

In The Know

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News of the Month

Nepal among the 'top ten movers'.....

The recently launched 20th anniversary edition of UNDP's Human Development Report highlights that Nepal is one of the fastest movers in the Human Development Index (HDI) since 1970 and is 3rd among the 'Top Ten Movers' list in terms of progress in health and education.

Between 1970 and 2010, Nepal's HDI value increased from 0.210 to 0.428, an increase of 104 per cent, while Nepal's Gross National Income per capita increased by 94 per cent during the same period. The gap between Nepal's life expectancy and the global average has narrowed by 87 percent over the past 40 years.

Nepal's impressive progress in health and education can be traced to major public policy efforts such as the 'Free primary education for all children' legislation as far back as 1971 and the extension of primary healthcare through community participation, local mobilization of resources and decentralization.

However, economic growth has been modest and a lack of employment opportunities has led

many Nepalese to seek opportunities abroad. Nepal is still a poor country with an HDI value for 2010 of 0.428—keeping the country in the 'Low Human Development' category—ranking 138 out of 169 countries and territories listed.

Continuing and multifaceted inequity remains a major reason for Nepal's low HDI position. According to the Human Development Report 2010, large disparities remain between boys and girls in school attendance as well as in the quality of education between urban and rural areas and across ethnic groups.

Major health challenges remain, related to communicable diseases and malnutrition. Large disparities separate regions and groups, with a quasi-feudal oligarchic system and caste based discriminations continuing to marginalize some.

UNDP Country Director, Ms. Anne-Isabelle Degryse-Blateau stated, "Nepal needs to learn from its own successes in health and education and apply the same determination to



Dr. Jagadish C. Pokharel, Hon'ble Vice Chairman of the National Planning Commission launching the report

tackle the areas in which it is still lagging behind. Addressing inequalities across gender, regions, groups remains a priority to ensure that no Nepali child, women, youth or person living in remote areas or from any particular groups is left behind, and also to ensure every Nepali can enjoy his or her fundamental rights and can actively participate in moving Nepal out of the Low Human Development Category."

Considerable inequalities are also seen in terms of the Gender Inequality Index. Only 18 per cent of adult women have a secondary or higher level of education compared to 40 per cent of their male counterparts, fewer women work have paid work and for every 100,000 live births, still 281 women die from pregnancy-related causes.

Launch of *National Adaptation Programme of Action—NAPA*



Rt. Honourable Prime Minister Mr. Madhav Kumar Nepal launches the NAPA

Following the Cabinet approval, Rt. Honourable Prime Minister and Chairperson of Climate Change Council, Mr. Madhav Kumar Nepal launched the *National Adaptation Programme of Action (NAPA)* document and the *Nepal Climate Change and Development Portal*, bringing to fruition an 18 months long effort involving six line ministries and more than 80 institutions across the country, including civil society, private sector and the media.

The NAPA is a process of assessing the country's climate vulnerability and identifying priority adaptation measures. The Nepal NAPA document contains 9 integrated priority climate change adaptation areas identified through a nationwide vulnerability assessment and extensive consultation process led by six multi-sectoral thematic working groups.

Addressing a gathering of more than 300 persons representing development partners and NAPA

stakeholders, the Prime Minister said; "The National Adaptation Programme of Action is our top priority, to manage the vulnerabilities of climate change and to minimize the risks."

The new web-based Climate Change and Development Portal (www.climatenepal.org.np), launched together with the NAPA document, serves as a knowledge platform where researchers, policymakers, NGO professionals and the general public can find climate change-related information relevant to Nepal. The portal also serves as a tool for coordinating climate change initiatives in the country as well as people and organisations working on climate change. The portal contents are provided by the institutions that are members of the climate change knowledge partnership formed by the Ministry of Environment.

Neil Briscoe, acting head of UK Department for International Development (DFID), highlighted the

implications of Nepal's NAPA for the South Asian region. He said, "The NAPA in Nepal is not only a country's response but it also contributes to the regional response because Nepal is the water tower of Asia."

