



JOINT PRESS RELEASE

10th January, 2012

European Union, DFID extend EUR 16.5 million (NPR approx 1.8 billion) grant assistance to Nepal Government for 'Nepal Climate Change Support Programme'

The Government of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, acting through the Department for International Development ("DFID"), and the European Union have agreed to provide a grant assistance of EURO 16.5 million (equivalent to NPR 1.8 billion) to the Government of Nepal for the implementation of the Nepal Climate Change Support Programme: Building Climate Resilience in Nepal. Out of the total grant assistance of EURO 16.5 million, the Government of the United Kingdom will provide EURO 7.9 million and the European Union (EU) will provide EURO 8.6 million.

In this regard, the Memorandum of Understanding between the Government of Nepal and the Government of the United Kingdom, was signed today at the Ministry of Finance, Kathmandu, Nepal. The agreement between Nepal and the EU was already concluded on 26 December 2011.

The goal of the Nepal Climate Change Support Programme (NCCSP) is to enable Nepal's poorest and most vulnerable communities to adapt to the effects of climate change, by supporting local level adaptation programme in the most climate vulnerable districts of the Mid and Far Western regions of Nepal. This program will assist the Government of Nepal to implement its Climate Change Policy, 2011 and develop and implement necessary strategies and most urgent and immediate adaption actions that increase the benefits and sustainability of public as well as public-private development efforts. More specifically, NCCSP will assist Nepal to implement the adaptation priorities as identified in the National

Adaptation Programme of Action (NAPA) document which was approved in 2010. It will also help the Government in developing climate change responses and technical competency. The NCCSP will also contribute towards reducing poverty by focusing on the poorest and most vulnerable people, particularly women and girls. The Climate Change Policy 2011 and NAPA 2010 commit to channel 80 percent of the total funds for field level activities. This NCCSP will use the National Framework for Local Adaptation Plan for Action (LAPA) recently approved by the Government of Nepal with the objectives of implementing adaptation actions at the local level, and integrating climate adaptation in the planning process.

The Ministry of Environment (MoE) shall extend the necessary guidance and support to the Programme and ensure collaboration of the local bodies and line agencies. The NCCSP project will be implemented by the Ministry of Environment in coordination with the Ministry of Local Development and its local units. The programme will run until 31 March, 2015.

The MoU was signed by Mr. Krishna Hari Baskota, Secretary, Ministry of Finance and Mr. Dominic O'Neil, Head of DFID, Nepal on behalf of their respective Governments, in the presence of the EU Delegation to Nepal.

The Government of Nepal has expressed its sincere appreciation to the British Government and the Delegation of the European Union to Nepal for this assistance and also for the continued support in the socio-economic development of Nepal.

Ministry of Finance
Singha Durbar, Kathmandu
January 10, 2012



EUROPEAN UNION
DELEGATION TO NEPAL

16/12/2011

PRESS RELEASE

European Union provides NPR 40.8 million to promote agriculture and nutrition in four districts of Nepal and one district of Bangladesh

The European Union funded 'Agriculture and Nutrition Extension (ANE) project launched on Friday aims at improving the food security and nutrition of 20,000 households identified as the poorest and vulnerable in Nawalparasi, Rupandehi, Rukum and Surkhet districts of Nepal including 40,000 additional households in the Barisal district of Bangladesh.

International Development Enterprises Nepal (IDE-Nepal) has joined hands with seven other partners-- CIMMYT, WorldFish, IRRI, Save The Children, CEAPRED, BES and CODEC to run the project. IDE successfully submitted the ANE project proposal as part of a global competitive call. The EU has provided an assistance of EUR 3,644,677 (NPR approx 40.8 million) for the three-year project.

The decision to support the project comes in the wake of the successful completion of the European Union Food Facility Project (EUFF), which was implemented in eighteen districts of mid and far western Nepal through a total contribution of EUR 23.5 million. Several partners of the newly launched initiative had been mobilised under the Food Facility to carry out similar activities in Humla, Mugu, Rukum, Rokpa and Banke districts from January 2010 to October 2011.

