



UiO : Universitetet i Oslo



UNIVERSITETET I BERGEN



HIGH LEVEL DELEGATION COMENTH

VISIT TO NORWAY 31st May to 2nd June 2022



Photo: Saroj Ojha

Summary Report

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Anustha Mainali, Bente Vasbotten*



1. Introduction of the COMENTH Project

Collaboration in higher education Mental Health (COMENTH) is a collaborative NORPART project between Norway and Nepal with University of Oslo and Tribhuvan University as the main partners. University of Bergen and University of Tromsø are other academic partners from Norway together with several other non-academic partners from Nepal and Norway. The main aim of the project is to strengthen academic collaborations at master and PhD levels through joint courses, exchange of faculties and students, study visits by high level officials, and collaboration in research.

2. High Level Delegation

- Professor Dr Dibya Singh Shah, Dean, Institute of Medicine (IOM), Tribhuvan University (TU) Nepal
- Professor Dr Saroj Prasad Ojha, Head of Department of psychiatry, and past assistant dean, OM, TU

3. Objectives of the visit were two-fold

- To review and assess the progress of the COMENTH Project including the annual progress meeting
- To meet relevant and appropriate counterparts to explore further collaboration in Higher education, Research and Health



Suraj Thapa, Dibya Singh Shah, Saroj Ohja
Photo: Saroj Ohja

4. Highlights from the Meetings

Meeting/ Event	Persons Met	Highlights from the Meeting
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Meeting with Institute of Psychology, UiO 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Bjørn Lau, Lars Westlye Mita Rana from IOM 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Discussed about possible collaborations in clinical psychology and PhD programs Received curriculum of clinical psychology course at UiO.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Field Visit to District Pyschaitric Center in Mortensrud 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Erik Ganesh Iyer Søegaard May Kristin Øverby 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Brief presentation on DPS and its activities Visit of psychiatric wards and clinics
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Meeting at Norwegian Center for Violence and Traumatic Stress NKVTS - 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Inger Elise Birkelund Arfinn Andresen 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> NKVTS presented a comprehensive overview of the center, their history and development as well as and their main projects, tasks and achievements to date HLD asked relevant questions in relation to possibilities of establishing such a center in Nepal and explored areas of possible collaboration NKVTS was invited to collaborate on research projects in Nepal in the area of Gender Based Violence.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Meeting with PHA, UiO and - NSSF, Gaustad bygg 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Lars Mehlum 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A brief presentation on NSSF and its suicidal research Discussions on possible collaborations in suicide prevention and research
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Meeting with Dean Faculty of Medicine at Sogn Arena 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ivar Gladhaug Elin Olaus Rosvold 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Deans from Norway and Nepal presented their institutions and priorities Medfak, UiO requested placement of medical students in Nepal Further explore research collaborations to expand to other areas Review strengthening faculty at IOM through exchange and capacity building
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Meeting with Center for Global Health* 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Jeanette Magnus Ingeborg Havardsson 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> CGH presented their activities and priorities as well as WGH Dean Dr Dibya accepted to lead WGH Nepal Chapter. WGH Norway would support establishment of the Chapter CGH CGH would collaborate further on research activities especially building the skills of faculty such as the online leadership course and other such courses. CGH to participate in the Phd Forum as required
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Meeting with Norwegian Nursing Association 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Jarle Grumstad, 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> NSF presented the organization, leadership for change and their international work Explore possibilities of collaboration in particular leadership for change
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Annual Meeting at Blindern 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Overview of participants at page 7 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Appendix 1, programme of the day Brief discussions on planned activities and future possibilities
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Rikshospitalet 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Nephrology department 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Brief overview of kidney transplantations in Norway

5. Highlights from the Annual Project Meeting

Project coordinator and Associate Professor Suraj Thapa welcomed all the participants on behalf of the COMENTH- NORPART project and briefed about the ongoing and future activities of the project. He underlined that this project has opened opportunities for several other projects. He brought into attention that the existing collaboration has enhanced the quality of higher education in mental health in both the countries and strengthened internationalization of higher education through mobility of Master and PhD students and academicians.

Professor Dibya Singh Shah, Dean, IOM, TU expressed thankfulness and appreciation to NORPART members (Norway and Nepal) who are generously working and associating together for the quality of higher education in mental health in both the countries via mobility students, teachers and high-level officials. She underlined the need to have more collaborations in research and expand the collaborations in other departments at IOM.

