



HICAST STRATEGIC PLAN 2018-2028

**Himalayan College of Agricultural Sciences and Technology
(HICAST)
Kathmandu, Nepal
2017**

Foreword

HICAST was established in 2000 as a pioneer private-sector college of agricultural sciences and technology in Nepal. Today it has acquired a prescribed status in the inventory of agricultural colleges in the country. We feel encouraged with this achievement of HICAST as an institution of academic excellence in the field of agriculture, veterinary and allied subjects. After crossing over 17-year zigzags in its academic path HICAST AGM 2017 had decided to formulate second Strategic Plan for the next ten years, i.e. 2018-2028. The AGM had formed a three member strategic planning committee with Dr Neeraj Narayan Joshi as Coordinator, and Dr Naba Raj Devkota and Dr Krishna Bahadur Shrestha as Members. The team members deserve special thanks for completing the historical responsibility and task employing participatory methodology.

We are aware that successful implementation of this Strategic Plan would require serious and genuine efforts of the whole HICAST family as well as the helping hands and cooperation from other stakeholders and well-wishers.

We are committed to do everything essential and possible in our capacity towards meeting our vision and mission within the stipulated time frame. At the same time, we also wish and look forward for positive attitude and cooperation from the concerned ministries and departments, NARC of the Government of Nepal, donor agencies, private sector organisations, and relevant INGOs.



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1. Introduction

The Himalayan College of Agricultural Sciences & Technology (HICAST) was founded, with the advent of the millennium year, in 2000 by a group of like-minded and highly motivated and committed professionals working in the field of agriculture, livestock and allied sciences. It is a prototype educational institution in the country, as no any privately-owned agricultural educational institutions existed before its establishment. HICAST intends to contribute in the field of higher education in agriculture besides engaging in relevant research and outreach programs. It has embraced '*Agricultural Revolution through Quality Education*' as its principal slogan keeping in view the existing gaps in agricultural education, research and extension as well as the pivotal role of agriculture in national economy.

Over the past 17 years, HICAST has gained substantial momentum and widespread recognition as an institution of academic excellence in the field of agriculture and allied subjects. This is particularly reflected by the extent to which HICAST graduates are valued by the government and non-government organizations, academia and private sectors. Such recognition has come in various forms. For example, HICAST is the first private-sector initiated educational institution for higher education in agriculture and veterinary

science. It clearly finds a prescribed status in the inventory of agricultural colleges in Nepal. Its graduates are spread across many countries as scholars, researchers, academia, entrepreneurs, and managers/executives with notable achievements. Such a success can be attributed to the factors like the dynamic syllabus, innovative pedagogical activities, highly experienced senior professors and meaningful partnerships with relevant organizations, significant service to the public through its plant and veterinary clinics, standard procedure for the intake of students, stringent process for the recruitment of faculty members and staff together with their high level of professional dedication and commitment.

During the past 17 years, HICAST had encountered various institutional, financial and physical problems. However, as it built its strengths through experiences and with the helping hands extended by individuals and organizations, it could conveniently get through such difficulties. Presently, HICAST possesses the basic educational infrastructure (such as modern class-rooms, teaching labs, instructional equipments, lab and farm based research facilities, etc.) of its own, besides other physical assets (buildings, agricultural farms) necessary for academic and administrative purposes. It also has excellent functional and academic collaborative relationships with such institutions as Department of Agriculture, Nepal Agricultural Research Council; Department of Livestock Services, and Dairy

Development Corporation of the Government of Nepal, while also maintains functional linkage with professional individuals and relevant private organizations in the country for the purpose of undertaking collaborative actions.

HICAST, established under the Institutions Registration Act of the Government of Nepal, has its academic programme affiliation with the Purbanchal University of Nepal. To begin with, it had started its academic programme with Bachelor degrees in Agricultural and Veterinary Sciences. Currently, it offers Masters Degree programmes in Dairy Technology, Meat Technology and Agri-business Management. These academic programmes have a distinct character of rigor, flexibility, being innovative and integrally linked to HICAST's research and extension activities.

