



IMPACT NEWSLETTER

SEPTEMBER - DECEMBER 2023 EDITION

Dear Team,

We are pleased to present you the Impact Newsletter for the months of September - December, 2023. This newsletter will serve as a regular communication tool to keep us informed and connected on important events and happenings in the Impact team.

We appreciate your help and positive feedback regarding the newsletter initiative throughout the last few months and we look forward to your continued support in the upcoming days as well.

If you want to volunteer or contribute to any upcoming newsletter(s), please do not hesitate to contact pragya.pokharel@upaya.com.np. We also welcome any feedback or suggestions you may have.

If you wish to unsubscribe from the monthly Impact Newsletter then please send an email to pragya.pokharel@upaya.com.np.



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WORKSHOP ON ESG

On the 19th of October 2023, our dedicated impact team from Upaya actively participated in a comprehensive workshop centered around the Environmental, Social, and Governance (ESG) - Sustainability Framework. This enlightening session was organized by Sustainability Solutions, within the facilitation of Mr. Sandeep Shrestha. The core emphasis of the workshop was directed towards exploring the Performance Standards set forth by the International Finance Corporation (IFC) in the context of ESG considerations.

Mr. Shrestha, with his insightful guidance, skillfully navigated the intricacies of risk management within the framework of sustainability. An aspect that captivated our attention during the workshop was the transformative perspective that risk management isn't merely a defensive strategy but can, in fact, be harnessed as an opportunity for organizational growth. The concept that managing risks can, in itself, generate positive impacts became a focal point, broadening our understanding of the interconnected nature of risk and impact within a company's operations.

A particularly engaging segment of the workshop involved interactive group activities. Participants were divided into groups and each group was assigned diverse case studies, challenging us to delve into real-world scenarios where the delicate balance of ESG considerations had been tested. The task at hand was to meticulously identify potential risks and discern the specific Performance Standard from the IFC that might be compromised in each case.



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This group based approach encouraged dynamic discussions and knowledge exchange among participants. Analyzing actual case studies allowed us to practically apply the theoretical concepts shared during the workshop, deepening our comprehension of how ESG frameworks operate in real world situations.

Our participation in this Sustainability Framework workshop proved to be an enriching journey. It not only broadened our understanding of the IFC's Performance Standards but also instilled a nuanced perspective on risk management as a catalyst for positive impact within the realm of ESG.



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UPAYA'S DASHAIN CELEBRATION BRINGS EVERYONE TOGETHER

In a spirit of togetherness and festive cheer, Upaya's Employee Engagement Committee organized a memorable Dashain Celebration. The committee, driven by a commitment to enhancing our work culture, planned an event that ensured every Upaya employee could partake in the festivities.

The celebration unfolded with an array of engaging games that sparked laughter and friendly competition among colleagues. The air was filled with infectious energy as vibrant dance performances took center stage, adding a touch of artistic flair to the occasion.

What made this celebration truly special was the collective gathering of the entire Upaya family at a central location. In this shared space, colleagues from different departments and teams came together, reinforcing the sense of unity that defines our workplace identity.

Beyond the joyous revelry, the event served a deeper purpose – strengthening the bonds that weave our professional community together. It provided an invaluable opportunity for colleagues to connect on a personal level, fostering a supportive and collaborative atmosphere.

As we fondly reflect on this Dashain Celebration, our heartfelt gratitude goes to the Employee Engagement Committee for their unwavering dedication and thoughtful planning. Their efforts not only made this event a success but also exemplified the Upaya spirit of unity, and shared joy.





BII SESSION ON ESG

BII recently organized a virtual session focusing on Environmental, Social, and Governance ESG. The session comprised five informative seminars, each catering to different aspects of ESG implementation.

The first seminar provided an introduction to ESMS (Environmental and Social Management System) for beginners, ensuring that everyone, regardless of their familiarity with the topic, could build a foundational understanding.

The second seminar explored how ESMS could function as a powerful tool for robust management, emphasizing its significance in shaping the overall strength of the company.

The third seminar was particularly interesting as it delved into the process of building an effective ESMS and shed light on how individuals contribute to the development of systems. It underscored the human element in creating and sustaining robust ESG frameworks within an organization.

The fourth seminar took a forward-looking approach by discussing strategies for future-proofing an ESMS. As the business landscape evolves, ensuring that ESG practices remain relevant and effective is crucial, and this session addressed potential challenges and proactive measures to maintain the resilience of ESMS.



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Finally, the fifth seminar focused on labor and human resource management within the ESG framework. It explored how organizations can effectively manage their workforce while aligning with environmental and social responsibilities, providing valuable insights into creating a harmonious workplace.

Overall, the sessions provided a comprehensive overview of ESG principles, from the basics for beginners to advanced topics like future proofing. The interactive nature of the seminars, combined with the mandatory participation of key personnel from risk management and various departments, ensured that the insights gained could be effectively applied within the organizational context.

Attendance in the sessions was made mandatory for all members of the risk management committee, as well as for the designated focal points from each vertical and department. This deliberate inclusion of key personnel aimed to ensure a comprehensive understanding and engagement with the critical topics covered in the virtual sessions on Environmental, Social, and Governance (ESG). By involving individuals from risk management and various departments, the organization sought to foster a holistic approach to integrating ESG principles into its overall operational framework.



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TATA EV PURCHASE AND FEMALE DRIVER PARTNER

ZERO EMISSION

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In our recent stride towards sustainability, we embarked on a significant journey by acquiring an electric vehicle (EV) from Sipradi. This decision is not about updating our fleet, it is a deliberate move reflecting our unwavering commitment to environmental responsibility and a greener future. To operate this vehicle, we have a female driver. This decision to onboard a female driver for the EV is not just about navigating the roads with a sustainable vehicle. Rather is a narrative of empowerment, a story that challenges preconceived notions and underscores our belief in providing equal opportunities for the skilled regardless of gender. As we unfold this story, it is not just a new addition to our fleet, it is about fostering a workplace that promotes diversity, empowerment and a greener, more sustainable future for the logistics industry.