Professor Saroj Prasad Ojha, Head, Department Psychiatry and Mental Health, IOM, TU covered the followings in his talk and presentation.

Brief historical background of IOM, trainings and academic programs

Sharing of achievement and future activities of NORPAT project done so far in Nepal

Revision of MPhil Psychology and MD psychiatry curriculum

Placement of Students from UiB and UiO in IOM, TU

Courtesy Call Meeting with ambassador, Norwegian Embassy and Meeting with Secretary of Ministry of Health, GON discussing future collaboration between Norway and Nepal

Professor Mita Rana, Department of Psychiatry & Mental Health, IOM, TU talked about the following.

Sharing of success stories on DIGITAL COURSE-Global mental health & Crisis

Psychology and Disaster response (2020-21) for Nepalese students

Students and Faculty Mobility- UiB-IOM and Norway and Nepal

Unni Heltne, Clinical psychologist from University of Bergen, Norway briefed about

UiB's parts and activities in the project.

Commencement and collaboration of 10 ECTS Global Mental

Health Practicum in Bergen and Crisis Psychology and Disaster Response in Nepal

Students' mobility Norway-Nepal in 2020/2021 and sharing of experiences on virtual exchange of information, online fieldwork and hybrid teaching solution.

Dr. Arun Kunwar, Head, Department of Child and Adolescent Psychiatry, Kanti Hospital, Nepal gave an overview of his department and collaboration with Norway

Sharing of historical timeline and establishment of Child and Adolescent Psychiatry Unit, Kanti Children's Hospital

Brief on community level and mental health interventions

NORAD Collaborations

Future plans- Expansion of mental health services, outreach activities in all 7 provinces, exploration of education program on child and adolescent psychiatry in partnership with the Nepal Academy of Medical Sciences (NAMS), strengthen telepsychiatry to reach out to children nationwide and establish a center of excellence in child mental health



Lars Hestmark, Arun Kunwar, Sneha Ohja, Anustha Mainali
Photo: Saroj Ojha

Dr. Cecilie Javo, from FORUT talked about collaboration in child psychiatry between UiT. Kanti along with CWIN and FORUT.

- Exchange Program 2021: Two medical students from Norway to Nepal and 2 PhD candidates from Nepal to Norway
- Sharing of future plans and further collaborative exchange educational programs

Dr. Bernadette Kumar from the Norwegian Institute of *Public Health* focused more on the development, mentoring and leadership experiences and experiences from the PhD forum that she started when she was posted in Kathmandu for several years. PhD forum gives the unique opportunities for PhD candidates where they come together, build the team, explore, learn the skills, have the learning attitudes, share the knowledge, build network and challenge content, process and self-create an opportunity together. She also emphasized the need of advising, training, coaching and mentoring to all the fresh and fragile researchers via their respective guide/mentor/supervisor.

Similarly, **Dr. Yuba Basaula- Director, Kanti Children's Hospital, Kathmandu, Nepal-** gave a brief introduction of the hospital and highlighted his support to the Department of Child and Adolescent



Saroj Ohja, Bernadette Kumar, Dibaba Singh.
Photo: Suraj Thapa



Sagun Pant, Saraswati Dhungana, Suraj Thapa
Photo: Suraj Thapa

Psychiatry. **Dr. Ananta Adhikari- Director, Patan Mental Hospital, Patan, Nepal** also briefed about his hospital, the only mental hospital in the country and expressed his interest to collaborate with Norway in research and clinical services. **Dr. Kedar Marhatta- World Health Organization (WHO) Country Office, Nepal** addressed the session with his remarks appreciating the efforts, achievements so far made in between Norway and Nepal. He also highlighted that this collaboration is a historical move towards the development higher education and services in mental health and generates further platform of working together with WHO for the development of mental health in Nepal specially.