Since HICAST is a privately-owned entity, its biggest limitation lies with generating financial resource, among others. So far, it has been managing its entire academic and managerial functions with the funds being raised mainly from the students and to some extent from extension services provided and sale of publications, besides the occasional support received from national and international level organizations in the form of research grant, consultancy fees, and institutional development funds.

2. The Strategic Plan

In contribution to fulfilling the country's need of human resource in agriculture and allied sectors, HICAST is uniquely positioned in terms of identifying and running teaching, research and training programs that correspond to the pressing concerns of the 21st century; in particular, meeting the increasing demands for food, need for maintaining a healthy and balanced physical and human ecosystem in the context of ever competing challenges of productivity and sustainability.

Against this backdrop in mind, this 'HICAST Strategic Plan 2018-2028' has been prepared based on its historical strength and long-accumulated experience with the purpose of establishing the overall strategic direction to guide the HICAST family (the executive committee, faculty and staff members) to embark on its programs (teaching, research and extension) over the next 10 years to further enhance its institutional capabilities for meeting the societal needs. This plan provides much needed guidance in making choices about direction related to teaching, research and extension programs, set fundraising priorities, allocate the use of limited human and financial resources, and develop long-term action plans. Successful implementation of this strategic plan will help HICAST provide quality services to a more diverse and greater number of organizations, stakeholders and individuals. This

strategic plan seeks to develop HICAST's new strength so as to increase its role as a leader facilitator for agricultural educational activities and diffusion of innovations. It will also bring us closer to our aspiration that the relevant national and international level organizations and professionals view HICAST as a potential organization to generate collaborative actions and implement focused developmental programs.

The process for the preparation of this strategic plan began with the review of HICAST related documents to have an understanding of the historical accounts of the institution. This was followed by consultation with HICAST's founder members, executive board members, faculty and staff members, who provided the relevant information, insights and candid opinion reflecting their own working experiences and long-term association. Besides, the opinion of other relevant professional individuals and organizations that demonstrate concerns and interest in overall growth and development of HICAST were also sought during the course of information gathering for the preparation of this document.

3. Vision, Mission, Objectives

3.1 Vision

HICAST envisions it to be a leading institution of academic excellence and innovations through eminent education, breakthrough research and dynamic outreach programmes to contribute to the process of nation building.

3.2 Mission

The mission is to:

- Develop proficient human resource to become future leaders in agriculture and allied sectors,
- Generate knowledge and develop technologies related to agriculture and allied sectors,
- Provide service and training to agricultural producers, entrepreneurs, and relevant stakeholders for enhancing quality of life.

3.3 Objectives

HICAST operates on trilogity functions of teaching, research and extension. The objectives are also based on these three interrelated subjects.

3.3.1 Academic/Teaching Objective

Foster the educational programs by taking the advantage of the organization's strengths, geographic location and utilizing the existing opportunities to respond to societal needs.

3.3.2 Research Objective

Promote integrated research activities and development of appropriate agricultural, livestock, veterinary and

entrepreneurial practices in an effort to respond to the needs of the broader society.

3.3.3 Extension Objective

Offer extension (information, experts' advice, etc.) and service programmes (e.g., veterinary and plant clinics, training activities) to the people in general, and farmers and their organizations in particular.

4. Core values

Achievement of the above vision and mission will be made possible by the following core values:

- Commitment to professional responsibility,
- Transparency, accountability, honesty and openness,
- Effective public-private partnership,
- Professional integrity,
- Positive attitude towards change,
- Mutual trust and respect,
- Efficient and effective delivery of services,
- Believing in sustainability

5. Core Competencies

- **Sharing responsibility of nation building task:** Effectively providing education and extension services, which, in fact, is a gigantic task for non-state organizations in the absence of any regular institutional support.
- **Responding to clients' need:** Voluntarily engaging in solving life-related problems (poverty, hunger, malnutrition, food insecurity, etc.) of people by generating and providing solution-based know-how and do-how.
- **Motivating people to work:** Helping economically dynamic people to engage in productive agro-entrepreneurial activities thereby preventing them from potential socio-economic frustration.
- **Mobilizing resources prudently and judicially:** Ensuring achievement of target being set with limited resources.
- **Valuing and building diverse partnerships:** Bringing stakeholders (students, scientists, academia, employees, entrepreneurs, and others) with diverse socio-economic and cultural background into a common platform for collective solution through consensus,

- **Managing crisis and adversity:** Keeping always or getting prepared to cope with the hardship, and recovering from such conditions.
- **Building momentum and capacity:** Developing human resources through experiential learning, and strengthening them to cater to the changing national and international agricultural development needs for sustainable food production.

