude towards Siam University and Kathmandu College of Management for including such internship programs in the curriculum. I am extremely grateful to my academic supervisors Mrs. Yhing Sawheny and Mr. Sitaram Dhakal for the necessary guidance and valuable suggestions while preparing this internship report. I perceive this opportunity as a big milestone in my career development. I will strive to use gained skills and knowledge in the best possible way, and I will continue to work on their improvement, in order to attain desired career goals.

Yours sincerely,

Kamana Saud

How has Covid-19 affected this organization and the internship?

While having serious implications for people's health, COVID-19 has also significantly affected businesses and the economies throughout the world. COVID-19 has created situations that have pushed organizations to rethink and modify their strategies and operation processes to help them stabilize in the new environment.

The Government of Nepal imposed a lockdown starting March 24 as a precautionary measure for COVID-19. The pandemic situation cost every student interning during this time a valuable time, which would have otherwise been utilized in learning and understanding the professional working environment better. However, working from home, the new normal environment created by the pandemic, was a new learning for me.

The major struggle faced by the company, Industry and Trade Solutions, in this period was managing workforce and clients. The agro-tourism project I was involved with at the company was affected in its day-to-day operation since the field employees couldn't perform their responsibilities. My work at the company was mostly done from home during the initial stage of the internship. Even after the lockdown was lifted, contacting designers and other agents was mostly online.

Contents

Abstract.....	3
Acknowledgement.....	4
How has Covid-19 affected this organization and the internship?.....	5
Chapter 1: Introduction	8
1.1 Company Profile	8
1.1.1 Mission of ITS	8
1.1.2 Vision of ITS	8
1.1.3 Objectives of ITS	8
1.1.4 Services Offered	9
1.2 Organizational Structure of ITS	9
1.3 Projects Handled	10
1.4 Intention and Motivation to choose the company as Co-op Studies Workplace	10
1.5 Strategic Analysis of ITS	11
1.6 Objective of the study:	11
1.7 Methodology of the Study	12
Chapter 2: Internship Activities	13
2.1 Job Description	13
2.2 Job responsibilities and contributions in the company	13
2.3 Activities in coordinating with other co-workers.....	16
Chapter 3: Identification of Problems Encountered During the Internship	17
3.1 Problems encountered during internship.....	17
3.2 Indicate how you solved the problems.....	18
3.3 Recommendations to the company	18
3.4 Applying the knowledge from coursework to real working situations	18
Chapter 4: Learning Process	20
4.1 Contributions made during the internship.....	20
4.2 Details of the related learning process or new knowledge obtained	20
Chapter 5: Conclusion	22
5.1 Self-assessment as a professional	22
5.2 Recommendations for the company regarding co-op work	23
Bibliography.....	24
Annexure.....	25

Table of Figures

<i>Figure 1. Organizational structure of ITS</i>	9
<i>Figure 2. Job Process for Service Chart Design</i>	13
<i>Figure 3. Job Process for Profile Building</i>	14



Chapter 1: Introduction

1.1 Company Profile

Industry and Trade Solutions Pvt. Ltd (hereafter referred to as ITS) is a private limited company led by various business related professional consultants to get the business ahead based in Lalitpur, Nepal. ITS has their dexterous team (*Lawyers, Engineers, Environment Specialist, Media Professionals, Researchers and Financial Advisors*), as their strength. ITS team has a well-established expertise in their discipline with the adoption of latest and updated methodologies. With the cooperative and integrated team approach, ITS has been maintaining its punctuality in its duties. The company has been collaborating with different institutions/organizations to enhance and strengthen its capacities. In 2000, the company started advisory service to the business group in the area of law; gradually they encouraged and developed themselves as a project developer. At present, the company has a team of professionals in the area of economic development. ITS started the cross-border consultancy services for foreigners in the area of investment and trade from 2010. Since the establishment, they have developed many projects involving foreign investment and local investment in Nepal. The team excels in providing services such as feasibility study, legal structure design, project modality and market research as well.

1.1.1 Mission of ITS

Setting a borderless global business and developing business leaders for a sustainable global society

1.1.2 Vision of ITS

Share Information for deeper knowledge, to improve business network and for wellbeing of business environment in Nepal

1.1.3 Objectives of ITS

Service excellence and quality is the main theme of the organization. The company aims to balance standardization and personalization when providing services for both the efficiency of the organization and satisfaction of the clients.

