

# ICA-IN ASIA PACIFIC REGIONAL CONFERENCE ON CLIMATE RESPONSE, INNOVATION & PROSPERITY

## CONFERENCE PROCEEDING



26 -28 NOVEMBER, 2024  
KATHMANDU, NEPAL



## Background

The Institute of Cultural Affairs (ICA), a global network with over 50 years of experience in community development, hosted the Asia Pacific Regional Conference (APRC) in Nepal from November 26th to 28th, 2024, including pre and post-conference events. Chosen for its ongoing local contributions to global dialogue, Nepal welcomed the global ICA community, NGO members, and individuals to engage in collaborative and engaging events.

The APRC aims to create a platform for strategizing, training, and community consultation. Building on the consensus from the previous APRC in India, this face-to-face gathering in Nepal leveraged collaborations, exchanges and learnings.

Participants worked together in developing regional strategies and working together for meaningful impact. The event was jointly hosted by ICA Nepal and Imagine Nepal.

## Objectives

- Facilitate global collaboration and idea exchange to address the climate emergency and promote shared prosperity.
- Establish forums and training opportunities for sustainability, regeneration, community consultation, and participatory action research, creating momentum towards positive, impactful outcomes.

## Host Organizations

**The Institute of Cultural Affairs (ICA) Nepal** is a non-governmental organization working since 1998 in the sector of human capacity building through sustainable participatory methods. Every individual should participate in building sustainable change and development.

ICA is also a registered member of the Institute of Cultural Affairs International, located in Montreal, Canada ICA-Nepal has its main office in Kathmandu with the necessary office and communication facilities.

As a national member of ICA International, ICA-Nepal aims to introduce the experiences of ICA International in the Nepalese context. The three major areas of activities of the ICAs are sustainable development, life-long learning and organizational transformation. ICA Nepal's mission is to promote social innovation through participation and community development. It aims to enlarge opportunities for disadvantaged communities throughout the country through training, facilitation, and developmental activities.

**Imagine Nepal (IN)** is a non-political, non-profit movement fostering a positive future for Nepal through creativity, synergy, and compassion. It promotes transparency, inclusion, and partnership to unite people in a nationwide effort for peace and development. By empowering individuals through appreciative inquiry, IN aims to amplify optimism and create lasting positive change across Nepal.

# ICA-IN Asia Pacific Regional Conference on Climate Response, Innovation and Prosperity



Hosted by:

**Institute of Cultural Affairs (ICA) Nepal  
and Imagine Nepal (IN)**

November 26-28, 2024

Pension Vasana Hotel, Kathmandu, Nepal

Sponsored by:



Fundraising  
For NGOs



## Thematic Dialogue and Action on:

### 1. CLIMATE EMERGENCY & RESPONSE

This theme focused on climate change driven largely by human activities, addressed the critical threat to our planet. To effectively combat this issue, we must understand the science and advocate for solutions through genuine participatory engagement of all stakeholders. This inclusive approach ensures diverse perspectives and promotes collaborative action for a sustainable future.

Facilitators: Enusha Khadka, Amba Datta Bhatta & Don Hinkelman

### 2. MEANINGFUL ENGAGEMENT FOR HAPPINESS, WELL-BEING & PROSPERITY

This theme aimed to initiate meaningful conversations around prosperity, happiness, and well-being through Appreciative Inquiry, Social Artistry and the Science of Positive Psychology. We aimed to foster a deeper understanding and promote positive change in ourselves and our communities.

Facilitators: Tatwa P. Timsina, Dhruva Acharya & Janet Sanders

### 3. SOCIAL DISCOURSE & innovations for community TRANSFORMATION

This theme explored ongoing research, processes, practices, and approaches to addressing social problems aimed at transformative change and development. We aim to engage participants in conversations about how participatory research can lead to empowerment, power shifts, and political action, fostering meaningful community transformation.

Facilitators: Ishu Subba, Juju Raj Tuladhar & Larry Philbrook



**ICA-IN ASIA PACIFIC REGIONAL CONFERENCE (APRC) ON CLIMATE RESPONSE,  
INNOVATION AND PROSPERITY**

**Program Schedule**

**Date: 26 - 28 November, 2024**

**Venue: Pension Vasana Hotel, Kathmandu Nepal**



Date   Time	Programs
Day I   26 Nov. 2024	
14:00 - 15:30	Opening and Welcome Remarks
30 minutes	Tea Break   Networking and Collaborations
16:00 - 17:45	<b>Climate Emergency and Response</b> Background Paper Sharing, Paper Presentations & Open Discussion
17:45 -	Day I - Wrap-Up
Day II   27 Nov. 2024	
8:00 - 9:00	Breakfast
9:00 - 9:15	Day II Overview
9:15 - 11:00	Action Workshop of Climate Emergency and Response
30 minutes	Tea break   Networking and Collaborations
11:30 - 13:00	<b>Meaningful Engagement for Happiness, Well-Being and Prosperity</b> Background Paper Sharing, Paper Presentations & Open Discussion
60 minutes	Lunch   Networking and Collaborations
14:00 - 15:15	Workshop of Meaningful Engagement for Happiness, Well-Being and Prosperity
30 minutes	Tea Break   Networking and Collaborations
15:45 - 17:00	<b>Social Discourse and Innovations for Community Transformation</b> Background Paper Sharing, Paper Presentation & Discussion
17:00 - 18:00	Workshop on Social Discourse and Innovations for Community Transformation
18:00 -	Day II Wrap-up
Day III   28 November 2024	
8:00 - 9:00	Breakfast
9:00 - 9:15	Day III Overview
9:15 - 11:00	World Café on Intersectionality of climate resilience, prosperity and social discourse (together) <b>Action Agenda for the Future</b>
30 minutes	Tea Break   Networking and Collaborations
11:30 - 13:00	Closing and Celebrations followed by Lunch

# CONFERENCE HIGHLIGHTS

## PARTICIPANTS

The conference ran over three days from 26 November to 28 November 2024. The conference was attended by more than 80 individuals representing diverse domains and backgrounds. The participants age ranged from 19 to 75 years old. Individuals from



## PRE-CONFERENCE EVENTS

Many events including workshop, training and meetings were conducted as pre-conference events.

### **PARTICIPATORY STRATEGIC PLANNING WORKSHOP | 17-19 NOV.**

As part of pre-conference events, a participatory strategic planning workshop was conducted for the team members of the Institute of Innovation and Quality Assurance (IIQA) from 16 to 18 Nov. 2024. The workshop was facilitated by Michelle Zhang, IncluSmart.



Institute of Innovation and Quality Assurance (IIQA) is a sister organization of ICA Nepal which works for quality promotion and standardization. For more details [www.iiqa.com.np](http://www.iiqa.com.np)

## TRAINING ON SOCIAL ARTISTRY | 20 NOV.

On 20th Nov. 2024, twenty-five women from Prasamsha Women Group participated in Training on Social Artistry facilitated by Janet Sanders, Evelyn Philbrook, Amba Datta Bhatta and Juju Raj Tuladhar. Social Artistry is the art of enhancing human capacities in the light of social complexity. It seeks to bring new ways of thinking, being and doing to social challenges in the world. Prasamsha Women Group represents women from the Far Western Region of Nepal. The group works for the preservation of local arts and culture.



## INNOVATIVE LEADERSHIP THROUGH SOCIAL ARTISTRY AND NEUROLEADERSHIP | 21-22 NOV.

On 21 and 22 Nov. 2024, training on social artistry using neuroleaders was conducted. The training was attended by 26 individuals who were Social Artistry practitioners, trainers and facilitators. The overall objective of this training was to validate the new training curriculum of the Social Artistry program using a neuroleadership perspective. The training focused on making the brain health through system thinking, arts and mindfulness. Drawing upon its successes in training leaders in many countries and organizations throughout the world, social artistry using the neuroleadership lens and state-of-the-art discoveries in human capacity building to social transformation.







## CLIENT CARE AND DESIGN, 23 -24 NOV.

This training was designed to help individuals become facilitators of transformation. The same approach that ICA use of designing for change while nurturing the relationship and adapting to reality was shared. Building empathy into our process, this was an introduction to the ICA process for strategic context building to support transformation based on Stakeholder Alignment. The workshop was facilitated by Lawrence Philbrook, ICA Taiwan.



The training program helped participants understand the steps of client care and how to use participatory strategies effectively. It also improved teamwork and problem-solving skills among the participants. They learned more about analyzing their organizations and understanding competition. Practical exercises encouraged creative thinking and better planning for future goals. Overall, the program provided useful tools and knowledge to build good relationships with clients and support the growth of organizations, helping them work towards long-term success in their fields.





This training attended by internet service providers, school owners, community workers and profit-making organizations.

## **ICA ASIA PACIFIC REGIONAL MEETING (APRM) | 25- 26 NOV.**

ICAs and its associate members in the Asia Pacific Region meet every month on the first Wednesday of every month virtually and face-to-face once a year. This year in November, 2024 ICA Nepal hosted its colleagues from the Asia Pacific Region and organized a regional gathering.

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The meeting was attended by ICAs from Australasia, Bangladesh, India, Japan, Taiwan and Nepal. We also had colleagues from ICA Kenya, ICA USA and China. ICAI President Henry Mpale also attended the meeting.

ICA Asia Pacific Regional Meeting in Pune, 2023 focused on “Organizational Sustainability” as a comprehensive model to explore our current situations and begin to create local and global options for action. The model helps ICAI members take a systemic approach to analysing their current organisation's sustainability situation and to identify potential areas for transformation.

Continuing the discussion on Organizational Sustainability, for the 2024 ICA Asia Pacific Regional Meeting in Kathmandu, it was proposed to focus the meeting on the “Economic Sufficiency” of the ICAs in the Asia Pacific Region. The gathering focused on developing regional strategies to authentically re-balance the sustainability triangle in our region (Economic Sufficiency, Organization resilience and Mission Relevance) the focus question proposed is “how to operate as a collective to strengthen our individual organizations’ sustainability, especially economic sufficiency”



## WELCOME DINNER AND HERITAGE WALK AT KRITIPUR

Welcome Dinner and Heritage Walk was organized on 25 Nov. 2024 at the Kritirpur. Kirtipur is an ancient city of Nepal, a typical Newari settlement in the Kathmandu Valley of Nepal. It's known for its well-preserved historic center, fort-like features, and many Newar monuments.



# ICA-IN ASIA PACIFIC REGIONAL CONFERENCE HIGHLIGHTS

26 -28 NOV. 2024

## INAUGURATION CEREMONY

The ICA-IN Asia Pacific Regional Conference (APRC) commenced at 2 pm November 26, 2024, in Kathmandu, Nepal, with 80 participants from various countries. The conference focused on dialogue and collaborative actions on climate response, innovations, and prosperity.

The Seminar was officially inaugurated by playing the national anthem "Sayaun Thunga Phool Ka Hami".of Nepal followed by Panas lightening by the chief guest of the ceremony Prof. Mahendra Pandey, Former Foreign Minister, Ministry of Foreign Affairs Nepal, Mr. Henry Ikatukhu Mpapale, Institute of Cultural Affairs (ICA) International President and Prof. Dr. Tatwa Prasad Timsina, Founding Chairperson of ICA Nepal and President of Imagine Nepal, Dr. Dhruva Acharya, Former Chairperson of Imagine Nepal, Ms. Janet Sanders, senior facilitator of ICA Nepal and Ms Evelyn Philbrook, ICA Taiwan.

The facilitator for the opening ceremony was Ms. Ishu Subba, Executive Chair for ICA Nepal. Ms. Subba moderated and welcomed the attendees with a brief introduction to ICA Nepal, Imagine Nepal, and the program's objectives.