6. Strengths, Opportunities and Challenges

6.1 Strengths

During the past 17 years, HICAST has been able to build substantial momentum through accumulation of diverse experiences and assets, required to operate an educational institution of this kind. Some of the key strengths are as follows:

- Despite being a private sector institution, it has laid a strong and stable institutional foundation for furthering various formal and non-formal educational and research programmes.
- HICAST has gained adequate experience of running academic programmes, and undertaking research and extension activities in professional and sustainable manners.

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- The institution possesses basic physical infrastructures / assets of its own for educational, managerial and research purposes; and it is in the continuous process of acquiring more assets required to strengthen its institutional and infrastructural strength.
- It has, within its jurisdiction, adequate number of highly qualified academic staff with national and international experience, and committed to teaching, research and extension programmes.
- It has a set of capable and committed administrative and support staff to undertake the academic, research and extension programmes of the college.
- HICAST recruits only those students, who have keen interest in career development, from a diverse geographic area, gender and social groups and cultural background for providing an inclusive and supportive learning environment.
- The institution has already established professional networks and collaborative relationships with some relevant organizations involved in teaching, research and extension in and outside the country.

- HICAST offers educational programs that are in line with the need of the people, and relevant to agri-business, enterprises and national priority.
- It utilizes the relevant experience of diverse stakeholders (entrepreneurs, farmers, academics, etc.) besides its own human resource in managing its teaching, research and extension programs more effectively.
- It has already produced several hundreds of graduates, who have been working as professionals in various development, extension, teaching and research institutions across the country and around the globe, to its academic credit.

6.2 Opportunities

Because of its geographical location and existence of various institutions and resources around it, HICAST finds itself in a favorable position for its growth and development. The opportunities that can be availed by HICAST are as follows.

- Developing and strengthening collaborative partnerships with both public and private organizations to advance and showcase opportunities in HICAST,

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- Bringing in highly experienced professionals for teaching and research activities,

working with diverse individual professionals and organizations for mutual benefit.
- Keeping the programs up-to-date and in line with emerging needs of the students and run in accordance with the statutory directives,
- Increasing the enrollment of students and adding new academic programs,
- Promoting faculty and staff participation in professional activities,
- Expanding and enhancing methods for instructional delivery and extension service,
- Creating new programs to attract talented higher secondary school graduate students,
- Increasing the role of the departments in delivering strength and success messages for their academic program areas.
- Engaging in activities other than academic and research (e.g., consultancies) for fundraising,

- Conducting regular monitoring for maintaining standard and quality of education and services.

6.3 Challenges

The current situation of the college and its programs, with its outstanding faculty, staff and facilities, are inspiring to lead toward its vision. However, the college faces some challenges in way of undertaking its functions, which are as follows.

- Managing the institution with limited human and financial resources for operation of its programs.
- Recruiting fulltime faculty for academic programs and managing part-time faculty to strengthen the academic programs.
- Meeting the statutory requirements (e.g., regulation of Nepal Veterinary Council), which seem infeasible keeping in view the limited capacities of the private institutions based on PPP approach.
- Obtaining state assistance required for the institutional strength building.
- Obtaining external assistance from diverse sources for the institutional strength building.

- Raising tuition fees in accordance with the market inflation and cost per production of students.
- Augmenting the existing facilities (laboratories, library, ITC, extracurricular activities, etc.) to meet the growing need of the students and researchers.
- Securing long-term donor commitments for undertaking the programs and institutional development.
- Establishing functional relations with potential partners for collaborative activities.

7. Areas of Intervention and Strategic Actions

In order to achieve its mission and objectives, HICAST will adopt multi-pronged strategy with various strategic initiatives aimed at strengthening its educational, research and extension programs, while also augmenting its resources towards transforming the college into a status of private agricultural university in the due course of time. The strategic actions under each of the core areas and auxiliary areas of interventions are as follows.