1.1.4 Services Offered

The major services offered by ITS include:

- Project Identification
- Financial Advice
- Legal Registration
- Specific Licensing
- Good Governance
- Tax Planning
- Intellectual Property Reserve
- Arbitration
- Pre-Operating Management
- Legal Audit

1.2 Organizational Structure of ITS

Organizational structure helps determine the roles, power and responsibilities among the employees and how information flows between different levels of management.



Figure 1. Organizational structure of ITS

The organizational structure of ITS is quite hierarchical. Whenever a project comes to ITS, the manager usually sets a team of certain employees from each department and the team is then responsible to handle the whereabouts of the said project from document preparation to company registration to media work.

1.3 Projects Handled

ITS has previously managed many projects in the field of agro-tourism, market research, feasibility and licensing. The major project currently being handled by ITS is Golden Agro Industry Pvt. Ltd. It is a project established for integrated agriculture activities that started its operation in 2012 A.D. Golden Agro Industry is located 70 KM far from Kathmandu in Kavrepalanchok, Nepal where a total of 2500 ropani land area has been used for farming. The project started the fruits & coffee farming as their first operation. Additional 22,000 different fruits, tea and herbal plantations are in progress on site. Agro tourism activities conducted at Golden Agro Industry includes homestay activities (for which 8 houses that can reside 5 individuals each have been already built), tent houses (20 houses residing 3 individuals each) and village resorts. Similarly, building training centres, agro exhibition centers and green parks are also included in the future plan of the project. Furthermore, Golden Agro Industry is planning to enter into two different sectors in this fiscal year. One of the sectors is the education sector by establishing agro-based courses such as Agro JTA Course, Veterinary JTA Course and Forestry JTA Course. Second sector is the production sector whereby they will be producing organic compost fertilizers and their own brand products.

1.4 Intention and Motivation to choose the company as Co-op Studies Workplace

This report is prepared for the fulfillment of the internship program (Cooperative Education Program) as required by the course curriculum of Bachelor of Business Administration under Siam University. Internship programs as such provide students with real life experience of the work environment where they can implement their academic skills gained from the educational institution.

Nepal, being an agrarian country with diverse geography, is expected to experience a synergistic effect on the national income if both agriculture and tourism are practiced in an integrated manner (Khanal & Shrestha, 2019). The scope of this industry is therefore found to be

very broad. I chose to do my internship at ITS because the agro-tourism industry and portfolio management was a field I wanted to have work experience in.

1.5 Strategic Analysis of ITS

<p><i>STRENGTHS:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Professional staff and core team members - Provides an opportunity for newcomers to put their view. - Network with many Nepalese as well as non-Nepalese entrepreneur and industrialist 	<p><i>WEAKNESSES:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Limited team members - Lower social media presence - Physical location of the company
<p><i>OPPORTUNITIES:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Use of technology to automate processes - Chances of co-promotion with the projects - Forward vertical integration possibilities 	<p><i>THREATS:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Political Instability - Economic factors affecting businesses and project developments - Rising competition in the industry

1.6 Objective of the study:

- To get an insight about the operation of Agro-tourism projects in Nepal
- To acquire knowledge about the profile building procedure and contents for the development of new websites.
- To build a professional network and connection in the business environment.
- To learn what type of challenges are faced by organizations and how those challenges can be overcome.

1.7 Methodology of the Study

This report has been prepared based on the experience gathered during the internship period. The report has been made by collecting primary data (own job responsibilities assigned by the supervisor, talking with coworkers in the organization) which played a vital role and also using some secondary data (handbook and brochures of the organization, study of the existing files and documents) which provided the needed supportive buildup to my work during the internship and the internship report.



Chapter 2: Internship Activities

2.1 Job Description

During my internship period, I have performed different tasks and fulfilled responsibilities assigned to me. I worked in the Project Identification department, under the supervision of Ms. Nanda Bhandari (Manager & Department Head) and performed some responsibilities of the accounting department as well. My supervisor was involved in the project 'Golden Agro Industry Pvt. Ltd' during the time of my internship, thus I performed tasks involving the project as well.