Prof. Pandey congratulated the host organizations and highlighted the role of dialogue in addressing the emerging issues of climate change and innovation. Mr. Henry Mpapale shared his curiosity to learn and exchange from everyone. He also mentioned that he is visiting in this part of the world and how overwhelmed with the welcome and warmth. Dr. Dhruva Acharya highlighted the need to address the mental health, well-being and happiness and how this conference attempts to address the same. Janet Sanders claimed Nepal as her second home where she spent more than 20 years of life in learning and working with Nepali people. Evelyn Philbrook appreciates the fight-back attitude of Nepalese especially she remembers how quick we fought back after the massive earthquake 2015. Prof. Dr. Timsina thanked all the participants and welcomed everyone to engage in dialogue, workshops and interactions designed in the conference.



# CLIMATE EMERGENCY AND RESPONSE

*This theme focused on climate change driven largely by human activities, and addressed the critical threat to our planet. To effectively combat this issue, we must understand the science and advocate for solutions through genuine participatory engagement of all stakeholders. This inclusive approach ensures diverse perspectives and promotes collaborative action for a sustainable future.*

*Facilitators: Enusha Khadka, Amba Datta Bhatta & Don Hinkelman*

Ms. Enusha Khadka, CEO of the IIQA set the context by emphasizing the urgency of addressing climate change, a critical threat caused primarily by human activities. Ms. Khadka stressed the importance of participatory engagement for inclusive and sustainable solutions.

She emphasized the significance of the Asia-Pacific region, which contributes over 50% of global greenhouse gas emissions, primarily from the burning of fossil fuels. She pointed out that three major economies in the region—China, India, and Russia—are collectively responsible for more than 77% of the region's emissions. Furthermore, she noted that this region is highly vulnerable, with seven out of the ten countries most affected by climate-induced disasters located here, alongside three small Pacific Island nations.

She highlighted the impacts of climate change on Nepal, which, despite contributing a negligible amount to global emissions, is severely affected by climate-induced disasters. Nepal is experiencing multiple disasters such as floods, landslides, wildfires, heatwaves, and glacial lake outburst floods (GLOFs), as well as new phenomena like tornadoes.

The importance of building a climate-resilient society through mitigation and adaptation strategies. Although Nepal's greenhouse gas emissions are minimal, the country has committed to achieving net-zero emissions by 2050 under its second Nationally Determined Contribution (NDC) was stressed. The need to promote clean energy technologies and improve solid waste management, as these are the primary sources of emissions in Nepal was highlighted.

She also shared key insights from COP29, expressing optimism for developing countries to benefit from climate finance initiatives. She underscored the importance of working on adaptation strategies at both individual and organizational levels.

To align with these goals, ICA Nepal themed this APRC conference around climate response, focusing on awareness-building and knowledge-sharing to foster a climate-resilient society. She concluded her remarks by welcoming all presenters and initiating the conference presentations.

## PAPER PRESENTATIONS ON CLIMATE EMERGENCY AND RESPONSE

The session included eight thought-provoking presentations, each addressing unique aspects of climate response:

### **"Empowering the Next Generation: Integrating Disaster Risk Management into Climate Education for Resilient Communities through Social Artistry," Amin Sutar Karki**

Mr. Sutar talks about the importance of including Disaster Risk Management (DRM) in Nepal's school education. He highlights how teaching students about disaster risks and climate challenges can help them stay prepared and make their communities safer. Programs like Kathmandu's Book Free Friday use creative learning methods to inspire students to take action, encouraging them to become responsible citizens and future leaders who support sustainable development and disaster preparedness.

### **"Climate Change and its Adaptation in the Agriculture Sector", Sagar Bishwakarma**

Sagar Bishwakarma, in his presentation on "Climate Change and its Adaptation in the Agriculture Sector," explores innovative strategies to address climate impacts on farming. He highlights that while higher maximum temperatures can boost crop yields through adaptive practices like heat-tolerant crops and adjusted planting, higher minimum temperatures harm productivity by disrupting growth cycles.

Long-term effects of CO<sub>2</sub> emissions and rainfall are minimal, but short-term changes in temperature and rainfall significantly impact productivity, requiring swift adaptation. Excessive chemical fertilizer use degrades soil over time, while irrigation enhances yields. Improved seeds offer quick benefits but need sustainable integration for lasting impact. His research highlighted the need for sustainable and adaptive solutions to ensure agricultural resilience in a changing climate.

### **"Analyzing the Temporal and Spatial Patterns of Air Pollution Dynamics in Nepal (2003–2023), Sakriya Pandey**

Mr. Pandey examined 20 years of air pollution data. He found that winter has the highest pollution levels, posing serious health risks, while seasonal changes are influenced by weather patterns. Trans boundary pollution, especially in spring, also impacts air quality. He emphasizes the need for affordable local air monitoring, regional collaboration, and season-specific policies to reduce pollution and protect public health.

### **"Climate Change: The Role of Plastic, Tulip Saud**

Tulip Saud, in her work "Climate Change: The Role of Plastic," highlights the critical impact of plastic pollution on the environment and its devastating effects on wildlife, both on land and in water. She emphasizes the power of youth in driving change by educating school students on reducing single-use plastics. By raising awareness and inspiring action, she advocates for a collective effort to protect ecosystems, rivers, and the broader environment from the harm caused by plastic waste.

### **"FAREED Readymade Hygiene and Hybrid Biogas Technology", Mahaboob Siddiki**

"FAREED Readymade Hygiene and Hybrid Biogas Technology" shared insights on hybrid biogas technology for sustainable hygiene solutions. In his presentation he highlighted that an innovative solution converting organic waste into biogas for cooking, electricity, and energy needs with economic benefits like savings on fertilizers, improved agricultural yields, and revenue from carbon trading, while also enhancing health, sanitation, and education by minimizing indoor pollution and reducing firewood reliance. Despite challenges in accessibility and sustainability, FAREED leverages subsidies and partnerships to scale its impact, aiming to install 4.13 lakh biogas plants by 2030, supporting Nepal's environmental and energy goals.

## **"Empowering Women in Climate Action: A Strategic Approach in Addressing the Climate Emergency through Resource Management"- Kabita Gaire**

Her work focuses on community transformation through social dialogue and innovation. She highlighted the Women Rights and Resource Network (WRRN) for empowering women in Nepal to combat climate change through resource management. WRRN addresses gender norms and socio-economic barriers by forming community groups, supporting women's entrepreneurship, and providing leadership and disaster response training.

## **"Case of Solar Energy Integration at a School in Surkhet", Narendra Kumar Rokaya**

He highlighted a successful case study on the integration of solar energy in education. He highlighted its cost-effectiveness, contribution to quality education, and potential to inspire others by creating open spaces for learning. He also added that this program not only addresses the climate emergency but also supports the nation's economic growth and sustainable development. Kopila Valley School in Surkhet uses solar power to enhance education for marginalized students and promote sustainability, benefiting both education and rural communities.

## **"Climate Change Effects on Mountain Tourism and Adaptation Strategies in Nepal", Dr. Shreeekanta Khatiwoda**

Dr. Khatiwoda addressed the impacts of climate change on mountain tourism and suggested adaptation strategies. He highlighted the severe impact of climate change on Nepal's mountain tourism, particularly trekking, which is crucial for local livelihoods. Unpredictable weather, heavy storms, and avalanches have led to tragic incidents, including the loss of lives in high Himalayan regions. Immediate actions like safety awareness, rescue centers, and infrastructure improvements are essential, alongside long-term policy integration by local, provincial, and federal governments to ensure sustainable and resilient tourism.

Ms. Enusha Khadka summarized the key points from each presentation. She acknowledged the speakers for their invaluable contributions and set a positive tone for the following days of the conference.



## **Open Discussion and Certificate Distribution**

After the presentations, an open discussion session provided participants with opportunities to ask questions, share insights, and deepen understanding. The interaction encouraged knowledge exchange and clarified innovative approaches to climate response.

The presenters were recognized for their contributions with certificates, awarded by ICA International guests. The first day ended on an optimistic note, leaving participants inspired and motivated for further discussions and activities.

# ACTION WORKSHOPS ON CLIMATE EMERGENCY

Day II started with dialogue on actions in response to the Climate Emergency based on the insights and learnings from the Day I presentations and discussions.

The workshop was facilitated by Don Hinkelman, ICA Japan and Amba Datta Bhatta.

Facilitators briefly introduced the group to Sustainable Development Goals 2030 and invited participants to reflect the insights and learnings of Day I.



Day II started with dialogue on actions in response to the Climate Emergency based on the insights and learnings from the Day I presentations and discussions.

The workshop was facilitated by Don Hinkelman, ICA Japan and Amba Datta Bhatta.

Facilitators briefly introduced the group to Sustainable Development Goals 2030 and invited participants to reflect the insights and learnings of Day I.

## Process: Focused Conversation and Workshop Method

Facilitators used ICA tools of Focused Conversation Method to engage all the conference participants to review the learnings.

Questions were shared in a whole group and later to discuss in each table.

1. What do you remember from yesterday?
2. What did you learn?
3. What were the key insights?
4. What are the targets of change?

In a small group, a facilitator was chosen and assigned to facilitate a discussion in a group using the questions provided. After discussion, each group wrote 2-4 cards to share as key insights or targets of change. Collected ideas were clustered in two key actions: Adaptation and Mitigation



During the session, participants were divided into eight groups, each tasked with brainstorming climate-related actions. These ideas were documented on paper and categorized under two key themes: Mitigation and Adaptation.

Participants engaged collaboratively in group discussions, brainstorming strategies and innovative solutions to pressing climate issues. Each group wrote their ideas on vibrant, colorful metacards, promoting a lively exchange of diverse perspectives. These metacards were then displayed on designated walls, creating a visually engaging and organized space for further analysis and refinement.



As cards were shared, participants decided where the card would go on either mitigation or adaptation.

Mitigation was defined as those actions undertaken to reduce the risk of the occurrence of any climate change-induced disasters.

Whereas Adaptation was defined as actions involved in adjusting to the current and future effects of climate change.

Each participants were observed to be fully engaged and participate and contribute in the discussion.

A climate emergency is a situation that requires immediate action. Human activity has increased the production of greenhouse gases like carbon dioxide leading to a 1°C rise in global temperatures and more frequent and extreme weather events, such as flooding, droughts, wildfires, and hurricanes. A 2°C rise in global temperature could have devastating impacts on food and water supplies, human life, and economic growth. Therefore, a collective, comprehensive and systemic approach is needed to address this situation.

Climate emergency can only be addressed when greenhouse gas emission is drastically reduced and aim for "net zero". A few key ways include: Investing in natural climate solutions like forests, kelp beds, and soils; Contributing to climate adaptation, restoring the natural environment and indigenous technology.



# MEANINGFUL ENGAGEMENT FOR HAPPINESS, WELL-BEING & PROSPERITY

This theme aimed to initiate meaningful conversations around prosperity, happiness, and well-being through Appreciative Inquiry, Social Artistry and the Science of Positive Psychology. We aimed to foster a deeper understanding and promote positive change in ourselves and our communities.

Facilitators: Dr. Tatwa P. Timsina, Dr. Dhruva Acharya & Janet Sanders

Dr. Dhruva Acharya facilitated the very program. He shared insights about meaningful engagement for happiness, well-being and prosperity.

Furthermore, Prof. Dr. Tatwa Prasad Timsina, Founding Chair of ICA Nepal introduced the concept of neuroscience and neuroleadership approach to prosperity. He included debunked myths in neuroscience, measuring happiness and prosperity.