During the launch, UNDP Country Director Anne-Isabelle Degryse-Blateau stated, "A lot of energy and efforts has been mobilized across the Ministries and various sectors down to the grassroots. This has raised expectations and we need to respond to them. We need to keep involving all these partners and implement our programmes in a prioritized, structured and well-coordinated way without losing momentum."

This unique broad based consultation was made possible by the additional funding (approx. US\$ 1 m) from the Embassy of Denmark and DFID beyond the standard Global Environment Facility (GEF) allocation of US\$ 2,00,000. The final NAPA document has been submitted to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change Secretariat (UNFCCC).

Climate Change

Climate Change Knowledge Management Centre (NCCKMC) inaugurated

The Nepal Climate Change Knowledge Management Centre (NCCKMC) was inaugurated by Rt. Honourable Prime Minister Mr. Madhav Kumar Nepal at the National Academy for Science and Technology (NAST) amidst the presence of senior Government officials and academicians. The Center will help advance climate studies and also bring awareness on the impacts of climate change on livelihood and ecosystem as a whole.

The center was established by the NAST in partnership with the Ministry of Environment, supported by DANIDA, DFID, GEF and UNDP as one of the complementary activities of the NAPA process and will support the implementation of the Action Plan. Currently, the center has a collection of over 700 publications but has plans to disseminate climate change related information to other districts by organizing campaigns, quizzes, lectures and exhibitions for students and the general public. The Center will work as the knowledge bank on climate change related information, scientific researches and policies, useful for decision making and development planning.



Rt. Hon'ble PM at the opening of NCCKMC

Women's caucus interact with media

The Centre for Constitutional Dialogue (CCD) supported by **UNDP Support to Participatory Constitution Building in Nepal (SPCBN)** organised a one-day interaction programme on the role of media and women's issues in the CA. The interaction took place between the women's caucus in the Constituent Assembly and the local media to have the awareness of the importance of women's role in Constitution making.

For the past 22 months, the Centre for Constitutional Dialogue (CCD) has served as a resource centre and a neutral space for dialogue between members of the CA as well as between CA members and other actors that has helped promote the widest possible public participation in the Constitution drafting process. The dialogues among peers have helped women CA members who progressively

organise themselves into a caucus. Inaugurating the programme, the Chairman of the Constituent Assembly, Mr. Subash Nembang said, "the role of women's caucus is highly appreciated as the caucus has been actively involved in raising important gender issues and has been lobbying for the rights of women to be included in the new constitution." He further added, "Media has equally been playing an instrumental role in disseminating information on peace and Constitution drafting process."

The co-ordinator of the women's caucus Ms. Usha Kala Rai said, "The caucus has played a critical role particularly in amending laws regarding domestic violence against women and in obtaining 33 per cent of seats for women in each peace committees at the local level."

The media representatives praised the women's caucus for their contribution to make the Constitution as gender

Support to Constitution making



Chairman of the CA, Hon'ble Subash Nembang



Women's caucus interact with the media

inclusive as possible and expressed their commitment to work together to bring forward these issues to the public. A total of 50 journalists and 60 women CA members participated in this one-day workshop. A total of 196 women CA members form the caucus, out of the 601 member Constituent Assembly.

Success Story

Rebuilding more lives.....

Chaudhary, 21 and Budha, 22 were verified as minors during the UN-led verification process in 2007. After being officially discharged from the Surkhet cantonment in February 2010, both of them contacted the toll free number and were subsequently referred to the **UN Inter-agency Rehabilitation Programme (UNIRP)**, Western Regional Office in Nepalgunj to receive career counseling and referral to rehabilitation packages.

They opted for mobile maintenance option under the micro enterprise package. Through the **Start and Improve Your Business (SIYB)** provided by the UNDP **Micro-enterprise Development Programme**, the duo received two and half months of technical training in repairing mobiles and completed the course on 31 July 2010.