Internship Role: Project Identification Intern

Length of internship: 14 weeks

Internship Start Date: 28th August, 2020

Internship End Date: 3rd December, 2020

2.2 Job responsibilities and contributions in the company

The roles and responsibilities assigned to me at the company include the following:

○ Service

Discuss the services and previous projects with supervisor

Chart

Use Graphic Design Platform

Design

Give the design for review

Figure 2. Job Process for Service Chart Design

One of the tasks assigned to me was preparing a chart design that shows all the areas the company has an expertise in and the projects that the organization has consulted in the past. This chart was made to be added to the brochure of ITS for the reference of the future customers. The list of services and the previous projects handled by ITS were provided to me by the supervisor. I used Canva, a graphic design platform, to create the brochure design.

○ Profile Building

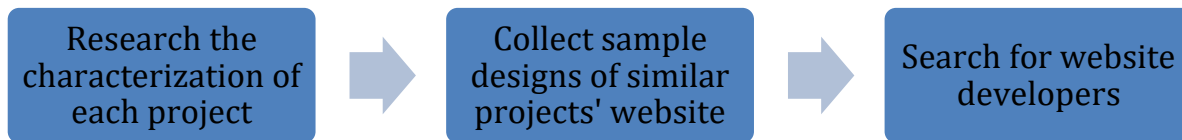


Figure 3. Job Process for Profile Building

The major responsibility assigned to me for my internship period was profile building for the project 'Golden Agro Industry'. Project profiling is the process of extracting a characterization from the known attributes of a project (Darnell & Preston, 2010, 31). This will provide a comprehensive understanding of the project resulting in forming an appropriate execution approach and helps in the assignment of organization's resources.

Profile building for this project would help us create a profile that would also be helpful for the project's website development and other social media pages. My main objective was to help complete the non-design aspects of building websites. Firstly, I started with research for the requirements of a website in regards to the current service area of the project. I collected sample designs of similar local and foreign companies such as Arava Nepal Modern Agriculture Company, Himalayan Alpine Herbal & Agriculture Farm, etc. for reference. Golden Agro Industry has four major working areas according to which the contents for profile building were prepared. The major aspects selected for profile building of this project were high-level overview of the project, timeline/synopsis of development, statistics, and general details (such as physical location, established date and contact information). As per the discussion with my supervisor, the aforementioned characterization was finalized to be given to the web developers for website development. Similarly, I also prepared a list of website developers and their costs along with the extent of services they provide by contacting them.

○ Expansion Modality

We have learnt about different types of shareholding patterns during our BBA course that could be undertaken when expanding any business. Depending upon the organization's goals, they could choose from different modalities including subsidiaries, strategic alliances, etc (Chandra,

n.d.). I started with researching the types of shareholding pattern undertaken by the projects (majorly agro-based projects) functioning in different parts of Nepal. Golden Agro Industry is about to diversify into two different sectors (a college under CTEVT affiliation and the other in manufacturing) in the next fiscal year. This helped me get an idea and reference so that I could suggest to my supervisor what pattern to follow for the upcoming projects to be registered.

Similarly, ITS wanted to create a 'Entrepreneurship Development' segment for its brochure that includes testimonials of all the small entrepreneurs that the organization has helped with. I was responsible for creating the design for the same and prepared the questions for interviewing the entrepreneurs as well as some project clients. The questions are forwarded to the supervisor for finalizing.

○ **Document Preparation for Field Visit**

Golden Agro Industry Pvt. Ltd has received grants from different NGOs and other government organisations working for the development of this industry in Nepal. To continue with the grants the organisations usually send a committee for inspection of the project and its performance. While at the internship, I also had the opportunity to be at the inspection. From the project's part, I was responsible in preparing some documents showing the financials of the project which included the salary sheet of the non-site employees, documents showcasing the farming development (fruits, tea and herbal plantation), the homestay activities, tenthouses and resorts constructions along with the pictorial presentation.

Along with the documents and presentation preparation, I accompanied the ITS team in a field visit to Kavrepalanchowk for the inspection from the grant committee. On the inspection day, I helped my supervisor with the presentation regarding the details of the execution of the project and the performance evaluation.