The project will work in two terai districts of Rupandehi and Nawalparasi selected because they are part of a technology development hub being implemented by the International Centres and NARC and two hill districts Rukum and Surkhet were selected for their suitability for a programme to develop exports and linkages for vegetable seeds between Nepal to Bangladesh.

One of the major goals of the project is to develop market linkages between rural and urban areas and promote exchange of expertise and technologies between agricultural and research institutions in Nepal and Bangladesh, both at the national and grassroots levels.

The project activities seek to disseminate training on new and emerging agricultural technologies to farmers helping them to step up productivity and increase their annual incomes. The project will expose them to new agriculture technologies based on market development approaches and the Participatory Market Chain Approach (PMCA). The training component has also encompassed public and private institutions.

The project also aims at conducting nutrition education, monitoring and counselling for the poor, rural and urban households for increasing the consumption of nutritious foods.

Women and children in both countries, who have been facing nutritional problems, will be made the target beneficiaries of the project. The project seeks to help 60,000 households to increase their annual income by at least 75 Euros from production and sales of high- value agricultural commodities. Similarly, 1000 households are expected to increase their annual income by 100 Euros from seed sales.

Overall, the project seeks to help 60,000 poor and excluded household – 40,000 in Bangladesh and 20,000 in Nepal – to increase their income and nutritional status.

END

From: AmnestyIntl@amnesty.eu
Sent: 13 December 2011 10:05
To: undisclosed-recipients
Subject: AI Press Release : Nepal - Protect Nepalese migrants from 'false promises' of work abroad

AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL
PRESS RELEASE

Under embargo to 13 December 12.00 Nepal time 05.45 GMT

Nepal: Protect Nepalese migrants from 'false promises' of work abroad

Rogue Nepalese recruitment agencies are trafficking Nepalese for exploitation and forced labour in the Gulf States and Malaysia, Amnesty International said today in a new report, as it called on the Nepalese government to improve protection of its migrant workers.

False Promises: Exploitation and forced labour of Nepalese migrant workers highlights the fate of prospective migrants who take out large loans to pay recruitment fees to secure a job overseas, unaware that recruitment agencies are deceiving them about the work, pay and conditions they are signing up to.

Amnesty International interviewed nearly 150 migrant workers and found that 90 per cent had been deceived by recruitment agencies regarding their employment contract. Some had to work without rest days, in dangerous conditions, or received salaries of less than half of what was promised.

"Nepalese people seek a better life abroad but fail before they even leave home, as recruitment agents – who earn huge profits – deceive them regarding their terms of contract, which is a key element in trafficking," said Norma Kang Muico, Amnesty International's Researcher for Asia-Pacific Migrants' Rights.

"By the time they find out the true nature of their work, many are already trapped, saddled with large loans from private lenders with annual interest rates of up to 60 per cent."

Recruitment agencies charge an average NPR 100,000 (US\$1,400) for their services, three times the average annual income in Nepal.

Being burdened with large loans and no alternative way of repaying them leaves migrant workers highly vulnerable to exploitation. Amnesty International documented cases where migrants were also beaten, threatened and had their freedom of movement restricted by employers in destination countries.

Migrants facing exploitation or forced labour who sought assistance from Nepalese recruitment agencies or Nepalese government authorities received little support. Recruitment agencies even endorsed employers' common practice of confiscating passports, which facilitates abuse.

Nepalese women face restrictions to working abroad which increase their vulnerability. Intermittent bans on domestic work and a requirement to seek family permission prior to migrating, force women to migrate through irregular channels or become 'undocumented'.

Amnesty International interviewed migrant domestics who had worked 21 hours per day, were not allowed to leave the house and were sexually abused by their employers.

"The Government must end discriminatory practices that force women migrants underground and leave them at greater risk of exploitation, without the protections available to regular migrants," said Norma Kang Muico.