Chaudhary and Budha became good friends during the SIYB and the skills training. That friendship laid the basis for a business partnership and they jointly decided to establish a mobile repair and maintenance shop. Six months later they opened *Rara Mobile Marmat Kendra* (Rara Mobile Repair Center) at Chhinchu Bazaar, Surkhet.

They are now very satisfied with the income they are making. Budha, with his typical shyness reveals that their average daily income was NRs. 500-700. They do not have sufficient tools and accessories but hope to do so when their income starts increasing.

Budha says, "Normally we do not have any problem fixing or repairing

mobiles but for some complicated cases, we take them to our trainer in Nepalgunj. We are still learning."

Chaudhary and Budha want the United Nations to help them in getting access to financial support in the form of micro-credit. "Our utmost need is the expansion of the shop. If we get micro-credit support, we could expand our business. We are ready to follow whatever conditions and guidelines and pay back the loan within the stipulated timeframe", they say.

They also feel that the duration of skills training should be extended to five months, "The period of two and half months is too short to acquire advanced skills in a technical field," says Budha.

To date, more than 1,759 men and women, verified minors and late recruits who were discharged from the Maoist army in February 2010, have chosen voluntary rehabilitation packages that are being offered by the UNIRP.

A total of 1,144 have already started training in regional centers or are studying at schools close to their homes (32% of them female). Of the total number of participants who are in education and skills training



In a jolly mood at work !



Proud owners of Rara Mobile Repair Centre

programmes, 368 have completed the training programme in vocational skills and micro enterprise packages.

A toll-free number, **1-660-01-77888**, is in operation across the country and accessible six day a week. The discharges can make their first contact with the programme. This number has already recorded more than 2,300 calls inquiring about the rehabilitation programme.

Most of the callers have expressed willingness to avail themselves of the associated education, health training, micro-enterprise support or vocational skills training packages.

Success Story

Model sub health post for safer and healthier life

The Badalamjee village located at a distance of 16 kms from the district headquarters of Dailekh was suffering due to lack of proper health services. The patients, mainly the pregnant mothers suffered during child birth due to the dilapidated condition of the old sub health post lacking basic facilities such as electricity, water, proper delivery room and the irregular presence of health attendants.

Little did these people with very less education know how vulnerable they were to different kinds of infections by having the grounds of the sub health post as a grazing place for the cattle. The district official says, "Earlier, the sub health post lacked proper beds and women were required to bring a bucket of water and a sack to lie down when it was time to deliver babies. At times, when the queue was long, the women were kept waiting, lying in the same ground where the cattle grazed every day."

It was a boon for the community when the **Quick Impact and Peace Support Initiative (QIPSI)** programme under the UNDP supported **Decentralized Local Governance Support Programme (DLGSP)**, two years ago chose the village to implement small infrastructure activities. There are a total of 993 households (338 Dalits, 58 Muslims and 597 others) in Badalamjee village.

Under the popular demand of the villagers and seeing the plight of

women/mothers, the decision was taken at the village assembly meeting to fund a small well-equipped sub health post, addressing different health care issues including emergency and obstetrics with enough health attendants. The meeting was attended by district Government officials, teachers, political party representatives and community leaders.

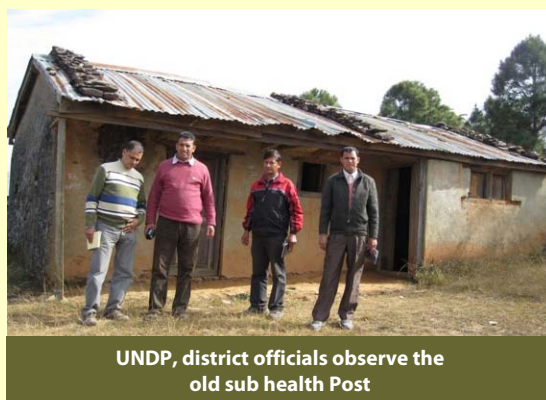
To start with, the technicians estimated the cost for the construction of the health post. A Construction Committee was formed with clear duties and responsibilities under Moti Ram Adhikary, Chairperson of the Users Committee. For transparency purpose, a signboard was placed in the project site with all the details of the cost.