○ **Financial Statements Preparation**

During the last weeks of my internship, I was working with my coworkers for the administrative tasks of the project including finalizing the financial details for the previous fiscal year. This included the salary sheet that was already prepared for the inspection committee, the profit and loss statements and the balance sheet. I also helped prepare some reports for the

performance evaluation as per the budget set for the year. The accounting department later completed and finalized these financial statements.

2.3 Activities in coordinating with other co-workers

Apart from the major assignments, I was also involved in the following tasks during the course of my internship:

- Creating identification documents for the employees
- Research into the management structure and shareholding pattern of subsidiary companies
- Prepare for the registration of two more companies under Golden Agro Industry Pvt. Ltd following the shareholding pattern to be decided among the ones suggested
- Researched for a broad sector of articles that could be added to the websites of the project.

Chapter 3: Identification of Problems Encountered During the Internship

3.1 Problems encountered during internship

Organizations are faced with different sorts of challenges and difficulties on a day-to-day basis. How the company reacts to those challenges and tackles them is the matter of concern for its stakeholders. Some problems that I witnessed at the company and during my internship period include:

- The tasks assigned to me, especially the designs for the service chart and entrepreneurship development segment were to be verified by my supervisor as well as the project heads. Because of the long hierarchy, it took longer for suggestions to reach and thus corrections to be made. The proper coordination while passing information is missing.
- During my internship, I noticed that there was a lack of teamwork as everyone was very busy with their own duty and responsibility. Also there was a lack of communication between the subordinates due to which many things are not done as information received.
- Based on my field visit observation, I found that there was a lack of clear understanding about the project itself among many subordinates at the field. Many subordinates and employees were not clear about the long term objectives of the project itself and did not make an effort to understand the goals. Although they would do assigned tasks and meet deadlines, this would affect the quality of project execution in the long term. This is a problem in many organizations.
- Because of the pandemic, most of the meetings with clients would be online while working from home. The aspect of meeting professionals and clients to discuss the work face to face could not be experienced this time which also affected proper networking. Online meetings mainly involved meetings with the team at ITS and talking to web developers regarding their services and cost structure.
- When researching subsidiaries and their management structure, there were very little details of local companies available over the internet.

3.2 Indicate how you solved the problems

Proper communication and coordination can help solve many problems in the work life setting. During my internship, there would sometimes be delayed replies from the project head or even my supervisor on some occasions because of their busy schedule. The delayed response from my superiors due to the longer hierarchy would leave me with no work to carry on for some days. In those situations, I would myself make an effort to contact them via email or phone calls and ask for their suggestions to complete the task on time.

The first few days of my internship were very challenging for me considering the fact that this was a completely new environment (in terms of the industry) and we were further working from home at that time. Communicating with my coworkers would be difficult because of the same. This problem slowly faded a few weeks into the internship and when offices started functioning normally. Proper planning and Scheduling helped me manage my time when working from home. Working from home was a challenge but a great learning experience altogether.

3.3 Recommendations to the company

- ITS should focus on improving teamwork and coordination among the employees for a better handling of projects and responsibilities. This is crucial also to remove any kind of lags and repetition in the work.
- The company, although involved in portfolio management and profile building of the clients, has a very low digital presence. ITS should emphasize on maintaining their personal presence digitally to survive in the ever competitive market.

3.4 Applying the knowledge from coursework to real working situations

While studying the Project Evaluation course in BBA, our learning was mostly based on theory and less on practical one. But during this internship I got to learn the practical aspect as well. I learned that planning of any project is done in a way that it addresses the core issue. Execution part requires the longest time in case of agro projects. Frequent meetings and monitoring of the projects was held. Inspection committee would also be sent by the grant committee to check

whether the execution was going as per the plan (Chandra, n.d.). Similarly, the concept of different shareholding patterns learnt in the Business course helped me a lot in making different suggestions to my supervisor as well. The fundamental terms about Memorandum of Understanding (MOU), Article of Association (AOA) and similar documents and contracts, subsidiary and strategic alliances were useful during this internship. The principles behind financial statements preparations helped me a lot in assisting the administrative department for the financial reporting.