He sheds lights on various means to realize the vision of “Prosper Nepal Happy Nepali” where he has discussed his 40 years of experience in the field of human development, education, science and prosperity. Dr. Timsina highlighted that human centered development and prosperity-oriented mindsets are central to prosperity and true happiness and contentment of people at large.

Moving further, paper presenters were invited to present their paper presentation and open discussions on the stage and handed over the time for them. Each participant was given 10 minutes:

# PAPER PRESENTATIONS ON MEANINGFUL ENGAGEMENT FOR HAPPINESS, WELLBEING AND PROSPERITY

## **Working with Children Women and people with & at risk of disability including psychosocial Wellbeing in 9 Districts of Gandaki Province, Bina Silwal**

Bina Silwal shared a story of Suku, a girl of 13 years old who Suku delivered a baby at Government Hospital in Pokhara. She was physically and sexually abused by her biological father. Later at the age of 12 she left home and started to work in a hotel. She was forced to work all day and was expected to be available for sex whenever there were guests. When Suku became pregnant, the hotel owner forced her to leave, leaving her homeless. A woman took her in, asking her to care for her disabled son and made Suku pretend to be deaf and mute during pregnancy checkups. After Suku delivered her baby, differences in her age and identity were noticed by the hospital, leading to an OCMC investigation. It was revealed that the woman had falsified Suku's details to claim her baby. With strong advocacy and follow-up, the case was filed with the police, leading to the imprisonment of Suku's father, the hotel owner, and the woman who exploited her. Now 14 years, Suku lives happily in a shelter with her son, attends school for the first time, and is learning computer skills while her son goes to a childcare center.

## **Ways and Means of Protecting Crops From Monkeys in Mid Hills of Nepal, Chhabi Paudel**

The presentation highlighted the problem of monkeys damaging crops in Nepal's mid-hills, causing losses to farmers and threats to human safety. He suggested various solutions like using natural predators, traditional methods, repellents, fencing, and growing alternative crops that monkeys don't like, such as turmeric and ginger for integrated management strategies, government support, and community training to address the issue effectively while balancing wildlife conservation and farmers' livelihoods.

## **Meaningful Engagement for Happiness, Well-being, and Prosperity in the Context of the Asia-Pacific Region with a Focus on Nepal, Mahendra Kumar Bomjan**

This paper explored how meaningful engagement at individual, institutional, and community levels can improve happiness, well-being, and prosperity in the Asia-Pacific region, focusing on Nepal. He highlighted the role of cultural values, social inclusion, education, and policies in fostering social cohesion and sustainable development. Using Nepal as a case study, the paper examines how active participation addresses developmental challenges and promotes long-term well-being, offering recommendations to enhance engagement for improved living standards and regional prosperity.

## **Appreciative leadership for happiness, well-being and prosperity, RC Lamichhane, PhD**

The key message of this presentation is that Appreciative Inquiry (AI) is a positive and effective way to create meaningful change by focusing on strengths and what works well. It uses positive questions to spark creativity, encourage new ideas, and involve everyone in building a shared vision for the future. By shifting attention from problems to possibilities, AI helps organizations and communities grow in a sustainable and impactful way, inspiring people to work together for a better future.



# WORKSHOP ON MEANINGFUL ENGAGEMENT ON HAPPINESS, WELLBEING AND PROSPERITY

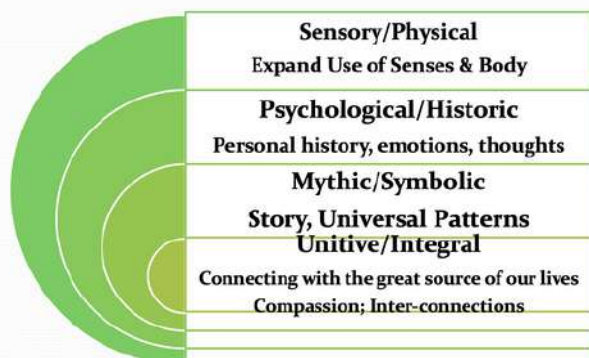


Following up the paper presentations on meaningful engagement in happiness, well-being and prosperity, Janet Sanders initiated a creative activity on how each participant perceives happiness and prosperity.

Janet used storytelling tools to share her journey about arts and her perception on wellbeing. She invited conference participants to use the colors and arts to express their feelings on prosperity.

The atmosphere became vibrant as each participant was handed an array of creative materials paper, clay, colors, and colorful craft supplies. The facilitators invited everyone to pause and reflect on a deeply personal question: “What makes you truly happy?” Participants were then guided to envision their own sense of happiness those moments, feelings, and thoughts that bring joy to their hearts.

With imagination ignited, the room buzzed with creative energy as everyone expressed their vision of happiness through drawings, symbols, and meaningful creations. Laughter and collaboration filled the space, making the workshop an engaging and delightful experience. The activity was not only fun but also deeply reflective, and every participant contributed with enthusiasm and joy.



The creative connection is a way to experience the four levels of AWARENESS.

On the sensory level, we use all our senses as we see, hear, speak, and use our bodies.

On the psychological/historical level, the arts help us to experience old and new feelings and memories.

On the mythic/symbolic level, our movement and art give expression to images and stories.

And on the unitive/integral level, the arts help us go beyond our usual ways of thinking and feeling. We are able to unify our thoughts and feelings and connect with others and Universal Energy.

WELL BEING

PEACE & PROSPERITY



ly

COMMITMENT

CHANGE  
IN MY  
LIFESTYLE

MINDEFULL

# SOCIAL DISCOURSE, INNOVATION AND COMMUNITY TRANSFORMATION

The overall intention of this theme to explore ongoing research, processes, practices, and approaches in addressing social problems aimed at transformative change and development and engage in conversations about how participatory research can lead to empowerment, power shifts, and political action, fostering meaningful community transformation.

**Facilitators: Ishu Subba, Juju Raj Tuladhar & Larry Philbrook**

Ishu Subba opened the session by sharing briefly the objective of this theme. She introduced the concept of social discourse, innovation and community transformation and each concept intersects and intertwines together.

## Social Discourse

*Discourse can be understood as a way of thinking or talking about a particular subject.*

*Discourses refer to a collection of ideas, assumptions, and representations that shape how we understand and experience the world. It governs how certain issues are discussed, what knowledge is considered valid, and which perspectives are marginalized and silenced.*

*Discourse operates on multiple levels. On a micro level, it shapes everyday interactions such as conversations between individuals, workplace communications, and media portrayals.*

*On a macro level, it influences institutional practices, laws, and policies that regulate social life. Discourse is not static. It evolves as new ideas emerge and social conditions change.*

*Discourse is both a product and a producer of social reality, continuously reinforcing and challenging social norms and structures*

## Community Transformation

*Community transformation redefines neighbourhoods through collective efforts, leadership, and innovation, fostering inclusion, equity, and resilience. Community transformation involves making intentional changes to address community problems and enhance the quality of life for all residents. It encompasses various aspects, such as social cohesion, economic development, environmental sustainability, and overall well-being. Community transformation requires collective effort, leadership, innovation, and collaboration among residents, businesses, government, and non-profits. It means creating spaces where everyone feels valued and included, with accessible resources, and celebrating the community's unique identities and histories.*



## Social Innovation

*Social innovation is the process of creating and implementing new ideas and practices to address social and environmental challenges.*

*Innovation is a process of bringing new ideas to life in any kind of field such as social, economic, political, etc.*

*With the emergence of the concept of social reform, social innovation became more closely related to the processes of intentional transformation that affected a part of society and aimed to solve problems, such as education, working conditions, and equal opportunities*

**The process of generating and adopting new ideas is heavily influenced by the conversations and narratives circulating within a society. Innovations themselves can shape and alter social discourse by introducing new concepts and perspectives. Social discourse provides the context for innovation to occur, and innovation can then feed back into the social discourse, driving further change and discussion. The way an innovation is discussed and presented within social discourse can significantly impact its acceptance and adoption, with positive framing often leading to wider support for community transformation.**

# PAPER PRESENTATIONS ON SOCIAL DISCOURSE, INNOVATION AND COMMUNITY TRANSFORMATION

## Rama Community, Janet Sanders

Aaniin Indinawemaaganidog,  
Julie Williams indizhinikaz, giigoohn indoodem, Mnjikaning indoonjeba.  
This is a story about our community as a collective force, united by the love our ancestors have had for us, that we have for each other now, and that we have for those not yet born. It is a story of a powerful moment in time for our Nation, described by many as “a turning point” for Rama, a time that laid the foundation for so much that we benefit from in our community today.

A detail article is shared in the annex.

COMMUNITY MEETING PREPARATION

**RAMA COMMUNITY MEETING**  
GENEVA PARK YMCA CONFERENCE CENTRE  
APRIL 13<sup>th</sup> & 15<sup>th</sup>, 1984

**FREE BABYSITTING at RAMA DAY CARE**  
Ages 2 - 8 yrs.  
(BRING A LUNCH, BEVERAGES PROVIDED)

EVERYONE WELCOME PLEASE ATTEND

FREE MEALS

FREE BUS TRANSPORTATION:  
Friday 6:30 pm - Return 10:30 pm  
Saturday 9:30 a.m. - Return 1:00 p.m.  
Sunday 9:30 a.m. - Return 1:00 p.m.

Early registration will be appreciated to confirm arrangements.

Cash offerings will be accepted during meeting & during requests.

PLEASE FILL OUT AND RETURN POST BELOW

REGISTER ME FOR THE RAMA COMMUNITY MEETING, April 13 - 15, 1984, GENEVA PARK Y.M.C.A. CONFERENCE CTR.

NAME \_\_\_\_\_  
ADDRESS \_\_\_\_\_  
TELEPHONE # \_\_\_\_\_

I WILL RETURN: APRIL 13, FRIDAY 7:00 p.m. - 10:00 a.m. \_\_\_\_\_ LUNCH \_\_\_\_\_ SUPPER \_\_\_\_\_  
APRIL 14, SATURDAY 9:30 a.m. - 1:00 p.m. \_\_\_\_\_  
APRIL 15, SUNDAY 9:30 a.m. - 1:00 p.m. \_\_\_\_\_

DAY CARE SERVICES REQUIRED: YES \_\_\_ NO \_\_\_ FOR NEW ARRIV. FRIDAY, 6:30 p.m. - 10:30 p.m. \_\_\_\_\_  
SAT. 9:30 a.m. - 1:00 p.m. \_\_\_\_\_  
SUN. 9:30 a.m. - 1:00 p.m. \_\_\_\_\_

PLEASE RETURN TO THE RAMA BAND OFFICE BEFORE APRIL 7, 1984 OR YOUR SOCIAL/RECREATIONAL NEEDS INTERESTER.

FOR MORE INFORMATION CALL PEGGY SHAW, CHRISTINE BOGGS OR MARSHAL WOODRUM AT 323-2611

## Integrating Holistic Approach to Waste Management for Improving Occupational Health and Safety of the Women Waste Workers of Kathmandu, Nepal by Anita Gurung

In her presentation, Ms. Anita highlighted the need for safe and healthy workplaces for women waste workers. These workers face unsafe conditions, low wages, lack of protective equipment, exposure to harmful substances, and social stigma.

Despite their essential role in waste management, they are undervalued and underpaid, earning less than the minimum wage. ICA Nepal is addressing these challenges by providing protective kit, promoting workplace safety awareness, advocating for fair wages, and fostering community support. Her presentation called for collective action and social discourse to ensure safe, dignified, and equitable working conditions for these women, acknowledging their vital contributions to environmental sustainability.

