

MAW Skills Academy

Bridging human resource gap and providing gainful employment through market-led skilling in Heavy Equipment Operation and Maintenance Sector

MAW Earth Movers Pvt. Ltd. (MEPL)'s partnership with UKaid सीप is designed to bridge skilling gaps and provide gainful employment for Nepali youth in Heavy Equipment Operation and Mechanics job roles via state-of-the-art Operator Training Centres—aligned with international JCB and national Council for Technical Education and Vocational Training (CTEVT) standards— at Provinces 2, Bagmati and Lumbini. Using an industry-led system-strengthening approach, this partnership established an industry-led MAW Skills Academy that is working with local training institutions, Government, and NGOs to upgrade and expand employment-linked training delivery capabilities and access in underserved geographic regions of Nepal.

The construction industry contributes to an estimated 10 - 11% of Nepal's GDP and nearly 14% of total employment. In 2018 alone, the construction sector contributed NPR 55 billion to Nepal's GDP (MoF, 2017/18). With infrastructure development and post-earthquake reconstruction being key priorities of the Government of Nepal, construction industry has great potential for growth. Data from the Department of Transport Management (DoTM) suggests a growing trend of heavy equipment being imported and used for various jobs. Multiple construction projects like hydropower, airport, road, and irrigation, among others are underway in the country which have led to a significant rise in demand for heavy equipment operators—indicative of the potential to create direct employment for large number of operators and mechanics. However, there is a stark shortage of skilled and licensed human resources to operate and maintain the operators. In this backdrop, सीप and MEPL came together to expand and enhance the capabilities of training centres—to build stronger skilling and livelihood support system for disadvantaged groups.

KEY FACTS:

Duration: September 2019 - August 2021

Geographic coverage: Janakpur, Province 2, Bhaktapur, Bagmati, and Nepalgunj, Lumbini Province

Key highlights:

- Establishment of MAW Skills Academy as an independent industry-led training institution.
- Co-location of training facilities with infrastructure development in Province 2 and Lumbini Province to enhance access of underserved disadvantaged youth.
- Fee-based training model established to enable self-sustainability of the academy beyond project support.
- Simulator-based training for safe, flexible and convenient skilling with none of the running costs associated with learning on real machines. Design of terrain tracks to be used for skilling in a range of terrains.
- Adoption of JCB Simulator Standard Operating Procedure, developed by JCB India for simulator-based training.
- International certification to training graduates from JCB to increase graduates' employability in Nepal and abroad.
- Active engagement with provincial and local governments to unlock funds from them in skilling leading to employment.



Anjali Devi (left) during her training, through scholarship via MAW Foundation, at Janakpur and Chuna Magar (right) in Bhaktapur OTC. Courtesy: MEPL

Summary of Activities

- Establish new training facility at Janakpur, Province 2, and upgrade existing facilities at Nepalgunj, Lumbini Province, and Bhaktapur, Bagmati Province for improved access and quality for young men and women to avail job-aligned training.
- Develop/upgrade training curricula and delivery capacity of training institutes, by integration of soft skills and safety training, introduction of heavy equipment mechanics training, and capacity building of trainers.
- Forge collaborations with local governments, Community Based Organisations and NGOs to ensure skilling of the right people, including through sponsorships and commitments for employment.
- Design and offer affordable employment-linked loan products along with provision of scholarships for people from disadvantaged communities.



Simulator-based training for safe, flexible and convenient skilling with none of the running costs associated with learning on real machines. / Courtesy: MEPL

- Improve marketing of training opportunities through targeted community mobilisation; and conduct training for heavy equipment operators and mechanics in partnership with other local-market stakeholders for training, certification, and employment linkage.

Drawing on lessons from the job-linked training model tested with सीप's support over the last two years, through an additional training centre planned at Tilotama Municipality, explore entry into additional job roles such as plumbing, automobile (two & four wheelers), AC/refrigerator and electrician to cater to the wider construction cum manufacturing industry's' workforce needs.

Key Achievements

- Industry-TVET linkages established and strengthened—with national and international accreditation—to address demand supply mismatch and construction industry workforce needs in Nepalgunj, Janakpur, and Bhatkpur. Three local training centres are offering practical industry and job-oriented training and certification—bridging inequitable access issues by decentralising skilling infrastructures out of Kathmandu.
- Introduced simulator-based learning and terrain tracks in training facilities for the first time in Nepal.
- Leveraged MEPL's knowledge of and networks with the construction industry and relationship with JCB, to refine training curriculum and reskill trainers. Trainees are mobilized in coordination with local government, Employment Service Centres (ESCs), local community networks, and media outreach.
- Introduced several gender inclusive outreach and marketing tactics, including a special scholarship fund and accommodation provision, to reach and mobilise greater numbers of women and youth from disadvantaged communities—embarking on a path to inclusion for the first time as an industry.
- Training of Trainers and capacity building of four instructors in JCB India for technical skills and four instructors from Training Institute for Technical Instructors /CTEVT for instructional skills.
- Nearly 550 people skilled including 306 people from disadvantaged communities.
- Shared-value collaboration forged with 11 local governments and 14 CBOs/NGOs that have led to investment of approximately NPR 6.9 million to skill 243 youth (of the 550 skilled).
- Since early 2021, सीप brokered agreement between Tilotama Municipality and MEPL for a cost-effective public private partnership that enables expansion of the MAW Skills Academy in Lumbini Province. The municipality plans to provide land and infrastructure to incentivize and kick-start operation of the academy.