Nepal's Foreign Employment Act, introduced in 2007, is supposed to provide protection for migrant workers. It requires recruitment agencies to provide migrant workers with a copy of their contract in advance and guards against excessive fees for recruitment services. It also allows for punishment of recruitment agents that fail to abide by terms of contract.

Amnesty International's research found evidence of violations of the law by recruitment agencies, including failure to provide contracts, changing terms and conditions and overcharging for services.

But the Government of Nepal is failing to enforce the legislation, and no recruitment agency has been punished.

Migrant workers also have rights under the Act to compensation when their terms and conditions have not been met, yet few are aware of existing mechanisms for complaint and redress in Nepal.

Nearly 20 per cent of Nepal's Gross Domestic Product (GDP) in 2010-11 came from remittances from migrants, who also provide for the needs of their own families.

Official figures show that the number of Nepalese migrating abroad has increased five-fold since 2000 and that Qatar is one of the major employers of Nepalese workers, largely due to construction ahead of the World Cup in 2022.

"If the Government prioritises safe migration, this will benefit hundreds of thousands of Nepalese migrants and their families each year," Norma Kang Muico said. "It is imperative that the Government of Nepal acts to protect its citizens abroad which can also benefit Nepal's economy," she said.

"The government must end impunity for rogue recruitment agencies and fully enforce the Foreign Employment Act," she said.

Amnesty International also called on the government to do more to ensure that compensation mechanisms are accessible and effective.

"Many migrant workers are in the dark about their rights and don't know who they can turn to for help. Nepalese authorities must ensure those working abroad and their families are properly informed about the migration process," she said.

Background

Between September 2010 and May 2011, Amnesty International interviewed 149 returned or prospective migrant workers and met seven recruitment agencies and numerous government officials.

Official figures show 294,094 Nepalese migrated abroad for work in 2010, compared with 55,025 in 2000. The majority go to Malaysia, Saudi Arabia, Qatar, and the UAE to work in construction, manufacturing and domestic work. True figures are thought to double this amount.

Nepal is one of the world's least developed countries. 42 per cent of Nepal's population of nearly 30 million people lives below the poverty line and the latest available figures for 2008 listed the unemployment rate at 46 per cent.

Notes to Editors

For more information contact Amnesty International's Asia-Pacific Press Officer, Katya Nasim at katya.nasim@amnesty.org or + 44 7904 398 103 / + 44 207 413 5871

Please use the following link for images and AV material. AV material includes interviews with migrant workers and Amnesty International spokespeople:

https://adam.amnesty.org/assetbank/action/search?attribute_603=Nepal+Migrant+report+Press+materials

KAMARIS Philippe

From: AmnestyIntl@amnesty.eu
Sent: 07 December 2011 09:59
To: undisclosed-recipients
Subject: AI Public Statement : Nepal - OHCHR's mandate in Nepal critically important to safeguarding rights, assuring accountability for past violations

AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL
PUBLIC STATEMENT

6 December 2011

OHCHR's mandate in Nepal critically important to safeguarding rights,
assuring accountability for past violations

The Government of Nepal, with support from the UN's Office of the High Commission for Human Rights should work more diligently to promote the rule of law, resist political pressures to grant amnesty to war-time violators and make good on other important human rights commitments made in Nepal's Comprehensive Peace Agreement (CPA).

This includes establishing fair and effective transitional justice mechanisms that ensure accountability for violations of human rights and humanitarian law, and a new constitution that upholds the principles enshrined in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and other international humanitarian and human rights instruments protecting civil, political, social, economic, and cultural rights.

Article 9 of Nepal's CPA mandates OHCHR to monitor the implementation of these rights commitments and support national human rights institutions until the peace process concludes.

This important work has a long way to go.

Political parties in the current government and Constituent Assembly - parties to the CPA, vowed to establish a Truth and Reconciliation Commission and also to create a commission to investigate disappearances that occurred during the armed conflict.

Five years later, Nepalis who lost loved ones and who suffered serious harm are still waiting for truth and justice.

Ends/