The new sub health post building was constructed at the total cost of Rs.370, 196. Out of the total cost, the QIPSI grant was Rs.277,647 and community contribution was Rs.92,549. The sub health post was constructed within a period of 8 months.

Today there is a post delivery room and a waiting room for a family member attending the patient. A small toilet has been constructed at the cost of Rs. 9000 from the support of the Village Development Committee. Through the programme, adequate facilities are now made available in the new sub health post including two beds for child birth.



The newly constructed sub health post



UNDP, district officials observe the old sub health Post



Benefitting from the available health services

Continued.....

Success Story

Model sub health post ...continued

The sub health post receives 20-30 patients everyday. About 14 women in average come for child delivery every month from this village and from three adjoining villages. As a result, there is less load in the hospital at the district headquarters. The rural people feel that they are receiving good treatment for normal illnesses.

Jhupkala BK, 25, recently had a baby delivered in this newly constructed sub health post. She is happy that she got herself regularly checked and received the necessary vaccinations. She says, "I received necessary vitamins and vaccinations free of cost. I faced no problems as such, rather I was taken care of very well. We women folks are relieved because we have this new well equipped sub health post in this village."

The Government (Department of Health) sent in senior staff last year after the new building was constructed. Currently the sub health post has a Senior Auxiliary Health Worker, an Auxiliary Nurse Midwife and an Office Assistant provided by the Government. Additionally, one Auxiliary Nurse Midwife is supported by the Village Development Committee. Also, in addition to the free distribution of iron capsules and vitamins, the Government provides an allowance ranging from Rs. 1500–Rs. 500 (depending on the geographic region i.e the Mountain, hill and terai) to mothers who come to the sub health post for check up and delivery. Enough incentives are

given to the staff to motivate them to provide good health care services. The allowance for an Auxiliary Nurse Midwife per delivery is Rs. 300.

To improve maternal health services, the Government has placed Female Community Health Volunteers (FCHVs) through the Department of Health in all the wards of the Village Development Committees. Maternity kits are provided to FCHVs who attend deliveries, reaching their patients who cannot travel to the sub health post.

The three delays—seeking, reaching and receiving care are important causes of poor maternal health status in Nepal. Some 40 per cent deaths occur at home, 14 per cent in transit to health facility and 41 per cent in a health facility.

About 73 per cent of births still take place at home in Nepal, with 55.7 per cent of women being assisted by traditional birth attendants and relatives. Lack of availability of qualified staff is identified as an important challenge, particularly in remote districts like Dailekh.

While there is still a long way to go to address maternal mortality and basic health care, the recent 20th edition of the Human Development Report places Nepal among the 'top ten movers' over the last 40 years in terms of health and education. Thanks to strong policies and commitments!

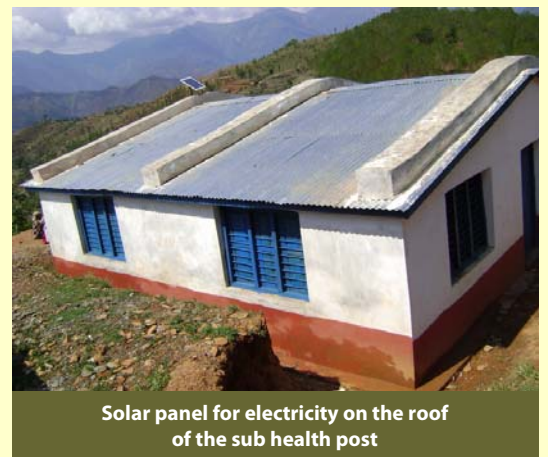
Nepal also received the Millennium Development Goals award for its outstanding achievement in reducing maternal mortality. However challenges still remain in many rural areas due to geographical constraints.