## Harnessing Social Artistry for Sustainable Community Transformation: A pathway to Inclusive Innovation and Collective Empowerment, Milan Shreshta

Milan shared the application of Social Artistry principles to community-driven innovations, emphasizing the importance of sustainability and long-term impact. He highlighted how action research enables communities to transition from storytelling to tangible outcomes, using tools like mind mapping, project planning, and the Spark Project. He also discussed how pilot initiatives and partnerships with policymakers align local efforts with broader systemic goals, advocating for policy shifts that prioritize sustainability and Social Artistry to create lasting, equitable transformations.

## **Unlocking Potential Women Youth Empowerment through Social Artistry and Activism by Mayree Tamang**

She explained how civic engagement and artistic expression can drive social change, focusing on the empowerment of women and young people. He discussed how Social Artistry, which combines art with social consciousness, empowers individuals and communities, particularly those from marginalized backgrounds. Her presentation highlighted how various forms of art, visual, performing, and literary, help women and youth develop a stronger sense of self, agency, and purpose. Additionally, activism was emphasized as a tool for enhancing the impact of social artistry, with case studies showing how empowered individuals contribute to movements focused on human rights, education, gender equality, and environmental sustainability.

## **Working as a Catalyst for exploring the social discourse & Innovation for Community Transformation by Anjali Thapa**

Anjali Thapa shared about her own organization called Ashmita Nepal. Ashmita Nepal is an organization committed to promoting social inclusion, enhancing livelihoods, and fostering capacity building, skill transformation, and leadership development. Established in 1998 BS, the organization focuses on empowering women, youth, and children across the country. Its core mission is to raise awareness about reducing discrimination against women and children, advocate for media representation, and lead various campaigns. Through rights-based training, Ashmita Nepal works at the grassroots level to ensure the rights of women, youth, and children are protected and promoted, ultimately contributing to their empowerment and societal transformation.

## **Reimagining Heritage Integration through Technology: Driving Community Transformation by Azad Thapa**

The presenter highlighted the innovative use of technology in heritage interpretation and community transformation through an engaging and visually supported presentation. He introduced the 5M Model, combining storytelling and multimedia, to emphasize the importance of preserving and making cultural heritage accessible. Using the case study of Sano Hattiban in Kathmandu, Nepal, he illustrated how multilingual QR storytelling revitalized Kirant traditions, supported by contributions from Former CDO Manjul Kumar Yakthumba and active local community participation. The presentation emphasized a sustainable heritage preservation model, reinforced with visuals, case-specific examples, and interactive elements to inspire similar global initiatives.



# WORKSHOP ON SOCIAL DISCOURSE, INNOVATION & COMMUNITY TRANSFORMATION

Following the presentation, Lawrence Philbrook, an esteemed international expert from Taiwan, facilitated an inspiring and interactive workshop on Social Discourse and Innovations for Community Transformation.

The workshop centred on key Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) including:

**Goal 5: Gender Equality**

**Goal 10: Reduced Inequalities**

**Goal 11: Sustainable Cities and Communities**

**Goal 16: Peace, Justice, and Strong Institutions**

He divided participants into teams of five, with approximately twelve teams in total; the session explored the definition of Authentic Social Discourse for Community Transformation:

*“Transforming communities through dialogue that reveals deeper understanding and builds respect, without automatically requiring specific agreement or decision.”*









# WORLD CAFÉ ON CONFERENCE RECOMMENDATIONS

## Welcome to World Cafe

Please decide which theme would you like to join

**Green Tables: Climate Response**

**Golden Tables: Meaningful Engagement,  
Happiness and Prosperity**

**Red Tables: Social Discourse, Innovation  
and Community Transformation**



# WORLD CAFÉ ON CONFERENCE RECOMMENDATIONS

Day III started with an open invitation be part World Cafe and work together on conference recommendation.

While entering the conference hall, participants were allowed to decide which theme they would like to join. This session was facilitated by Prof. Dr. Tatwa Prasad Timsina, Lawrence Philbrook and Evelyn Philbrook.

World Cafe: Facilitators briefly introduced the world cafe method.

- 1995 first invented by Juanita Brown and David Isaacs
- First used in conversations amongst Intellectual Capital Pioneers
- Magic effects in accessing collaborative intelligence through “conversations that matter”

## HOW WORLD CAFÉ WORKS...

- The same 1 person is host of each table stays at their table. Host stays at table and 4 move to a table of next
- There are 3 rounds of discussion on the 1st topic. Rotation to topic 2 and to 3rd topics. 4th round everyone returns to their original table to Harvest your 1st action agenda.

## GUIDELINES OF DISCUSSION

There were total 4 rounds and 4 tables for each theme.

Round 1: Home Table round share your thinking about your topic.

Round 2 and 3 - Four people from each table went to the next theme to shared their wisdom.

Final round back to the Home table and shared again all that has been discussed and determine at least 3 recommendations.

Then, 4 tables from each theme meet and agree on final recommendations.



**Cafe Etiquette: Following ground rules were shared.**

- **FOCUS** on what matters
- **LISTEN** to understand
- **CONTRIBUTE** your thinking and experiences
- **LISTEN TOGETHER** for patterns, insights, and deeper questions
- **CONNECT** ideas
- Play, Doodle, Draw

# WORLD CAFÉ ON CONFERENCE RECOMMENDATIONS

## Climate Emergency and Response:

What do you remember? Where were you excited or concerned? What learnings or insights about the topic? Any Recommendations?



## Meaningful Engagement for Happiness, Well-Being and Prosperity

What do you remember? Where were you excited or concerned? What learnings or insights about the topic? How can we achieve prosperity? What are effective ways of making me happy?



## THE POWER OF CONVERSATION



## Social Discourse and Innovations for Community Transformation

What do you remember? Where were you excited or concerned? What learnings or insights about the topic? Any Recommendations?

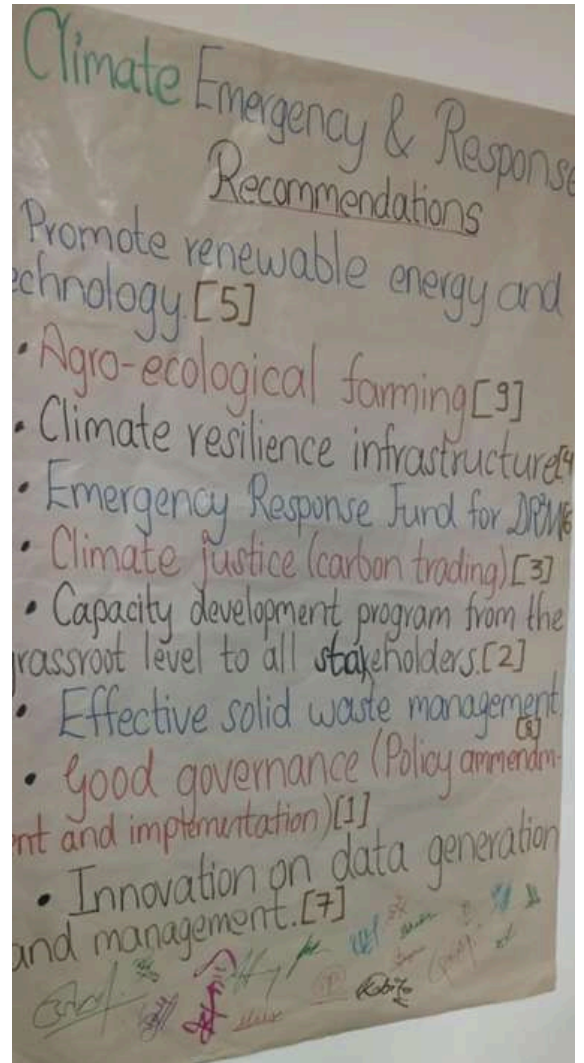


# CONFERENCE RECOMMENDATIONS

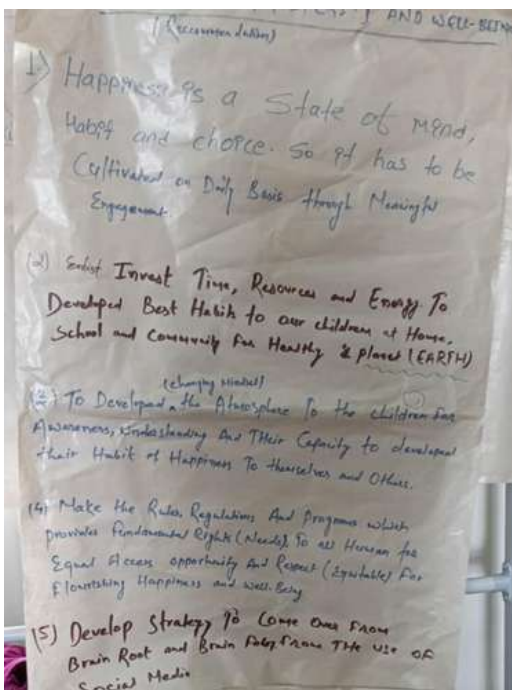
Each theme engaged in deep dialogue and and came up with following recommendation.

## Recommendations for Climate Emergency and Response

1. Good Governance (Policy Amendments and Implementation)
2. Capacity development program from the grass-root level to all stakeholders
3. Climate justice (carbon trading)
4. Climate resilience infrastructure
5. Promote renewal energy and technology
6. Emergency response fund for DRRM
7. Innovation on data generation and management
8. Effective solid waste management
9. Agro-ecological farming



## Recommendations for Meaningful Engagement for Happiness, Well-being and Prosperity



1. Happiness is a state of mind, habit and choice. So it has to be cultivated on Daily Basis through Meaningful Engagement in dialogue, interaction.
2. Invest time, resources and energy to develop best habits to our children at homes, schools and community for healthy and planet (Earth).
3. Changing the mindsets and create atmosphere for children for awareness, understanding and their capacity to develop habit of happiness for themselves and for others.
4. Make the rules, regulations and programs which provide fundamental rights (needs) to all human for equal access, opportunity and respect (equitable) for flourishing, happiness and wellbeing.
5. Develop strategy to come over from brain rot and brain fog from the massive use of social media.
6. Look towards (discovery) the best practices of our ancestors for their livelihood, prosperity and well-being (traditional practices)
7. Encourage use of certain form of arts.

# CONFERENCE RECOMMENDATIONS

## Recommendations for Social Discourse, Innovation and Community Transformation

1. Establishment/promotion of local institutions/forums/allies with network
2. Application of Social Artistry - Bottom up approach
3. Advocacy & lobby for innovative initiation climate change/community heritage/infrastructure/human resource/solide waste management/well-being/happiness/prosperity
4. Advocacy/lobby/Action for revitalization/improvement/expansion of cultural practices (Eg: Rodhi, Chautari, by Organization like ICA Nepal & Imagine Nepal)
5. Coordinate/Facilitate to government & other concern agencies for adapting solid waste management model presented in the conferences
6. Encouraging and providing opportunities for youth to explore interests through community engagement facilitated by organizations similar to ICA & Schools, etc.