Chapter 4: Learning Process

4.1 Contributions made during the internship

I was able to successfully complete the roles and responsibilities and made contributions mainly focused in the agro-tourism project at ITS. I had prepared effective reports and designs during my internship tenure using MS Excel, MS Word and Canva. I was able to make the following contributions during my internship:

- One contribution that I take pride in is the opportunity to design the layout for the brochure for ITS. I was involved in creating the service chart design, the entrepreneurship development story column and other segments for the brochure
- My other job was to prepare the documents and a presentation for the field visit of Golden Agro Industry Pvt. Ltd, which included inspection from the grant committee. Under the supervision of my job supervisor, I had helped prepare performance reports and the presentation.
- Beyond my roles and responsibilities, I also helped in designing the identification documents for the employees required in the office premises. This included Employee ID Cards and official emails for the projects.
- I had worked hand on hand with the accounting department in preparing the financial statements of the project for the fiscal year. Similarly, I assisted them with financial statements and general documents filing of the previous and ongoing projects at hand with ITS for tax purposes.

4.2 Details of the related learning process or new knowledge obtained

My previous internships have been in very different industries (first being at CG Techno Dreams, which was in a Marketing Department, and second at Franchise Nepal, which was an aggregator where I was involved in their Research and Development team). Consulting service providers and the agro-tourism industry has been a distinct experience for me. Although I was involved mostly in administrative tasks rather than the fieldwork of the agro project, getting to know the workings of such a project in Nepal (a country whose major economic activity is agriculture) was a new learning. The project's operational process is usually something we do not learn in classrooms. Similarly, this internship has been a platform to improve my organizational

skills as well. There were many occasions when I solely had to organize the zoom meetings, research about further activities and projects. Similarly I was also involved in helping my coworker prepare financial statements and report them to my superiors. These have helped to hone my organizational skills, teamwork and leadership quality.

An internship enables us to harness the skills, knowledge, and theoretical practice learnt in classrooms. We learn about different sets of strategies, and acquire a great amount of education in classrooms but the internship at ITS was a platform for me to learn when to use what kind of theories and strategies and how to apply that knowledge in our real life. Theory helps us understand why some methods should be chosen over others, why a particular action should be taken. But theory teaches us from the experience of other individuals, which is very influential but not as much as the self experience. You might forget what you learnt from other's mistakes but can never forget what we learn by making mistakes yourselves.

During my internship tenure, I was able to experience the functionality of not only the department I was assigned to but also some other departments including accounting, financial advice and company registration. This helped me understand the company holistically and I believe can help me in organizing a project as well.

Chapter 5: Conclusion

5.1 Self-assessment as a professional

I believe that internships are a great way of integrating practicality into the theories learnt within the classroom thus, helping us become capable enough of perceiving any situation in the corporate world with precision. Joining a company as an intern gives us the opportunity to work hands-on in a professional environment, which is a great platform for us BBA students. My internship at ITS has helped me gain a professional attitude for the future, and provided me with the experience that could help me better utilize theoretical knowledge. When working in a fast paced professional environment, time management is a skill essential for everyone. Keeping up with work schedules can turn out to be very difficult in some days, yet this is integral to acting professionally and to even succeed in the work you do. Tasks, such as using a graphic design platform and filtering out contents for profile building, that were assigned to me were completely new for me and even were out of my comfort zone. Regardless, I carried out those tasks with my full dedication. Getting out of my comfort zone to explore opportunities and handle challenges with the required skill is something I have learnt to harness. For someone like me who aspires to become an entrepreneur, the learning of such internships will prove to be an asset.

Similarly, internships provide us with the building blocks we need for our future. During my internship period, working as a part of the team helped me strengthen my research skills, planning and scheduling skills, adaptability and taught me work-life balance. Similarly, the technique of using a particular set of ideas in one area and a different set of ideas for a different field is very important for us to understand.

In a nutshell, I believe that this internship has enlightened me with the actual workings of the professional world. This internship has encouraged my personal development, and gave me a better understanding of myself. I have gained some clarity both in my professional and personal goals.