Pregnant mothers come for monthly check-ups



Information board outside sub health post with the details of project and expenses



Solar panel for electricity on the roof of the sub health post

News from the Field

Allo — potential source of income for entrepreneurs.....

The plant *Allo* (a kind of giant nettle) is found in abundance in the wilds of hilly regions in Nepal, within an altitude of 1200-3000 metres above the sea level. Organic by default, *Allo* has a strong potential as a fibre crop in the natural textiles industry— it can replace the use of cotton threads in the carpet industry and substitute the import of natural fibres, provided that the fibre processing technique is optimised as per the demand of industry stakeholders.

Allo fibre and products have increasing demands both at the local and international markets due to their special characteristics. The *Allo* fibre is hollow, allowing accumulation of air inside the fibre core creating a natural insulation and making fabrics woven out of *Allo* suitable to wear during both summer and winter seasons. The fibre can also be mixed with linen to produce designer fabrics.

A preliminary survey conducted recently by the **UNDP Micro Enterprise Development Programme (MEDEP)** estimates that two hundred metric tonnes of *Allo* fibre could be harvested annually if proper harvesting guidelines are followed. The total export of *Allo* goods was Rs 4.8 million in the year 2009 and they are mostly exported to USA, Norway and Australia.

Through MEDEP, the entrepreneurs have been oriented on the importance of *Allo* in the international market. The *Allo* collectors have been provided with skills development training to diversify the products suitable to export market. The programme also

supports the entrepreneurs in buying spinning machines for developing yarn and producing fabrics on traditional looms. MEDEP is supporting a little over 1100 entrepreneurs engaged in *Allo* business and over 80% entrepreneurs out of 1100 are women. However, the estimated number of *Allo* micro-entrepreneurs in the country is about 6000.

Realising the need to further promote *Allo* products in the domestic and international markets, MEDEP has invested a significant amount of time in research and coordination as well in the establishment of an authorised apex body that can further promote and regulate *Allo* harvesting, marketing, packaging and branding.

The efforts finally paid off when *Allo* entrepreneurs on 19 November 2010, gathered in Kathmandu from 30 districts of Nepal to form an ad hoc '*National Allo Entrepreneurs Association*'— a leap progress in terms of assuring better quality products and adopting a common trade mark ! During the 3 day workshop, coinciding with the formation of the Association, the *Allo* promoters discussed branding, packaging and marketing issues and the challenges associated with them. Hon'ble State Minister of Industry, Mr. Dan Bahadur Chaudhari while inaugurating the workshop stated that the Ministry would make its level best efforts to create a conducive environment to help produce and promote *Allo* enterprise.



Allo plant



Weaving Allo thread in the spinning machine



Allo products



National workshop of Allo entrepreneurs

16-days of activism campaign against Gender Based Violence

Following the historical declaration in Nov 2009 by the Rt. Honourable Prime Minister Mr. Madhav Kumar Nepal, marking the year 2010 as to end gender based violence in Nepal along with the announcement for the National Plan of Action 2010—a Gender Based Violence (GBV) unit was established in the office of the Prime Minister to monitor and collect data related to GBV.

After the announcement, a National Steering Committee was formed to monitor the implementation of the Action Plan under the chairmanship of the Chief Secretary and co-chairmanship of the Secretary of the Ministry of Women, Children and Social Welfare.

The inter-ministerial steering committee coordinates the multi-sectoral response to prevent and address issues related to GBV. The action plan focuses on prosecution, protection and prevention. It highlights the need of a special commission to investigate cases related to violence against women. Furthermore, the Prime Minister's office has made available a direct telephone hotline [1111] to report GBV cases.