RISK MANAGEMENT MEETING

On October 3rd, 2023, our risk management meeting was conducted with a primary focus on delving into the organization's Environmental and Social Risk Management landscape. The agenda prominently featured updates on compliance efforts, shedding light on the organization's strategies to align with environmental and social standards. This encompassed discussions on risk identification, assessment, and mitigation strategies tailored to the unique challenges associated with the organization's operations.

The spotlight on Environmental and Social Risk Management not only underscores the organization's dedication to meeting regulatory requirements but also reflects a proactive commitment to instilling sustainable and responsible business practices. These meetings stand as pivotal forums fostering transparency and accountability within the organization.



UPAYA'S HEALTH CAMP INITIATIVE FOR RIDER AND DRIVER WELL-BEING

At Upaya, ensuring the well-being of our riders and drivers who dedicate themselves to delivering exceptional service is at the core of our values. The recent Health Camp, held from the 24th to the 29th of December at Ek Ek Paila Community Health Center, was a sincere effort to prioritize the health of our riders and.

With 62 active participants, the Health Camp offered comprehensive health screenings, eye refraction tests, dental consultations, and general medical check-ups. Our aim was not just routine check-ups but a holistic approach to address various aspects of their well-being.

The valuable feedback from participants underscored a specific need for mental health support. This input has guided our future plans as we consider incorporating dedicated sessions to address these concerns. This adjustment reflects our responsiveness to the genuine needs of our drivers and riders, acknowledging the challenges they face on the road.

At Upaya, we view these initiatives as part of our ongoing commitment to supporting our essential partners. Our focus remains on creating an environment where our riders and drivers feel genuinely cared for, recognizing



BREAKING BARRIERS : SAMKISHYA THAPA'S LEADING ROLES IN UPAYA'S TRAINING INITIATIVES

Upaya goes above and beyond by extending its rider/driver training initiatives beyond the valley. A clear example of this commitment is shown by Samikshya Thapa, Lead of Learning and Development, who undertakes solo journeys outside the valley to conduct training sessions specifically for full truck load drivers. Samikshya's dedication has taken her to diverse locations, including Bhairahawa, Simara, Hetauda, Nepalgunj, and Biratnagar. Throughout her travels, she has fearlessly broken down barriers, overcoming geographical constraints, and providing valuable training to rooms filled with male participants. Samikshya's efforts highlight Upaya's commitment to reaching and empowering drivers across various regions, fostering a culture of inclusivity and skill development.



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It was a proud moment for us to see Samikshya Thapa, Lead of Learning and Development, engaging and training male drivers about digital and financial literacy. For a company that believes and implements a full gender inclusion, Samikshya has proven to everybody that a woman can stand confidently in front of a room full of male driver partners, lead and teach them the operational modality of the Upaya. I personally am proud of her achievement and leadership in this regard. This is called “breaking barriers” for all the stereotype approach which is currently predominated by male gender in the Transport division. Upaya is using its technology to create more inclusion of women in this sector for easy and convenient operation wherein women are encouraged to participate in this industry and it started with training led by women and we are confident the current landscape will change and evolve into more inclusion in days to come. ”

- Suman Rayamajhi



VIRTUAL WORKSHOP ON SEXUAL HARASSMENT BY SWEDFUND

Swedfund recently organized an insightful one-day virtual workshop focused on training related to Swedfund's Good Practice Handbook on the Prevention of and Response to Sexual Exploitation, Abuse, and Harassment. In this session, two members from our Impact team actively participated, engaging in valuable discussions and training activities aimed at fostering a thorough understanding of the handbook's guidelines. This initiative not only highlights our commitment to upholding the highest standards of ethical conduct but also signifies our dedication to creating a safe and respectful environment within the organization. The participation of our team members in such workshops underscores our proactive approach to ensuring a workplace culture that prioritizes the prevention and appropriate response to instances of sexual exploitation, abuse, and harassment.





ESG LEARNING AND SHARING SESSION

Dolma Impact Fund recently took the initiative to organize an ESG (Environmental, Social, and Governance) learning and sharing session. During this event, ESG specialists representing notable organizations such as Foodmandu, Chirayu Hospital, and a hydropower company gathered to collaboratively discuss their challenges and share valuable insights gained from their experiences. This endeavor marked a novel experience for all involved, offering a unique opportunity for mutual learning and knowledge exchange.

Participating in this collective learning endeavor provided a unique and enriching experience for us. Drawing insights from diverse perspectives within the ESG domain, the session served as a platform for mutual knowledge exchange. Excitingly, this initiative is set to become a regular occurrence. Going forward, it is planned to be a bi-monthly event, where every other month, participants will convene in a new space. This ongoing series aims to foster a continuous platform for professionals to come together, explore diverse perspectives, and collectively contribute to the broader understanding of ESG practices. The commitment to visiting new locations ensures a dynamic and enriched learning environment, facilitating a constant evolution of insights and knowledge in the realm of ESG.



EMBRACING ECO-FRIENDLY PRACTICES: USING KHAALISISI'S SERVICES FOR SUSTAINABLE WASTE MANAGEMENT

In our ongoing efforts to embrace sustainability, we have joined hands with Khaalिसisi for an innovative waste management initiative. As part of this collaboration, Khaalिसisi will be responsible for collecting recyclable waste from our building. This strategic alliance not only aligns with our dedication to sustainable practices but also emphasizes our proactive role in promoting an eco-friendly approach to waste management.