5.2 Recommendations for the company regarding co-op work

Some of the recommendations that I would like to make to ITS are-

- Employees as well as interns should be given an orientation during the start of the internship program, where they should be explained about the company background, mission and strategies and the assignments they would be expected to complete. This way, the employees and interns would be working hard to achieve the goals of the company.
- ITS has a lot of segmentation based on the services they provide but less departments and employees, which requires the employees to take on multiple tasks at the same time. They should, therefore, consider expanding their team and assigning core responsibilities to a separate team or department.
- ITS should have a performance evaluation in a timely manner, in a month or two every time. Proper feedback and guidelines should be given to the employees by the top management. They should also take into consideration the feedback of the employees and interns for the company's performance improvement.

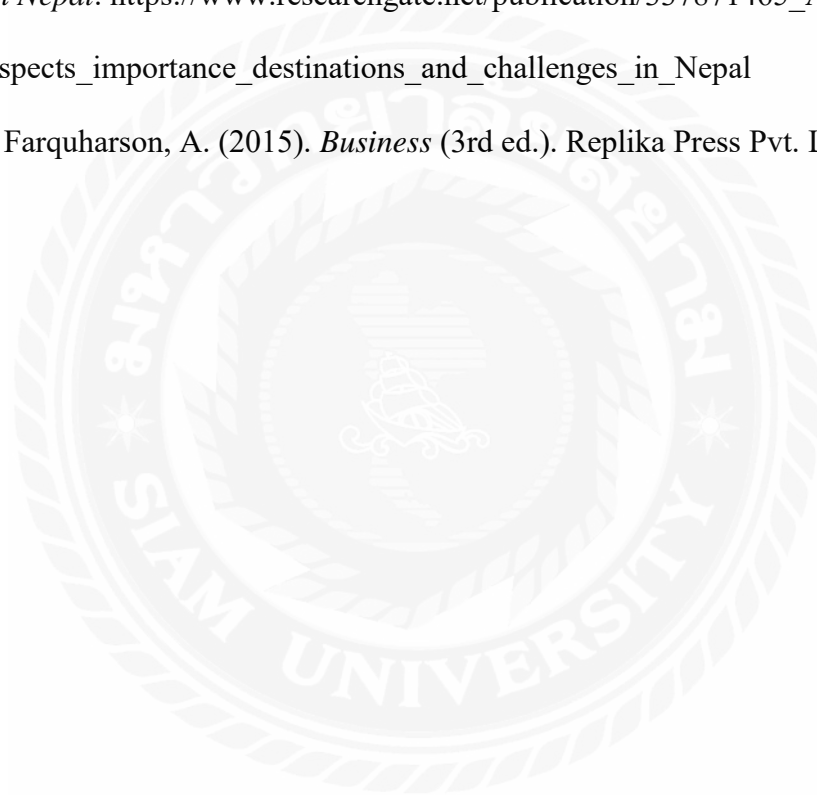
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ANNEXURE



Figure: Captured during the field visit of Golden Agro Industry in Kavrepalanchok, Nepal

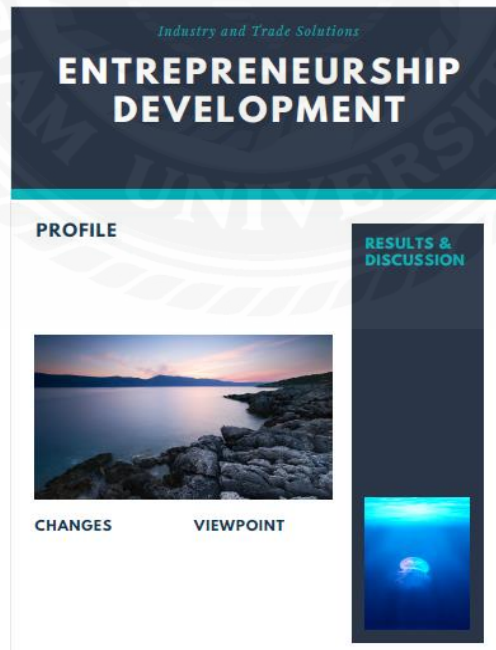


Figure: First Draft of the 'Entrepreneurship Development' segment for the brochure



Figure: During work



Figure: Colleague at office



Figure: For the brochure photoshoot