7.1 Area of Intervention: Teaching (educational programs)

7.1.1 Strategic Actions

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- Continuing the existing academic programs and adding new programs
- Recruiting full time faculty for undergraduate and graduate programs (for agriculture, animal science and veterinary programs)
- Creating a pool of proficient personnel to perform as faculty and staff members
- Revisiting and reviewing curricula in order to keep it tuned to the demand and needs of the society
- Reviewing instructional needs of all Bachelor and Masters level programs to continue quality delivery
- Establishing relationship with relevant institutions for professional development (through exchange programs)
- Initiating undergraduate experiential learning opportunities and professional development experiences through research, and internships.
- Setting up new disciplinary departments in response to emerging internal (academic program based) as well as external (e.g., Nepal Veterinary Council) demands
- Establishment of Quality Control Unit for committee enhancement of academic programs and administrative systems.

7.2 Area of Intervention: Research and Training

7.2.1 Strategic Action

- Strengthening the capacity of the Research and Training Directorate
- Establishing professional relationship with relevant research institutions (from Public, civil society, private sector, etc.) in Nepal and beyond for collaborative research activities.
- Conducting research activities responsive to dynamic societal needs including farmers and organizations
- Supporting the faculty and students' research

7.3 Extension

- Establishing Extension Directorate
- Establishing relationship with relevant potential stakeholders (public, private sectors, etc.) beneficiary farmers and other farmers
- Augmenting and regularizing publications

- Fostering participatory extension activities (engaging faculty, research, students and other stakeholders)

7.4 Area of Intervention: Organizational Structure and Governance System

7.4.1 Strategic Actions

- Revisiting and restructuring the existing organogram for strengthening organizational process
- Revising staff' job/functions and augmenting their managerial skills
- Improving the governance system (administrative and financial regulations)
- Recruiting proficient administrative and support staff
- Initiation in-service managerial skill development for staff members
- Enhancing coordination among the Departments, Directorates and other units

7.5 Area of Intervention: Infrastructural Facilities

7.5.1 Strategic Actions

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- Rehabilitating the existing buildings for teaching and research innovation as well as for managerial purposes
- Constructing new buildings (HICAST building for teaching, research, extension and managerial purposes in Kirtipur)
- Strengthening the ICT infrastructure (putting ICTs equipment in place)
- Setting up new laboratories and Improvement of laboratories for students' practical work and support for research, training and outreach activities,
- Improvement of condition of agricultural and livestock farms for students' practical and research purposes
- Establishing Extension Directorate
- Establishing relationship with relevant potential stakeholders (public, private sectors, etc.) beneficiary farmers and other farmers
- Augmenting and regularizing publications

- Fostering participatory extension activities (engaging faculty, research, students and other stakeholders) .

7.6 Area of Intervention: Financial Resource Management

7.6.1 Strategic Actions

- Initiating activities for fund generation from external sources (public and non-public organizations)
- Increasing students enrollment in various academic programs
- Enhancing the capacity of veterinary college hospital and expanding the service to wider geographical area
- Reactivating the professional consultancy services to wider audience.

7.7 Area of Intervention: Transforming the college into a status of private agricultural university

7.7.1 Strategic Actions

- Initiating advocacy activities towards transforming the college into a status of private agricultural university

8. Implementation of the Strategic Plan

In implementing this Strategic Plan, HICAST will adopt a systems approach to be more systematic and for facilitating the activities to be undertaken and managing the resources. It is our conviction that the works being undertaken through a system approach will contribute to our efficiency and contribute to organizational sustainability as a whole and also to national building process. In considering the significance of quality control for organizational performance, the activities being undertaken will be systematically monitored in line with the standard baseline situation of each activity.

This strategic plan will be implemented by a committee (to be called as Implementation Committee) comprising of the HICAST's Chair of the Executive Board as the chairperson. The other members include the Principal, two senior faculty members and one senior level administrative staff of HICAST. This team may form several sub-committees as per the need. Each of the members in the main committee and sub-committees will have their roles/responsibilities clearly described based on the areas of interventions and/or strategic actions. The implementation committee will prepare several sets of activities under various strategic actions, and prioritize these activities to be performed on annual basis for 10 consecutive years, i.e., 2018 through 2028.