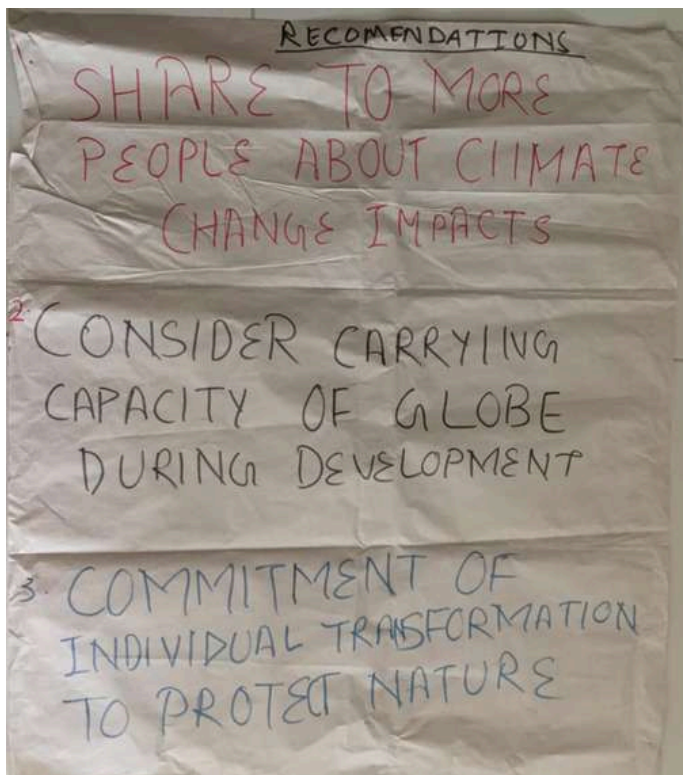
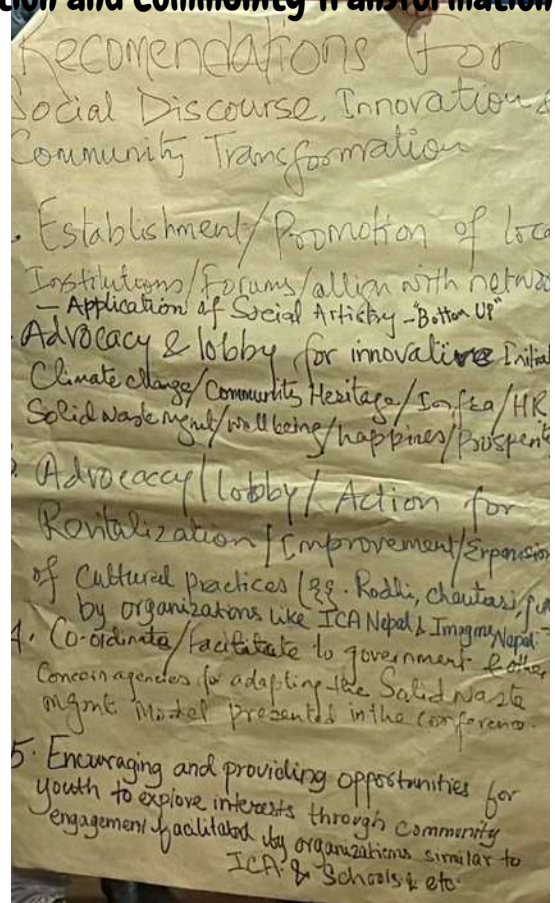




Photo Credit: Michelle Zhang

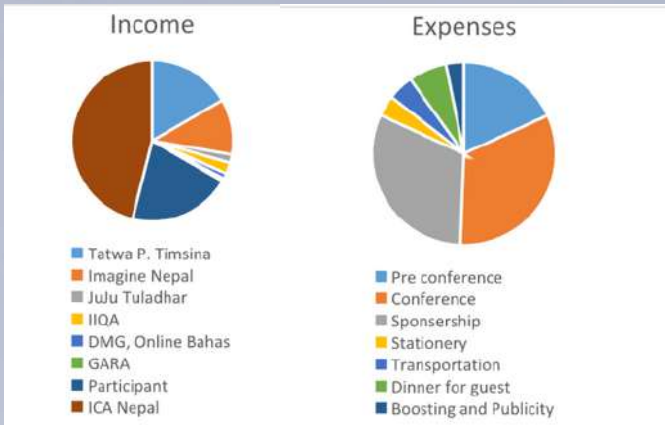


# CLOSING CEREMONY OF THE CONFERENCE

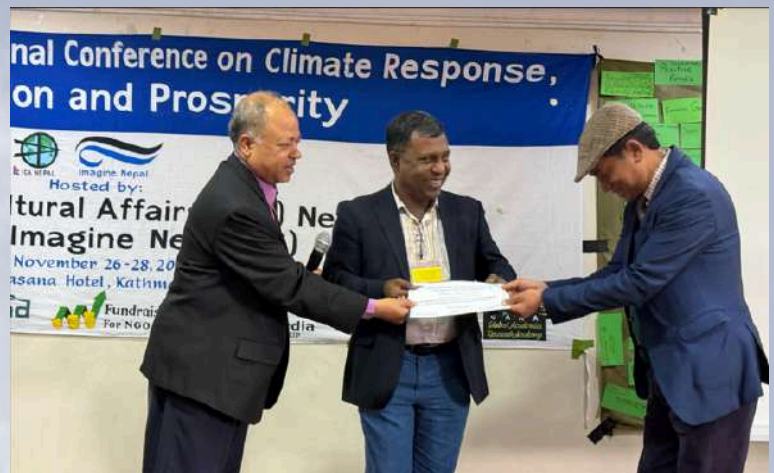


Ms. Ishu Subba, Chairperson of ICA Nepal facilitated the closing ceremony of the conference.

Along with the key announcement, she briefly shared the conference's overall financial report. She thanked all the participants, facilitators, sponsors, and her team mates from ICA Nepal and Imagine Nepal for their support and active participation



The total cost for the conference is approximately NPR 900,000 (including pre conference and post conference event) which was managed by the support of several donors and sponsors.



Certificate of appreciation was handed over to Mr. Prem Bomjan from PENSION VASANA HOTEL.



Closing Remarks were given by Mr. Blase Sands, USA/ICA Nepal, Mr. Khem P. Lohani, Former Member of Parliament, Ms. Rajani Poudel, Nutritionist and Dr. Dhurba Acharya.

# POST-CONFERENCE EVENTS

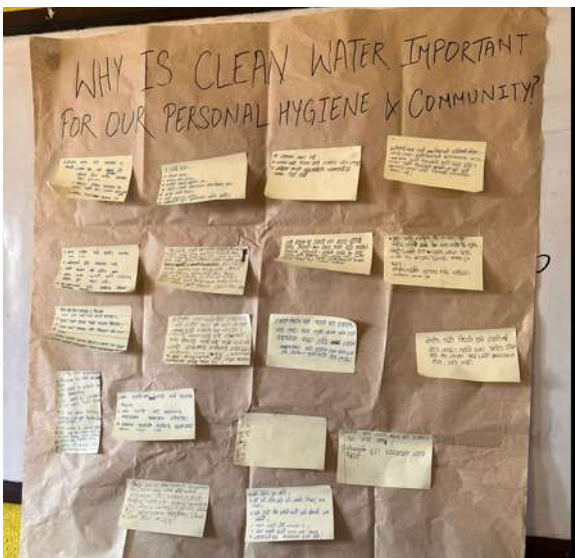
## MEETING WOMEN GROUP AT WOMEN AND CHILDREN LEARNING CENTER, CHANGUNARAYAN BHAKTAPUR



As a part of the Japanese students' SDG Tour, a plantation program has been organized at the Women Children Learning Centre at Changunarayan, Bhaktapur on 28 Nov. 2024. The students attended the Asia Pacific Conference hosted by ICA Nepal also visited several schools and participated in awareness-raising activities ICA Nepal youth wing conducts on issues related to plastic pollution, climate change, menstrual hygiene management etc. The ICA Japan team and students received a grand welcome from Progressive Women Society, a local women's group formed by ICA 20 years back.



During the visit, students who flew from Baltimore, USA and Taiwan worked with the ICA Youth Wing and conducted "Beat the Plastic Pollution", Awareness Raisign Program, a signature program of ICA Nepal Youth Wing.



# Annexes | Online and Social Media Engagement

## जलवायु परिवर्तन र समृद्धि बारे एसिया-प्रसान्त सम्मेलन



आज एक कार्यक्रम बिच तीन दिने 'एसिमा-प्रसान्त जलवायु परिवर्तन तथा समृद्धि' विषयक सम्मेलनको सुरुवात गरियो। आइसीए तथा इम्याजिन नेपालको संयोजनमा भएको उक्त सम्मेलनमा नेपाल लगायत अन्य १० देशको सहभागिता रहेको छ।



## Asia Pacific Regional Conference on Climate Response Begins in Kathmandu

Kathmandu, November 26, 2024 — The Asia Pacific Regional Conference (APRC) on Climate Response, Innovation, and Prosperity commenced today in Kathmandu, marking an essential platform for collaboration among experts, practitioners, and stakeholders across the region. Hosted by the Institute of Cultural Affairs (ICA) Nepal and Imagine Nepal, the conference runs from November 26 to 28, 2024, at Pension Vasana, Dillibazar. This three-day event focuses on



Shreekanta Khatiwada is with Tatwa P. Timsina and 4 others. November 30 at 5:52 AM

Thanks ICA Nepal & Imagine Nepal for this opportunity to present a paper on Climate Change Impact on Mountain Tourism in Nepal, in an international conference at Kathmandu, an interesting event to learn about the climate change, innovation, happiness, human rights & prosperity from the different part of the world, one of the meaningful moment for the memory!! for ever!!!



Rupendra Maharjan is with Janet Sanders and 24 others. November 29 at 1:20 PM

On behalf of the organizing team, I would like to extend our heartfelt gratitude to all the facilitators, paper presenters, esteemed guests, participants, and the entire management team for their invaluable contributions in making the ICA-IN Asia Pacific Regional Conference (APRC) on Climate Response, Innovation, and Prosperity a resounding success. Your dedication, expertise, and engagement throughout the event, guided by the principles of Appreciative Inquiry and Social Artistry, have enriched our discussions and helped us explore critical themes such as climate emergency, well-being, and community transformation. We deeply appreciate your commitment to this important regional gathering, and we look forward to continuing our collective efforts towards a sustainable and prosperous future. Thank you once again for your unwavering support and involvement. **Rupendra Maharjan** General Secretary, **Imagine Nepal** #Imaginenepal #ICA #icanepal ICA Nepal #appreciativeinquiry #SocialArtistry @highlight highlight

RC Lamichhane November 27 at 11:31 PM

Today, I was honored to present on Appreciative Inquiry for Happiness, Well-Being, and Prosperity at the esteemed ICA-IN Conference. The enthusiasm and engagement of the participants, particularly their spirited dance, were profoundly inspiring and uplifting, reflecting the event's vibrant energy. I extend my heartfelt gratitude to ICA, Imagine Nepal, and the entire Conference Management Team for their impeccable organization and support. My special thanks go to Dr. Tatwa P. Timsina, Dr. Dhruba Acharya, Ms. Ishu Subba, and Ms. Janet Sanders for their invaluable contributions, encouragement, and unwavering dedication to making this gathering a remarkable success. Being part of such a transformative and joyous occasion was truly a privilege. **Bina Silwal** Ashbinkumar Pudasaini **Rupendra Maharjan** **Shreekanta Khatiwada** **David Cooperrider** **Lindsey Godwin** **Linda Robson** **Joep C De Jong** **Luk Dewulf** **Luc Verheijen** **Philomena Pragasam** **Philippe Belien** **Loren Weybright**

Sapana Tamang is with Tatwa P. Timsina and 2 others. November 26 at 7:44 PM

लामो समय पछि डाक्टर तत्व प्रसाद दिग्विजित्ना ज्यू को निमन्त्रणाया आइसिप नेपालले आयोजना गरेको वातावरण परिवर्तन, सिर्जना र समृद्धि विकास सम्मेलनमा भाग लिने अवसर मिलेको छ बाश्रा छ अाद सि ए नेपाल ले हाम्रो चापुनारणमा मा रहेको पहिना तथा सिकाई केन्द्र लाई पुन सचलान मा लैराउने छ भने 🙏 यश सम्मेलनमा अमेरिक, क्यानडा, अस्ट्रेलिया, केन्या, बंगलादेश, जापान, चीन भारतका सहजकर्ता र विकासकर्ताहरुको सहभागिता रहेको छ। सम्मेलनको सफलताको हार्दिक शुभकामना !!

