GYAN Innovation Hub

Transitioning Nepal to a Knowledge Economy

CONCEPT NOTE | 2025

IIDS
Institute for Integrated Development Studies • 1979

WHAT IS GYAN INNOVATION HUB

GYAN is a flagship platform of IIDS conceived to unite people, institutions, ideas, and resources in advancing Nepal's transition to a knowledge based economy. Operating under the strategic oversight of the Executive Chair, **Dr. Biswash Gauchan**, the Hub empowers specialized teams of researchers and staff to lead high-impact programs that address Nepal's systemic development challenges. It focuses on three strategic areas mainly, **Growth, Youth and Applied Knowledge**.

The Philosophy

For Nepal to be an upper middle income country in the next two decades, Nepal needs to grow at an accelerated rate of above 8 percent. To achieve such a level of growth, the domestic market is not enough. Nepal needs to export and be part of the Global Value Chains (GVCs). However, geography, scale, and logistics make large-scale manufacturing exports unrealistic in the near term.

Globally, services now make up about two-thirds of global GDP, and digitally delivered services are the fastest-growing segment of global trade. These are 'borderless and weightless' exports that travel through knowledge, skills and connectivity rather than roads, ports or geography. For Nepal, this shifts the question**:** **not what can we produce, but what can we think, build, design, analyze, and deliver to the world.**

Nepal's current model, built on labor migration and remittances cannot sustain the transformation required. A decisive shift toward export-led, value-creating integration in the global service economy is the strategic imperative.

GYAN Innovation hub is the platform built to drive that shift.

STRATEGIC PILLARS

GYAN advances Nepal's knowledge economy transition through five interconnected pillars, each addressing a structural gap.

01	**Education & Skill Development**	Transform Nepal's education system around STEEM (Science, Technology, English, Engineering, Mathematics) disciplines and global skill demands; Align Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) and higher education with IT, engineering, and entrepreneurship.
02	**Innovation & Research**	Build a collaborative Research & Innovation ecosystem linking academia, industry, and government to generate the intellectual capital that drives long-term productivity.
03	**Digital Infrastructure**	Expand high-speed internet, cloud services, data centers and e-governance — the backbone enabling IT services and digital entrepreneurship at scale.
04	**Service Sector Expansion**	Develop globally competitive IT, tourism, education, and financial services sectors as important sources of foreign exchange reserves.
05	**Diaspora Engagement & Talent**	Convert Nepal's 5–6 million strong global diaspora from remittance senders into knowledge builders through grants, incentives, and career pathways.

GYAN Innovation Hub

Transitioning Nepal to a Knowledge Economy

CONCEPT NOTE | 2025

IIDS
Institute for Integrated Development Studies • 1979

FLAGSHIP INITIATIVES under Education & Skill Development

01. GYAN FELLOWSHIP PROGRAM

Inspired by a comprehensive strategy to 'STEMify' Nepal's government schools. The fellowship places highly motivated graduates directly into classrooms as embedded academic partners, building student motivation and interest in STEEM subjects. The extra E in STEEM is English as it is a global language and is essential for a globally integrated Nepal. This program is currently being implemented as a pilot initiative
Palasha Tuladhar leads the program's implementation and management.

Pilot: 5 schools · Kathmandu Valley
Fellows: 15 (groups of 3)
Grades: 6–10 · Maths, Science, English

Embedded Teaching
15 GYAN Fellows (Maths, Science & English fellows) work in groups of three across 5 government schools in Kathmandu, Lalitpur, and Bhaktapur — delivering supplementary instruction in Maths, English, and Science for Grades 6–10.

Mentorship & Inspiration
Beyond instruction, Fellows serve as role models — inspiring students toward STEM careers and demonstrating that academic excellence is achievable regardless of background.

STEMification Strategy
The Fellowship aligns with Nepal's knowledge economy vision by building foundational competencies in science, technology, and English — from secondary school onwards.

Evidence & Scale
Fellows collect learning outcome data to enable evidence-based iteration.

02. FOUNDATIONAL LEARNING ACCELERATION PROGRAM (FLAP)

Led by **Dr. Uttam Sharma**, FLAP is a tech-enabled remediation initiative focused on the 'last mile' of learning. It combines human-led tutoring with a state-of-the-art Personalized Digital Platform, ensuring that by Grade 5, every child has mastered the foundational Math and English skills necessary for higher-level academic success. Students are grouped by actual learning levels rather than grades, providing targeted support to close severe gaps in underprivileged communities. The program is also being implemented as a pilot initiative.

Pilot: 2 schools · Kathmandu Valley
Target: Mastery by Grade 5
Focus: Math & English foundations

Adaptive Learning Paths
Individualized journeys based on each student's unique profile — adjusting difficulty, pacing, and content dynamically.

AI Tutoring
Real-time feedback and hints — a tireless digital tutor available to every student at any time.

Smart Assessments
AI-driven adaptive testing that navigates students toward mastery rather than rote recall.

Generative AI Lessons
Custom, curriculum-aligned lessons created dynamically for each student's context and level.

HOW TO ENGAGE

Universities and institutions: Partner on research, mentoring, and programme design
Diaspora professionals: Contribute expertise, networks, and mentorship
Policy actors: Help connect evidence from pilots to wider reform
Philanthropists: Support pilot implementation
Individuals: Fellows or interns to support the pilot initiatives