6. Priorities Moving Forward

Task	Responsible	Time Frame
1. Immediate Priorities		
I. Continue the PhD supervision and progress II. Continue PhD curriculum and guidelines III. Continue Capacity Building Research through Phd Forum IV. Support Establishment of Women in Global Health Nepal (first joint online event) V. 'Planning of Nepal/ Norway International Conference 2023	Suraj Thapa/ Saroj Ohja Suraj Thapa/ Saroj Ohja Bernadette Kumar/ Anustha Dibya Shah/ BernadetteKumar& Ingeborg Haavardson Suraj Thapa/ Saroj Ohja/Bernadette Kumar	August – December 2022
2. Priorities 2023		
I. Organize Joint Nepal/ Norway International Conference March/April 2023 II. Explore possibilities of developing a National Suicide Prevention Strategy III. Promote development of Phd supervision guidelines IV. Ensure student/faculty exchange / placement medical students V. Continue capacity building through PhD/ online/ physical courses such leadership/ Phd Supervision/s leadership for change	Suraj Thapa/ Saroj Ohja/Bernadette Kumar	Jan- March 2023 April – December 2023 July – Dece,ber 2023
3. Long Term 2024 -		
I. PhD program initiated II. Phd Guidelines – completed III. PhD Supervision Courses IV. Placement medical students UiO V. More collaboration with existing and new partners		
Expected outputs 2022/2023		
- Joint Nepal/ Norway International Conference March/April 2023 - Completed Phds - Completed Masters - Student/ Faculty exchange - Joint Phd Forum meetings/ Courses - Initiation of Supervisor other Courses		

7. Appendix

Appendix 1- Annual project meeting programme



Programme for NORPART (COMENTH) Annual project meeting

Date: Thursday, 2nd of June,

Venue: Top floor at Nils Trescow's hus, Blindern Campus, University of Oslo.

[Click here to view map over Blindern campus](#)

08:15-08:30: Coffee and tea

08:30 Welcome and presentation on project progress report by Suraj Thapa, UiO

08:45 Opening remarks by Professor Dibya Singh Shah, the Dean, IOM, TU

09:00 Progress report from Psychiatry by Professor Saroj Prasad Ojha, IOM, TU

09:10 Progress report from Psychology by Professor Mita Rana, IOM, TU

09:20 Progress report from University of Bergen by Unni Heltne, UIB

09:30 Coffee and tea break

09:40 Progress report from Kanti Hospital by Dr. Arun Kunwar

09:50 Progress report from University of Tromsø, by Cecilie Javo

10:00 Q/A, Discussion

10:20 Experiences from PhD forum and other collaborations, by Dr Bernadette Kumar

10:30 Coffee and tea break

10:45 Remarks by directors from KCH and Patan Mental Hospital – Dr Yuba Basaula,
Dr. Ananta Adhikari, Dr Kedar Marhatta, WHO country office, Nepal

11:00 Discussions on possible future collaborations- facilitated by Dr Suraj /Dr Saroj

11:45-12:45 Lunch

16:00-17:45 Sightseeing (Nobel peace center, City council)

18:00 Dinner at Benares restaurant, Tordenskiolds gate 8, 0160 Oslo

Appendix 2- List of Meeting Participants

Name	Affiliation	Country
Manuela Ramin- Osmundsen	Diakonhjemmet	Norway
Ståle Stavrum	FORUT	Norway
Bernadette Kumar	Norwegian institute of Public Health	Norway
Arun Kunwar	Kanti Children Hospital	Nepal
Ananta Prasad Adhikari	Kanti Children Hospital	Nepal
Yuba Nidhi Basaula	Kanti Children Hospital	Nepal
Cecilie Javo	University of Tromsø	Norway
Erik Søegaard	Oslo University Hospital	Norway
Morten Mowe	Oslo University Hospital	Norway
Bente Vasbotten	University of Oslo	Norway
Sneha Ojha	University of Oslo	Norway
Fanny Duckert	University of Oslo	Norway
Suraj Thapa	University of Oslo	Norway
Anustha Mainali	University of Oslo	Norway
Marie Hveem	University of Oslo	Norway
Lars Hestmark	University of Oslo	Norway
Annika Melinder	University of Oslo	Norway
Edvard Hauff	University of Oslo	Norway
Unni Marie Heltne	University of Bergen	Norway
Esperanza Diaz	University of Bergen	Norway
Saroj Ojha	University of Tribhuvan	Nepal
Saraswati Dhungana	University of Tribhuvan	Nepal
Sagun Pant	University of Tribhuvan	Nepal
Dibaya Sing Shah	University og Tribhuvan	Nepal
Gro Jamtvedt	Oslo Metropolitan University	Norway
Nita Kapur	Oslo Metropolitan University	Norway
Arild Bjørndal	Regionsenter for barn og unges psykiske helse	Norway
Kedar Marahatta	World Health Organization	Nepal