Tina Rawal Saud is feeling proud with Enusha Khadka and 2 others. November 26 at 7:19 PM

My daughter Tulip and her team presented on climate change and the role of plastic in the Asia Pacific Regional Conference on Climate Response, Innovation and Prosperity conducted by Institute of Cultural Affairs ICA Nepal and Imagine Nepal. Thank you ICA Nepal for providing her this wonderful learning opportunity

Santosh Dev is with Janet Sanders and 3 others. November 28 at 10:02 PM

ICA-IN Asia Pacific Regional Conference Nov. 26-28, 2024 (२०८१ मंसिर ११ देखी १३ गते) मा अफ्रिका, अस्ट्रेलिया, जापान, अमेरिका, क्यानाडा, चिन, ताइवान, भारत, बंगलादेश र नेपालका सहभागितामा आज सम्पन्न भएको छ।



Michelle LM Zhang is attending Asia Pacific Regional Conference on Climate Response, Innovation, and Prosperity. November 26 at 2:55 PM

It's great to connect friends and colleagues on the conference!

**(APRC) ON CLIMATE RESPONSE, INNOVATION & PROSPERITY**

**26 to 28 Nov. 2024, Kathmandu, Nepal**

The Institute of Cultural Affairs (ICA) Nepal and Imagine Nepal (IN) Invites I/NGOs, groups and individuals dedicated to the transformation of individuals and organisations to join ICA-IN Asia Pacific Regional Conference.



# Words of Appreciation



P.O. Box 76622, Code: 00508, Nairobi, Kenya

Website: [www.icakenya.org](http://www.icakenya.org) Email: [infoicainkenya.org](mailto:infoicainkenya.org)

**Dear Tatwa, Ishu, and the entire staff of the ICA Nepal,**

I hope this letter finds you in the best of health and spirits. I am writing to express my heartfelt appreciation for the gracious invitation extended to me to attend the 3-day Asia-Pacific Conference, which was organized and hosted by the Institute of Cultural Affairs Nepal from November 25th to 28th, 2024. It was truly an honor to participate in such a profound and impactful gathering.

The conference was a testament to the hard work, dedication, and vision of the entire ICA Nepal team. The discussions, insights, and shared experiences have greatly enriched my understanding of the important work being done across the Asia-Pacific region. It was a privilege to engage with such passionate and visionary individuals.

I would like to extend a special thank you to Tatwa and Ishu, whose leadership and unwavering commitment were evident in every aspect of the event. Your efforts in organizing this conference created a platform for meaningful dialogue and collaboration, and it was a pleasure to witness your dedication firsthand.

I would also like to acknowledge the entire staff of ICA Nepal, whose hard work behind the scenes ensured the seamless execution of the conference. Your contributions were invaluable and deeply appreciated.

Once again, thank you for this wonderful opportunity to connect, learn, and grow with the ICA community. I look forward to our continued work together in fostering the shared vision of a more harmonious and sustainable world.

Warm regards,  
Henry Ikatukhu Mpapale

President, Institute of Cultural Affairs International

# Institute of Cultural Affairs International 9th Global Conference on Human Development

## ABOUT ICAI

The Institute of Cultural Affairs (ICAI) is a global community of non-governmental organisation advancing human development worldwide. ICAI is about empowering an authentic and sustainable transformation of individuals, communities and organizations.

## CONFERENCE THEMES

- I. Addressing the impact of climate change locally**  
 This theme will explore what we can do locally to address climate change, adapting to the effects of climate change such as regular flooding, heat waves and droughts.
- II. Innovative and Collaborative Tools**  
 We will be using participatory methods through out the conference, using the wisdom in the room. Motivation that comes from involving everybody shapes decisions and plans. The Journey together and mindset shifts allow change to take place.
- III. Innovations in Social Media for Education**  
 This theme explores social media and social networks as new revolutions in social change.
- IV. Health in a Globally Connected World**  
 This theme will explore lessons learned after COVID, and new approaches to promote health for the future.
- V. The Role of ICT in sustainable development**  
 How is Information and Communication Technology (ICT) enabling development and how is ICAI around the world using it?
- VI. How to localise Sustainable Community Development**  
 This theme will explore the role of local participation in sustainable development with examples.



Linking Sustainable Development to Key Issues of Our Time

**For Details:  
Institute of Cultural Affairs  
Kritimarg, Koteshwor, Kathmandu  
phone: 015147215, 977 9841883077**

## VENUE

Elephant Hills Resort, Victoria Fall



Address: 3822 Lavenham Drive, Bluffhill, Harare, Zimbabwe WhatsApp: +263 773 037258  
 E-mail: geraldgomeni@yahoo.com | Website: www.ica-international.org

Click Here To Register Online or scan 









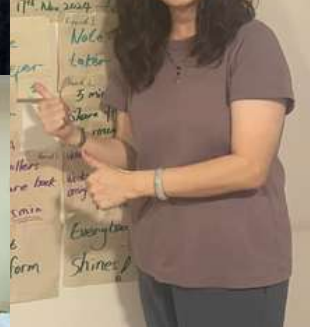


Global Education and Prosperity



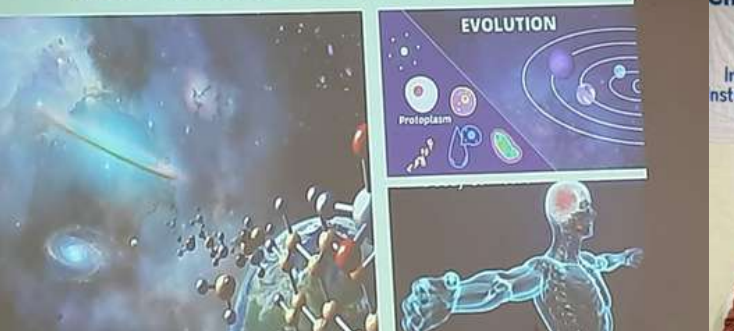
Hosted by: Cultural Affairs and Imagine Nepal

Collaboration on  
Dakshinpur  
improving the  
livelihoods of  
the poor  
Policy Advocacy  
PROPER WASTE  
MANAGEMENT  
PROMOTING  
BIO-GAS  
SOIL CONSERVATION AND REGENERATION  
LIFE STYLE CHANGE





Social Artistry as a Neuroleadership Approach



## Annexes | Article on Rama Community

*Aaniin Indinawemaaganidog,*

Julie Williams indizhnikaz, giigoohn indoodem, Mnjikaning indoonjeba. This is a story about our community as a collective force, united by the love our ancestors have had for us, that we have for each other now, and that we have for those not yet born. It is a story of a powerful moment in time for our Nation, described by many as “a turning point” for Rama, a time that laid the foundation for so much that we benefit from in our community today.

### Introduction

*Ziigwan*, Rama First Nation, 1984 the roads were still dirt, there were vast patches of green and long grasses between the homes along Rama Road heading north. The community was home to the Moccasin shop, church, old band office, old day care centre, a crumbling community hall, volunteer fire department, the marina, a plastic moulding company and an industrial mall. If you remember the 80s and early 90s in Rama you can see these places clearly in the mind’s eye and it evokes a memory of a quieter Rama. The ditches were our playgrounds, dogs roamed and cars turned up dust on the roads. The membership of our nation at that time totaled 513, with 359<sup>1</sup> (271 adults and 88 children) living on the reserve. I was about to become the 89th child very shortly. Nestled warmly in my mother’s womb, our community gathered to discuss our collective future in the Spring of 1984.

It was the community visioning session that would identify early by-laws, community programming and a revitalization of traditional Ojibway culture to Rama. In late 1983 and early 1984 a group of community members came together to begin the process of engaging the community. Marshall Noganosh and Mark Douglas were able to secure funding from federal and provincial government agencies. Using this funding they hired the Institute of Cultural Affairs (ICA) and project lead Jan Sanders to develop a planning process and facilitate skills development to help the community conduct the *Community Social and Recreational Needs Assessment*. The name of the project satisfied the government funding criteria, but funds were creatively used to undertake a broader community visioning process marked by *total* community participation.

After decades upon decades of government instituted paternalism, the impacts of colonialism were present in the daily health, disengagement and general well-being of the community. 1984 re-opened the door to community voice and self-determination by simply asking the people *themselves* what they wanted for our collective future, listening intently, and then driving change through action.

The process included three phases:

Phase I was designed to generate community involvement, and initiate the planning process. It included “Kitchen Dialogues,” input from the young people of Rama, training in group facilitation and preparation for the Community Meeting.

Phase II centred around the Community Meeting, at which a community plan was developed. At the meeting, a community vision was discerned, the underlying obstacles to realizing the vision were identified, strategic proposals were created and a realistic-time-plan for implementation was developed.

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<sup>1</sup> (sadly this number does not reflect our family members who lost status or were disconnected because of various federal government policies and the Indian Act legislation)

Phase III was a reflection back on over 100 accomplishments achieved in Rama initiated by the Community Meeting, measuring the progress made on 26 of the 27 proposal categories identified at the Meeting.<sup>2</sup>

### **Kitchen Dialogues**

Winter of 1984 saw a core committee conduct “Kitchen Dialogues” in which members of the working committee<sup>3</sup> would sit with their fellow Rama community members and just talk. At first, Rama members were sceptical. Of course, the history of federal government overreach in our communities had made members feel “studied to death” without any real consideration for what the members wanted. But the Kitchen Dialogues quickly proved to be very different once people realized that the committee was there to listen and really *hear* them. It was that specific intention to listen that guided the process. Without leading responses, the questions were open ended and allowed people to speak, asking “What are you most proud of?” or “What do you think we need to do to improve the community?” Christine Douglas, who was a committee listener of the Kitchen Dialogues remembered distinctly hearing responses like, “Nobody’s ever asked me before.” She recalled that it was, “the first time ordinary people had their voices heard.” It seems simple, but after years of being prescribed to by various government agencies this was a sort of awakening for some people. The roots of self-determination and a strong sense of identity and self-confidence began as community voices began to be heard. In 1984-1985, Rama community members came together to lend their individual voices to the collective well-being of the whole.

In preparation for this storytelling, I sat in kitchens and at dining tables over several months with a few of the former committee members. They graciously shared their memories and experience with the visioning process. Everyone reflected fondly and warmly on the Kitchen Dialogues. It was a reminder that at our core as Anishinaabeg is a kinship and being in good relations with all of our relatives. The Kitchen Dialogues facilitated the ability to relate with one another and build deeper bonds of connection.

A lot happens when people sit together around a kitchen table, or on the front step, or commune over food. Far from the formality of board rooms or the structure of business meetings, the real conversations of community often happen among friends in casual settings. Previous to the 1984 Visioning, there had been community planning projects that began in a more formal way, or outside entities or governments would come to talk to the community, take what they needed and leave. This kind of extractive or prescriptive approach lacks the essential values of being in good relations and it bypasses the empowerment and strength of a nation to make its own decisions. By 1984 a common sentiment in our community seems to have been that many things were done *for us* or prescribed *to us*. This left people feeling unheard, disempowered and jaded about making contributions, because “why should I tell you what is important to me if you’re not even going to listen?” Thankfully, the Institute of Cultural Affairs (ICA), led by Janet Sanders, understood what it meant to empower a community. As the planning and development consultants, the ICA was focused on building capacity within our community

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<sup>2</sup> Phase I, II, and III content listed here was taken directly from the *Report on the Initial Phase of a Community Social and Recreational Needs Assessment by the Chippewas of the Rama Band*, October 1984, p. 18.

