

# South Asia Labour Migration Governance Project



## AT A GLANCE

### → Partners

Ministry of Labour and Employment in Nepal, the Ministry of Overseas Indian Affairs and the India Centre for Migration, in India Ministry of Overseas Pakistanis & Human Resource Development in Pakistan, workers' and employers' organizations, private recruitment agencies, NGOs, migrant associations and diaspora organizations, embassies, banks, researchers.

### → Donor

European Commission

### → Budget

€ 2.4 million

### → Duration

1 June 2013 – 31 May 2016

### → Target beneficiaries

Migrant workers from India, Nepal and Pakistan.

### → Geographical focus

India, Nepal and Pakistan (countries of origin) and Gulf Cooperation Council countries (countries of destination).



## PROJECT OBJECTIVES

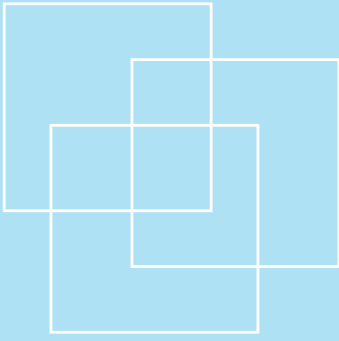
Migration in south Asia is largely South-South and is characterized by low and semi-skilled workers migrating with fixed-term contracts. The primary destination for South Asian migrant workers is the Arab Gulf States, which rely on foreign labour to fill more than 90 per cent of private sector jobs. The latest figures show an annual demand from the Gulf region for more than two million workers from the major countries of origin in South Asia.

While labour migration generates substantial benefits for countries of origin and destination it also creates a range of problems. Abuse of migrant workers during recruitment and employment is a common, well-documented issue. Women face barriers in finding overseas employment, and female migrant domestic workers are among the most vulnerable to abuses.

The South Asia Labour Migration Governance Project aims to promote the management of labour migration from India, Nepal and Pakistan to the countries of the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC), ensure effective protection of the rights of vulnerable migrant workers, enhance the development impact of labour migration and reduce unregulated migration.

Specific objectives include:

- Providing reliable information on overseas employment opportunities and building the capacity to match qualified job seekers with foreign employers.
- Reducing migration costs and abuses and increasing the protection of migrant workers in countries of origin and destination by improving recruitment services.
- Enhancing training and the portability of skills for outgoing and returning migrant workers and promoting the development impact of migration.



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## MAIN ACTIVITIES

The project has a migrant-centred approach. More than 20,000 migrant workers are expected to receive direct assistance and support, covering information dissemination, recruitment, employment and post-employment services.

The project aims to provide migrant workers with more accurate and reliable employment information in the GCC countries by creating the South Asia-GCC Employment Information Portal and organizing pre-departure orientation sessions and workshops on the portability of skills. By engaging with governments, trade unions and NGOs, the project also intends to improve recruitment services, including lowering recruitment costs and strengthening the protection of migrant workers during their employment.

*The International Labour Organization (ILO) is the United Nations' international organization responsible for drawing up and overseeing international labour standards. The ILO is the only United Nations agency with a constitutional mandate to protect migrant workers, and this mandate has been re-affirmed by the 1944 Declaration of Philadelphia and the 1998 ILO Declaration on Fundamental Principles and Rights at Work. The ILO has been addressing labour migration issues and the protection of migrant workers since its inception. ILO adopts a rights-based approach to labour migration and promotes tripartite participation in migration policy.*

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## PROJECT OUTCOMES

**Generation of labour market information:** Establish the South Asia-GCC Employment Information Portal and link it with migrant resource centres and job centres in countries of origin, to enhance access to accurate and timely information on job opportunities, employment terms and conditions, and skills requirements. Conduct studies and regular updates on the demand for labour and the required skills in specific sectors and occupations in GCC.

**Promotion of safe migration:** Improve pre-departure orientation programmes and delivery mechanisms to meet the specific needs of female migrant workers.

**Improvement of recruitment services:** Monitor and report on recruitment costs, develop a rating mechanism, support complaints mechanisms, develop a blueprint for reforms, and launch initiatives (in domestic work and construction) to reduce levels of intervention and costs.

**Protection in employment:** Introduce appropriate e-governance tools and measures to support more effective workplace inspection and complaints' handling mechanisms. Work with embassies, trade unions and civil society organizations to improve services related to information sharing, counselling, dispute resolution and legal advice.

**Improvement of training and portability of skills:** Develop recommendations and roadmaps for training and education programmes that meet the requirements for jobs in construction, hospitality and technical trades. Identify and build the capacity of skills-testing sites. Issue 'skills passports' for returnees.

**Facilitation of migration and development:** Develop strategies and roadmaps to support preparation and migration in Nepal and implement pilot actions to facilitate remittance-backed savings and investment.

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