

Editorial

This issue brings together a rich collection of scholarly works that reflect Nepal's evolving socio-cultural, economic, and spiritual landscape. Each contribution offers a distinct yet interconnected perspective on the country's rural transformation, drawing attention to voices, traditions, and structural forces that continue to shape community life. The articles examine diverse themes—from the philosophical insights of the *Shreemadbhagavadgeeta* in shaping human-centred development to shifts in agrarian livelihoods, women's empowerment, and debates on federalization and identity in natural resource governance. The inclusion of comparative studies on land reforms, alongside critical reflections on caste and ethnic dynamics, expands the conversation beyond national borders and invites broader theoretical engagement. Notably, the reviews on Himalayan Buddhism highlight cultural resilience and the unique role of spiritual heritage in promoting social harmony and community-based development in Nepal's highlands. Together, these contributions encourage reflection on how tradition and modernity can coexist, inform policy, and guide future research. As Nepal navigates rapid socio-economic change, the insights presented here underscore the need for inclusive development models rooted in equity, cultural consciousness, and human dignity. We hope this issue inspires further dialogue, critical inquiry, and meaningful scholarship within the academic community. These ten studies collectively explore Nepal's rural transformation through spiritual ethics, agrarian change, gender inclusion, ethnic and caste dynamics, federalization, comparative land reforms, and the cultural and developmental roles of Himalayan Buddhism.

This issue highlights diverse perspectives on Nepal's rural transformation, social change, and cultural heritage. Badal's work interprets the *Shreemadbhagavadgeeta* through a hermeneutic lens to understand human values driving sustainable development. Bhandari and G.C. trace Nepal's shift from a feudal labour system to a market-driven agrarian economy, while Bhattari and Sharma assess women's participation in agricultural cooperatives. Deo critically examines neoliberal influences on peasant livelihoods, and Dhakal provides a cultural review of Himalayan Buddhism. Kapadi focuses on Dalit women's empowerment, whereas Pandey and Baral explore federalization and identity politics in resource governance. Pasa et al. compare socialist agrarian reforms in Cuba, China, and Vietnam, and Pun and Maharjan analyze caste and ethnic inequalities in development.

Shrestha reviews the role of Buddhism in rural development across the Himalayan belt, emphasizing community resilience and cultural capital.

The “Research Nepal Journal of Development Studies” welcomes comments, advises, and suggestions from all sectors from its quality improvement and sustainability. We highly acknowledge Prof. Dr. Chandralal Shrestha, Prof. Dr. Jibraj Pokharel, Prof. Dr. Prem Sharma, and Dr. Bharat Prasad Badal, for their contribution to the peer-review process. Dr. Rajan Vinayek Pasa, Mr. Kiran Shrestha, Mr. Geba Nath Nyaupane and Designer Mr. Binod Ghimire for their efforts to manage articles of this journal. Similarly, we acknowledge the entire colleagues of the Central Department of Rural Development, Tribhuvan University, Research Nepal, University Grants Commission, teachers, students, contributors, and others for their support and encouragement for the betterment of the journal in the future.

Editor in Chief

Dr. BHARAT PRASAD BADAL

2025