<sup>3</sup> Members of the 1984 Committee included: Edward (Ted) Williams, Arnold Ingersoll, Norm Stinson, Betty Noganosh, George St. Germain, Marjorie George, Ken Snache, Rachel Shilling, Marshall Noganosh and two community facilitator trainees: Christine Douglas and Peggy Sharpe.

and individual members. This meant that their role as facilitators was not the driving force for change or action. Our individual community members and collective voice were the driving force. But after the decades long disenfranchisement of the *Indian Act* that undermined our community's voice, how could this 1984 visioning process be different?

Kitchen Dialogues were the answer. They provided an opportunity for people to be deeply heard and facilitated a rebuilding of relationships and trust among people. The Elders often talk about doing things *in a good way* and I've always taken that to mean that the process is just as important as the outcome. In some ways, HOW you get somewhere is more important than the completed product.

Every single person I spoke to about this project remarked at how important and impactful Kitchen Dialogues were. The Working Committee, Project Manager and two Community Facilitator Trainees, assisted by ICA prepared to meet with every single household in Rama. With the goal of having open human connected dialogue. The working committee wanted to listen and be connected with fellow community members. Community members I spoke with remembered a sense of hesitation at the beginning of the Kitchen Dialogues, as community members were reluctant to engage at first. The style of the Kitchen Dialogues was very open-ended and allowed residents to have as many answers and suggestions as they wished, "This gave the committee in-depth data about all the concerns and issues that residents were willing to share with the interviewers (their neighbours)."<sup>4</sup> Quickly, feelings of reluctance shifted and people began to understand that they were really and truly going to be heard. The Kitchen Dialogues became a defining point of connectedness, empowerment and pride. By the end of that phase of the project in 1984, 90 of the 110 households in Rama had been heard and provided 509 total responses of raw data to inform the future social and recreational needs of Rama First Nation. That really is incredible participation. As word got out about Kitchen Dialogues, the community became more and more excited to be engaged.

#### **"We're Sunrise"**

It was also during the visioning process of 1984 that the Deer over the Sun emblem, that we use to represent our community today, came into being. While there are differing memories of exactly how it came to being, artist Theresa (Terry) Desormeau was the artist who designed it.

In the process of preparing for Kitchen Dialogues and the Community meetings, the need for a representative emblem was required. Members of the planning committee remarked that the community needed to have a flag, something to represent who we are and what it was they were doing in the project. It had to be a representative identity to unify the community and they commissioned Terry to undertake the work of creating it.

By way of providing some historical background for the emblem, there is archival records of Rama Gimaa Mayawassino William Yellowhead, reciting and renewing a wampum belt agreement with the Haudenosaunee in 1840. The recorder of the council renewal recorded that alongside council fires lit at Sault St. Marie, Manitoulin, Penetanguishene and the Credit, there would be a council fire at the Narrows. It was at the Narrows that a white deer/reindeer was placed, which, "signified *superiority*; the dish and ladles at the same place indicated abundance of game and food." The renewal ceremony went

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<sup>4</sup> *Report on the Initial Phase of a Community Social and Recreational Needs Assessment by the Chippewas of Rama First Nation* October 1984. P. 20

on to describe how “...the sun was hung up at the narrows” at the place of the deer/reindeer clan. The Sun represented Creator who would watch over all that had been agreed by our forebearers and for ever after would observe the treaties made between the two parties.<sup>5</sup> But most remarkably, artist Terry Desormeau was not familiar with this history. Terry recalled that Harvey Anderson and my grandfather Leland Williams paid her a visit to offer some story-telling to help with the emblem request. At the time the community still readily identified as the Deer clan and during the visioning there had been discussions of the sunrise. Marjorie George stated, “We’re Sunrise” and the Seniors identified the term “sunset seniors” which both obviously evoked the sun. From those brief discussions, Terry came up with the deer over the sun emblem which had originally been painted on hide (the original painting on hide is still somewhere in the community as of 2023). The design also included the writing of different words to represent the planning process: vision, obstacles, proposals, tactics and implementation.

My father, Edward (Ted) Williams, remembers that time as a turning point for Rama, “it became a symbol for the community of success, progress and working together.” He remembers it as a new day, new beginning or new dawn which aptly fit with the representation of the Sun. He also recalled the slogan that was also created around this time. In keeping with the feeling of new beginnings, the community adopted a phrase to represent the ever-present dignity that our community maintained while persisting and adapting through significant changes. At a time when the community sought to turn a corner and provide inspiration, they came up with the phrase “Proud, progressive First Nation community.” When I reflect on the symbolism of the deer, the sun, and this statement, I look back from where I stand today through the years to 1984 and see the truth in them and these symbols have guided us well.

### Community Meeting and Development of Community Plan

The community meeting was held April 13-15, 1984 at the former Geneva Park. Over three days, members gathered together and engaged in an atmosphere of what many described as communal with “lots of laughing and teasing.” I can almost hear “haaa” and “chaaa” and “holay” in a room of belly laughs.

When Rama members entered the space, they immediately saw their own statements from the Kitchen Dialogues reflected in the key strategic proposals around the room. Things like “Developing Water System Plan,” “Community

COMMUNITY MEETING PREPARATION

## RAMA COMMUNITY MEETING

GENEVA PARK YMCA CONFERENCE CENTRE  
APRIL 13<sup>th</sup> 14<sup>th</sup> & 15<sup>th</sup> 1984

FREE BABYSITTING at RAMA DAY CARE  
Ages 2-8 yrs.  
(BRING A LUNCH, BEVERAGES PROVIDED)

EVERYONE WELCOME PLEASE ATTEND

- FREE MEALS
- FREE BUS TRANSPORTATION:

Friday 6:30 p.m.	-	Return 10:30 p.m.
Saturday 8:30 a.m.	-	Return ?
Sunday 8:30 a.m.	-	Return 1:00 p.m.

Early registration will be appreciated to confirm arrangements.

Cash offerings will be accepted during meeting to defray expenses.

PLEASE TEAR OFF AND RETURN PART BELOW

REGISTER ME FOR THE "RAMA COMMUNITY MEETING" April 13 - 15/84, GENEVA PARK Y.M.C.A. CONFERENCE CTR.

NAME \_\_\_\_\_  
ADDRESS \_\_\_\_\_  
TELEPHONE # \_\_\_\_\_

I WILL ATTEND: APRIL 13, FRIDAY 7:00 p.m. - 10:00 p.m. \_\_\_\_\_ LUNCH \_\_\_\_\_ SUPPER \_\_\_\_\_  
APRIL 14, SATURDAY 9:00 a.m. - 7:00 p.m. \_\_\_\_\_  
APRIL 15, SUNDAY 9:00 a.m. - 12:30 p.m. \_\_\_\_\_

DAY CARE SERVICES REQUIRED: YES \_\_\_ NO \_\_\_ FOR HOW MANY? \_\_\_\_\_

FRIDAY, 6:30 p.m. - 10:30 p.m.	_____
SAT. 8:30 a.m. - 7:30 p.m.	_____
SUN. 8:30 a.m. - 1:00 p.m.	_____

PLEASE RETURN TO THE RAMA BAND OFFICE BEFORE "APRIL 3, 1984" OR YOUR SOCIAL/RECREATIONAL NEEDS INTERVIEWER.

FOR MORE INFORMATION CALL PEGGY SHARPE, CHRISTINE DOUGLAS OR MARSHALL NOGANSKI AT 325-3611

<sup>5</sup> Peter Jones and G. Osborn, *History of the Ojebway Indians: With Especial Reference to their Conversion to Christianity*. Leopold Classic Library, Original publisher - London: A.W. Bennett, 1861, pp.121-122

Newsletter" and "Traditional Language and Craft Classes" were reflected back to them under different groupings that represented the broader needs associated with Environment, Government, Economy, Identity and Education, Community, Togetherness and Community Skills.

RAMA COMMUNITY STRATEGIC PROPOSALS						
SHAPING COMMUNITY CONSENSUS		BUILDING COMMUNITY STRENGTH			CREATING COMMUNITY UNITY	
ENVIRONMENT IMPROVED A	RESTRUCTURED BAND GOVERNMENT B	ECONOMIC BASE ESTABLISHED C	SELF-WORTH & IDENTITY THRU EDUCATION D	REGULAR COMMUNITY GATHERINGS E	COMMUNICATIONS FOR TOGETHERNESS F	COMMUNITY SKILLS BANK G
DEVELOPING WATER SYSTEM PLAN (Specialist & task force) 1	REVAMPED COMMITTEE MANAGEMENT 3	TOTAL COMMUNITY TOURISM PROJECT 7	RAMA STORY (Elders involved, family tree research) 11	"THINK POSITIVE" BAND CAMPAIGN 14	COMMUNITY NEWSLETTER 18	TRADITIONAL LANGUAGE & CRAFT CLASSES (Dance, drum, trapping) 22
	FUND RAISING BOARD (Advisors & proposal 4 writers) 4	CO-OPERATIVE FINANCING SCHEMES (Store, & credit union) 8	JOB TRAINING (Future needs, practical experience & trng courses) 12	HERITAGE DAYS (Sports, cookouts, dances 15 & costumes) 15	BAND COUNCIL REPORTING 19	
SEARCHING FOR REGIONAL LINKAGES (Research & share) 2	WOMEN'S DECISION-MAKING AND RIGHTS 5	MONEY-RAISING ACTIVITIES 9	NATIVE LEADERSHIP (Georgian Bay School & leadership training) 13	VOLUNTEER WORK FORCES (Clean up, Arbor Day) 16	EVENING COUNCIL FORUMS (Issues, 20 questions) 20	HUMAN RESOURCES INVENTORY & USE 23
	JUNIOR COUNCIL 6	BAND OWNED & MANAGED VENTURES (Bingo, quarry, marina, con-10 structure co) 10	"FUTURE FOR CHURCH" (Survey, events) 17	APPRECIATION/ RECOGNITION OCCASIONS 21		
MULTI-FUNCTIONAL COMMUNITY CENTRE						
RECREATIONAL PROGRAMMES 24	CENTRE DESIGN 25	ELDER'S CLUB 26	YOUTH ORGANIZATION 27			

6

Much of what can be seen here, are the early ideas that would eventually become the water treatment plant, the *Ojibway Times*, the MASK, By-law to tie up dogs, and even the Pow Wow. Aho!

During the Spring 1984 Community Meeting, the *Rama Community Time Plan* was created and it identified which proposals would be undertaken in priority order:

- 1<sup>st</sup> Priority - (Immediate action in 6 Months)
- 2<sup>nd</sup> Priority - (Medium Range 6 Months – 1 Year)
- 3<sup>rd</sup> Priority - (Longer Range 1-2 years)

<sup>6</sup> Report on the Initial Phase of a Community Social and Recreational Needs Assessment by the Chippewas of the Rama Band, October 1984, p.37



But perhaps more importantly what came out of the meeting was a sense of community and pride.

