



Public health model developed by Ashok Pandey

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Abstract

Nepal, a small country surrounded by the Himalayas, is known for its beautiful mountains and diverse landscapes. Beneath its beauty, Nepal faces the harsh impact of disasters each year. From earthquakes to floods, every challenge has taught its people to adapt and rebuild. These experiences have inspired changemakers to create new solutions that fit Nepal's needs. One such changemaker is Ashok Pandey, a public health professional and policy researcher who believes in practical, community-based innovation. His work connects technology, education, and local action to make Nepal stronger and more self-reliant. The following three models are focused on disaster safety, volunteer development, and academic independence, which reflect his vision of a resilient Nepal where local ideas drive lasting change.

Keywords: Ashok, Model, Public Health, Pandey

Model 1: Are you safe? Safety-check tools during a Natural Disaster

The innovative idea and model development emerged from his firsthand experience during Nepal's devastating 2015 earthquake. Recognizing the urgent need for rapid, reliable communication in disasters, he explored how digital safety-check tools, like Facebook's "Are You Safe?", could serve as lifelines. His model integrates internet-based safety confirmation with disaster response systems, enabling affected individuals to mark themselves safe, locate missing persons, and share updates with family and friends. Pandey's approach uniquely frames this not just as a technological aid but as a right to information, aligning it with Nepal's constitutional guarantees and international humanitarian guidelines. He emphasized a citizen-led, real-time information exchange, while also addressing critical limitations of internet penetration, misinformation risks, infrastructure collapse, and exclusion of offline populations. His proposed model calls for a multistakeholder collaboration involving tech developers, disaster authorities, and vulnerable communities to create context-specific, accessible, and reliable safety-check mechanisms. Importantly, he highlights the gender dimension, noting women's disproportionate vulnerability and the need for targeted solutions. Pandey's work bridges technology, human rights, and disaster resilience, offering a replicable framework for countries with similar infrastructural and socio-economic challenges. By combining



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community empowerment with digital innovation, his model envisions safety-check tools as an integrated, government-supported public service for disaster preparedness and response

For details: <https://www.giswatch.org/en/country-report/economic-social-and-cultural-rights-escrs/nepal>

Model 2: Center for Volunteering Excellence

The Volunteer Development Program under the *Center for Volunteering Excellence* is a structured model designed to strengthen Nepal's public health capacity through skilled volunteerism. Recognizing the country's resource constraints and diverse health challenges, Pandey created a 10-step pathway that recruits, trains, engages, and certifies public health volunteers. This model integrates theoretical training with hands-on fieldwork, ensuring volunteers gain both knowledge and real-world experience. The program has already trained over 100 volunteers, contributing to impactful initiatives such as the Harm Reduction Project, the Search and Destroy Dengue Prevention Campaign, and the WASH-away AMR Program. Volunteers have been equipped to tackle pressing issues—from reducing mosquito breeding sites to promoting harm reduction strategies and combating antimicrobial resistance. Pandey's model stands out for its sustainability focus: certified volunteers are placed in a roster for priority engagement in future projects, enhancing career growth while ensuring continuity in public health interventions. By combining education, mentorship, field engagement, and recognition, the program empowers volunteers as agents of change. This innovative approach aligns with global strategies for community-based health system strengthening, making it both a local solution for Nepal's needs and a replicable framework for other resource-limited settings.

For details: <https://jhsw.com/index.php/jhsw/article/view/107>

Model 3: A Publishing Vision

In a global academic landscape often dominated by large international publishers, the story of Ashok Pandey stands out as a powerful testament to local initiative and scholarly independence. His founding of the Journal of Health and Social Welfare (JHSWN) in Nepal is more than just the creation of another academic journal; it is a bold statement of intellectual self-reliance. For decades, researchers in countries like Nepal have faced significant challenges in sharing their work. High publication fees in international journals, geographical biases, and a lack of platforms tailored to local contexts often marginalize valuable regional research. Pandey identified this critical gap and, with remarkable foresight, established a peer-reviewed, open-access journal right in Nepal. The success of JHSWN, underscored by the publication of over



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15 volumes as of August 2025, proves that his vision was not only necessary but also viable. This achievement is a collective effort, significantly bolstered by support from Nepal's Ministry of Education, Science and Technology, which lends crucial national credibility. Furthermore, the dedicated work of a passionate team, including Dr. Nimanada Rijal (Chief Editor), Ayuska Parajuli (Editor), Kusum Dhungana (Editorial Assistant), Puja Nepal (Editorial Assistant), and others, has been instrumental in maintaining rigorous peer-review standards and ensuring the journal's consistent quality. The journal's impact is multifaceted. It provides a respected and accessible platform for Nepali and South Asian researchers to disseminate findings that are directly relevant to the region's public health and social welfare challenges. It also fosters a culture of critical academic inquiry and peer review within the country, building essential capacity for the next generation of scientists. Pandey's initiative demonstrates that the path to strengthening a nation's academic ecosystem does not always lie in looking outward. Sometimes, the most profound progress is made by building robust, reputable, and self-sufficient institutions at home. The Journal of Health and Social Welfare is a shining example of this principle, carving out a space where local knowledge is validated, valued, and shared with the world.

For details: <https://jhsw.com/index.php/jhsw>

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