As part of the ongoing national and local level campaign, a special event was organised on 29 November to mark **16-days Activism Campaign Against Gender Based Violence (November 25 to December 10)**, jointly by the Office of the Prime Minister and the Ministerial Council,

the Ministry of Women, Children and Social Welfare and the United Nations Country Team in Nepal with technical and financial assistance from UNDP **Enhancing Access to Justice for Consolidation of Peace (A2J)** project.

Rt. Hon'ble PM distributed 'white ribbon' as a symbol to end gender based violence and also launched a CD — '**Gender Based Violence Declaration Year**' on the occasion.

This mega event was addressed by national and international dignitaries.

Addressing as the guest speaker, UN Resident and Humanitarian Coordinator Mr. Robert Piper congratulated the PM for the successful completion of one year of the national campaign against Gender Based Violence. He further stated, "The past year has been a productive one for the campaign. We note in particular the important progress on legislation on sexual harassment, the domestic violence act, the launch of



Rt. Hon'ble PM launching the CD on GBV Declaration Year



UN Resident and Humanitarian Coordinator Mr. Robert Piper addressing the function

the 1325 National Action Plan, the establishment of new Women Service Centers and the effective mobilization of the media for this cause"

Ms. Arju Rana Deuba, Constituent Assembly Member and Women Activist stated that '**Gender Based Violence Declaration Year**' is a historical and landmark event for Nepal but to give continuity and to institutionalize the initiative, the Action Plan should be translated into policies and programmes with proper budget allocation."

Poverty Environment Initiative in Nepal

Under the leadership of the National Planning Commission (NPC), a one day workshop was organised on 'Environment of the poor in the context of Climate Change and Green Economy'.

The main objective of the workshop was to discuss the findings and country level policy and programmes relevant for the rural poor in the context of climate change, green growth and building resilience against natural hazards.

The participants of the workshop were from the Government, non-Governmental organisations, development organisations, private sector, community organisations and academic institutions.

Mr. Jorn Sorensen, UNDP Deputy Country Director for Programme in his opening remarks highlighted that climate change poses a major risk to many development projects and programmes. The National Adaptation Programme of Action (NAPA) for climate change has been approved but the key recommendations and proposed programmes will need to be included in the Periodic District Development Plans.

Dr. Jagadish Chandra Pokhrel, Hon'ble Vice Chairman of the NPC stated that the Poverty Reduction

Strategy Paper (PRSP) during the tenth plan was initiated to link poverty with environment. He added that the NAPA will now give a new dimension to address the issue of environment and poverty.

He further said that urban infrastructure development posed serious environmental threat and added that the tools used for the Environmental Impact Assessment should be re-sharpened and reframed legally so that they may cover broader dimensions.

The workshop was divided into two thematic areas firstly, Inclusive National Development: Need for Pro-poor Environment and Climate Resilience Policy and secondly, Local Level Policies and Practices for Pro-poor Development.

Seven papers were presented on *Integrating Environment, Poverty and Green Economy in the National Planning Process, Recommended Climate Policies and Investments from the NAPA, Upland Poverty, Rural Roads, Local Government Revenue, Alternative Energy and Leasehold/Community Forestry*.

The papers were critically examined by the experts to dig out what can be really applied for future course of actions under the *Poverty Environment Initiative* in



Opening of the PEI workshop

The Poverty-Environment Initiative (PEI) in Nepal focuses on improving the management of natural resources for a more inclusive and sustainable development. It strengthens the capacity of central and local authority to integrate poverty-environment issues into development and fiscal planning in turn strengthening local government's capacity to deal with climate change adaptation.

The two main partners of the PEI in Nepal are the National Planning Commission (NPC) and the Ministry of Local Development (MLD). The initiative integrates poverty-environment concerns at the District Development Committees (DDCs) and Village Development Committees (VDCs) level planning and assigning budget through the Institutional Strengthening Support Programme of the National Planning Commission (NPC) and the Local Governance Community Development Programme (LGCDP) of the Ministry of Local Development (MLD).

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