### The Aspirations of the Deer Clan

One of the greatest examples of community and kinship was a collaboratively written letter to us, those that came after. I've heard from several Anishinaabeg historians that they have been taught to understand history as a journey of self discovery and that on this journey we are never alone. Our old people and our ancestors have been leaving things along the way, our job is to pick up what they've left along the path for us. During the Community Meeting of Spring 1984, our people, our kin, many of whom have moved onto the spirit world now, left something along the path for us to pick up. This is the letter they left us:

COMMUNITY MEETING DOCUMENT		
Rama Community Meeting	THE ASPIRATIONS OF THE DEER CLAN	13-15 April 1984
LENS		Rama, Ontario
<p>In the early days we and our tepees were moved from Orillia to the Narrows and then moved again to Rama where we have stayed to this day. One of our great chiefs was Canice, who used to go around to the houses to see if each one had provisions. If they did not, he took a team of horses and went to find provisions for the people.</p> <p>We had an old Methodist church, built about 1836, but this church's steeple was destroyed by lightening. The people decided that the building was no longer safe, and in 1909, we built a new church which still stands to this day. The church has been a source of faith and strength for Rama through good times and hard times.</p> <p>In the late 1800's the Rama Silver Nightengale Band was formed. By the 1930's we had 28 men playing trombones, clarinets, saxophone, bass, and french horn. They played marches, waltzes, and sacred music. When World War II came, the men went to war and the band broke up.</p> <p>In 1921, a baseball field was built by our forefathers. We played for many years without a league. In 1949, we formed the North Ontario League For Rama and several white teams. We called this a "bush league", but we had uniforms which we bought with money raised by holding dances in the reserve. The field is here to this day, with grandstands now added.</p> <p>The 1930's were very hard times for our people. The depression hit and there was no work for most of the men. Some made bows and arrows, ax and hammer handles...anything they could try to sell at the market in Orillia. Every Saturday was an open-air market. During these 10-12 years, until factories and employment came again, we learned how to keep the wolf from the door. Then, when work started, some of the women were able to work at the wool mill for 25¢ per hour. Many men worked at the foundry for 35 ¢ per hour.</p> <p>With the departure of the Indian agent, Rama, as a whole, began to develop its self-esteem. Our people had a new opportunity to take more responsibility for the life of the community. With that control mechanism out of place, other sources of funding started to emerge, creating self-confidence. This in-turn, started us toward implementing our social and recreational goals, such as the Dart Club, Lions Club, Moose Lodge, and Indian management at the local level. It provided somewhat of a perpetual motion, for along with that came the right to vote and women councillors on the reserve. This was a time of the best for all concerned.</p> <p>Since before the 70's, we have led the way for other reserves in developing and modernizing Rama community. To look at our community, you would think we were anything but an Indian reservation. We got our firehall and daycare centre in the 70's, new offices, and job opportunities in new factories. In some ways, we out-distanced many of the surrounding non-native communities. We have advanced quickly, because when we got the better education of the 60's and 70's, we were able to get the better funding that goes with being able to understand the funding process.</p>		



Rama opened its own social services; Police Department, Health Clinic, Fire Department - on our way to self-sufficiency. We created more educated community members for better jobs and better local health care. We are depending on ourselves to look after Rama.

There is lots of enthusiasm in our community. At the Rama Community Fun Day, families were involved together. The young girls of our community are excited about the new Brownies and Guides organization, which gives Monday night a new meaning. Young and old enjoy the fun of making floats for the Santa Claus Parade. The Daycare, the Recreation committee and our faithful Fire Truck all deserve and receive community support. We recognize a drinking problem, and with A.A. in Rama it is on the way to being solved.

The recent Native Language course had our full support; we all are eager to learn. This first conference is an overwhelming success with a great turnout.

In the future we see the Deer Clan hosting "Rama Indian Days", a celebration and meeting with other tribes from different reserves. This will bring us together - elders, adults and children. We will learn the different dances of other tribes and share traditional foods; scones, barbecues, and soups. In this way, the Deer Clan will show its new unity of purpose and helpfulness. We are setting out on an exciting new voyage. Good luck to the inheritors of our future!

"Good Luck to the Inheritors of Our Future!" is a statement that hits deep. It reminds us today, that all of those before us were thinking of us, and those not yet to come. They send us what support they could/can, even to this day.

These are the lessons and values that continue to make impact here, not just as a community, but as a Nation. It is the understanding, that despite all of challenges we have faced as people, that we are connected. Beyond that, the letter exemplifies a pride we've always had as a community to continue to grow and prosper while keeping the wellbeing of others in mind. These are values that continue to underpin the nature of our community. Our forebearers set the foundations of our community into motion so that we could learn to thrive in our own time. It really is powerful what a well-defined community vision and collectivism can achieve.

### Phase III – New Programs

Out of the 1984 Community Meeting the people organized themselves into action as new committees were set up and old ones revitalized. It resulted in 70 new people taking greater involvement in committees that would serve the community. The process had facilitated the needs assessment but community empowerment and involvement was activated to implement their collective goals. They began to take action! It really is the story of self-determination. As the letter above highlights, the heavy hand of government through the Indian Agent had weighed immensely on that sense of self-determination, but the authentic reengagement of the community began to reignite the flame.

Within six months there was an expansion of participation and shared responsibility. In order to continue that momentum, the project was extended an additional six months with the funding arriving in February 1985.



The next phase sought to intensify training community members as facilitators, and planning and implementation. Over several months community members were trained up in various skills in order for the community to retain the capacity to carry on the planning and implementation efforts.

During the training process, the community trainees began to design the next community meeting. The design sought to identify the priorities for the community year and create the plan of action to implement those priorities. The community meeting was designed to foster community pride, encourage diverse methods of participation and expression, and celebrate their accomplishments up to that point.

In May of 1985, members of the community met at Geneva Park to talk, learn and plan how to move their community vision forward. The day opened with Elder Fred Wheatley offering a sweetgrass smudge and welcoming remarks from Chief Norm Stinson. Chief Stinson offered insights into community priorities at the time and highlighted their collective accomplishments since the community meeting the year prior. Marshall Noganosh then outlined the goals and activities for the day.

Out of that meeting, Rama identified three key areas: **Social Development, Human Development and Economic Development.**

Under Social Development the community wanted to see the enhancement of recreational programs, the building of a new community hall, and other protective community developments such as Block Parents.

In the area of Human Development, the top priority was to hold a Pow Wow, build a new hall at the church and develop a new community newsletter called the Ojibway Times.

Economic Development saw the desire to establish a Piggery on Chief Island and a Forest Improvement Greenhouse.

In addition to those immediate priorities, there were long-term goals such as: a new recreation facility, playground equipment, library, counseling services, expanded educational opportunities, senior citizens home, language revitalization, better housing, street lights, upgraded water system, band-owned ventures and a community garden.

Stop and read that all back. How incredible to see that nearly all of these goals have now been achieved. The community defined the vision they saw for themselves and then went and made it happen. The 1984-85 community visioning was essential to the growth of the community. The vision was set and it all eventually came to pass.

In the early 1990s, after Rama had identified the desire to prioritize economic development, it was decided that the community would put forward a bid to host a newly proposed Casino. My dad, Gimaa Ted (Edward) Williams led the team that developed and submitted the bid. After lots of hard work our community won the bid and the time came to negotiate the community benefits. My Dad was then able to go to the negotiation table with those community priorities. The way he describes it evokes the power of the nations collective vision; he went into that negotiation knowing he had the backing and collective force of the community. It was all there in the visioning. It was through that negotiation that the MASK and Seniors Home were built. When he tells the story, it is clear that the strength of the community supported him. It was with that collective strength he told the Casino people, "I cannot leave



this negotiation without those things for my community.” When a nation has a clear vision, developed from the collective desire and efforts of the people, it’s the power of the collectivity that brings them to fruition. Together, we are so powerful that it strengthens each of us individually in turn as well. With that increased capacity we bring the same energy to our current collective visions in service to those next seven generations.

So to all those that dreamed up the vision of our community, that defined the Aspirations of the Deer Clan, *apiji go miigwech* from the future ancestors.

### **Sparks of Anishinaabek Governance**

In the time before European contact, our Anishinaabek ancestors organized themselves through the Clans. The Clan system is a sophisticated way for families to relate to one another, contribute to the collective well-being, and the health and safety of the community. The Clan system was the forum for decisions to be made. At clan meetings, each clan member had the opportunity to speak and contribute to the decision-making process. Once a clan had reached a consensus voice and approach, their collective thoughts, concerns, gifts and considerations were conveyed to the clans that they were connected to. For example, as Fish clan, we are connected to the Loon and Crane clans, as advisors to our internal and external Chiefs, our “Fishly” gifts were the lens through which we offered careful consideration on community decisions. In this way, every voice was heard and contributed to community decision making. Guided as well, by the clan teachings, and our central Seven Grandfather Teachings, our community would collectively determine the forward-looking vision and agree on how to work together to make it happen. In this way we became one mind, strengthened by our common goals and vision for the next seven generations.

The Centre for First Nations Governance (CFNG) has identified Five Pillars of Effective Governance, they include: The People, The Land, Laws and Jurisdiction, Governing Systems, and Resources. In the context of the 1984 visioning session, I think The People pillar is quite relevant. The CFNG in partnership with First Nations across Canada have identified key principles of this pillar and they include the centrality of the people / citizens of a nation as the rights holders.

**The People** therefore are the only ones that can identify the shared vision. As our rights as First Nations people are collectively held, that means that our self-determination is also a collective activity, requiring the voice and participation of the community as a whole. This includes decision-making processes that are open, inclusive and appropriate for the community. Finally, meaningful information sharing is also required as part of this effective pillar of governance. As I’ve gone through all the documents of the 1984 Visioning and through my discussions with community members who worked on or participated in the project, it is clear to me that what took place was in alignment with the *principles* of the Clan System (even if the Clan system wasn’t visible, the essence of its values were) and the principles of The People pillar of effective governance were present. Communities and nations are even more powerful when their approaches and systems are culturally grounded. It excites me to consider how current generations continue to develop and implement the community goals while expanding the vision of the future to put into action.

### **Reflections**

When reflecting back on the Community Visioning of 1984-1985 we can clearly see the revitalization of self-determination within Rama. The Kitchen Dialogues facilitated active reengagement of the individual and communal voices that drive change. Through thoughtful engagement and planning the community articulated its needs and vision for the future of Rama. The process was guided by emblems and values that underpinned the collective power of the nation. Members were then trained up and mobilized into action! It is an important reminder that nothing happens, nothing changes without our commitment to that action and it all starts with the people.

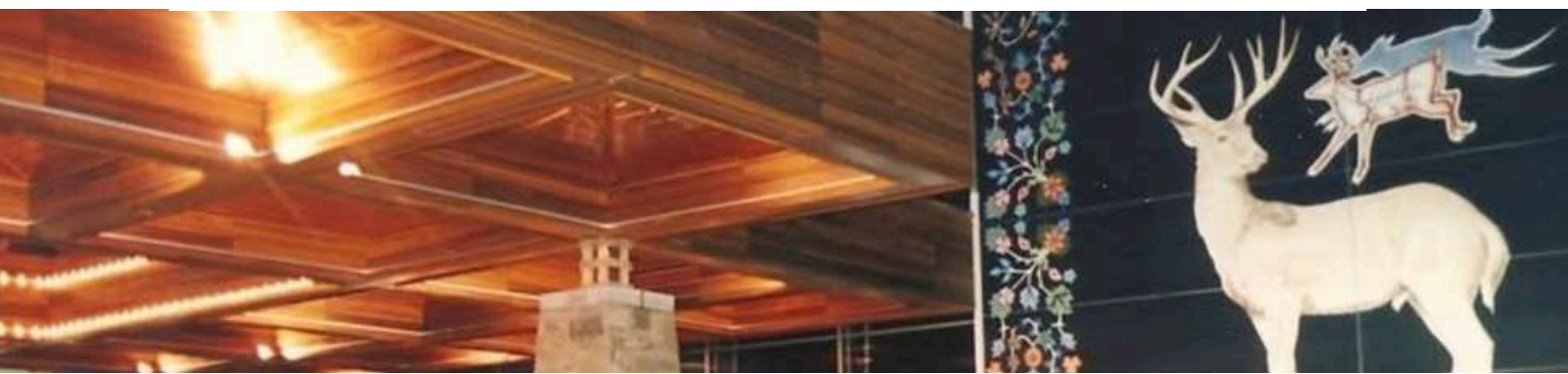




Photo Credit: Michelle Zhang



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