For the entire implementation period, a system of accountability or a mechanism will be established to monitor/measure the progress of the implementation. The

progress against each activity/action under each intervention area will be measured periodically and reported accordingly.

9. Sustainability

The successful completion of 17 academic years with significant achievements demonstrates a clear indication of the fact that HICAST is moving ahead in a sustainable manner. However, in considering the potential challenges ahead, it is well aware of the need for improving its prospects for institutional as well as financial sustainability. For this, besides the existing strategy, it will make conscious efforts for promoting partnerships to engage more and more relevant and potential stakeholders in its programs, and devising other institutional and financial sustainability strategies.

10. Way Forward

The Strategic Plan sets out specific strategic actions to be undertaken with respect to the major programs (teaching, research and extension) of HICAST. The actions, which have been set out after extensive consultation and discussion with the individuals and professional from inside as well as outside of HICAST, are contextual and attainable leading to realization of the vision outlined in this Plan. However, successful implementation of this Plan would be a difficult task without the genuine efforts of the HICAST family together with the support and cooperation from its stakeholders and well-wishers.

Work Plan 2018-2028

(To be filled in by concerned departments and approved by Executive Board)

Areas of Intervention	Strategic Actions	Target Year	Baseline
<p>1. Teaching (educational programs)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continuing the existing academic programs and adding new programs • Recruiting full time faculty for undergraduate and graduate programs (for agriculture, animal science and veterinary programs) • Creating a pool of proficient personnel to perform as faculty and staff members • Revisiting and reviewing curricula in order to keep it tuned to the demand and needs of the society • Reviewing instructional needs of all Bachelor and Masters level programs to continue quality delivery • Establishing relationship with relevant institutions for professional development (through 		

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	<p>exchange programs)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Initiating undergraduate experiential learning opportunities and professional development experiences through research, and internships. • Setting up new disciplinary departments in response to emerging internal (academic program based) as well as external (e.g., Nepal Veterinary Council) demands • Establishment of Quality Control Unit for committee enhancement of academic programs and administrative systems. 		
<p>2. Research and Training</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strengthening the capacity of the Research and Training Directorate • Establishing relationship with relevant research institutions (from Public, civil society, private sector, etc.) in Nepal and beyond for collaborative research activities. • Conducting research 		

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	<p>activities responsive to dynamic societal needs including farmers and organizations</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Supporting the faculty and students' research 		
3. Extension	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Establishing Extension Directorate • Establishing relationship with relevant potential stakeholders (public, private sectors, etc.) beneficiary farmers and other farmers • Augmenting and regularizing publications • Fostering participatory extension activities (engaging faculty, research, students and other stakeholders) 		
4. Organizational and governance system	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Revisiting and restructuring the existing organogram for strengthening organizational process • Revising staff' job/functions and augmenting their managerial skills • Improving the governance system (administrative and financial regulations) • Recruiting proficient administrative and support staff • Initiation in-service managerial skill 		

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	<p>development for staff members</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Enhancing coordination among the Departments, Directorates and other units 		
<p>5. Infrastructure facilities</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rehabilitating the existing buildings for teaching and research innovation as well as for managerial purposes • Constructing new buildings (HICAST building for teaching, research, extension and managerial purposes in Kirtipur) • Strengthening the ICT infrastructure (putting ICTs equipment in place) • Setting up new laboratories and Improvement of laboratories for students' practical work and support for research, training and outreach activities, • Improvement of condition of agricultural and livestock farms for students' practical and research purposes 		

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<p>6. Financial Resource Management</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Initiating activities for fund generation from external sources (public and private organizations) • Increasing students enrollment in various academic programs • Enhancing the capacity of veterinary college hospital and expanding the service to wider geographical area • Reactivating the professional consultancy services to wider audience 		
<p>7. Transforming the college into a status of private agricultural university</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Initiating advocacy activities towards transforming the college into a status of private agricultural university 		