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# E-Bulletin

# 5th Edition

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SEPTEMBER 2021





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### Brief Information on the Fifth Edition

This bulletin basically tries to document key activities and programs implemented by National Network for Safe Migration (NNSM) under Hamro Samman project from April to September 2021. It presents key accomplishments under NNSM initiatives and those of its member organizations over the period. The highlights of this edition are lobby and advocacy initiatives, and campaigns related to counter human trafficking and safer migration.

### Acknowledgements

The fifth edition of this e-bulletin has been developed under the Hamro Samman project with support from USAID and UK aid. The project being implemented by Winrock International aims to reduce human trafficking in Nepal and increase the protection of people from being trafficked by improving systems to counter trafficking in persons (TIP). In this regard, we extend our sincere thanks to USAID and UK aid for their support. Also, we thank the entire Winrock International team for their technical support since the inception of the project to its implementation phase. We express our sincere gratitude to our member organizations for providing the required information and coordinating with us during the implementation of the secretariat activities and programs.

NNSM Secretariat

Ghattekulo, Kathmandu

## Introduction to NNSM:

National Network for Safe Migration (NNSM) is an umbrella institution of 25 organizations working in migration sector. This network was established in 2008 with a vision to bring together civil society organizations (CSOs) working for the protection of migrant workers' rights and also create synergy among the CSOs for safe, orderly, dignified and productive labor migration.

Since its inception, NNSM has been advocating for the rights of migrant workers through integrated efforts of its diverse member organizations and in partnership with various organizations within and across the Asia Pacific Regions.

The organization has been representing the voice of CSOs working in migration sectors mainly at national level and also engaged in regional consultative process such as Colombo Process (CP), Abu Dhabi Dialogue (ADD), South Asian Association of Regional Cooperation (SAARC), Global Compact for Safe Orderly and Regular Migration and Global Forum for Migration and Development (GFMD) in collaboration and cooperation with various organizations.

# KEY INTERVENTIONS UNDER HAMRO SAMMAN PROJECT

## 1. Meeting to Share Learning of Province-level Consultations on Foreign Labor Employment and Returnee Migrants: Frameworks for Policy and Practice

NNSM organized a "Meeting to Share Learning of Province-level Consultations on Foreign Labor Employment and Returnee Migrants: Frameworks for Policy and Practice" on April 21, 2021 in Kathmandu.

The objective was to share learning and findings of the three province-level meetings.

The province-level meeting was organized as part of member-led and workers centric advocacy at the provincial level. Issues of



Picture 1 Hon. Member of NHRC Ms Lily Thapa, attending the learning and sharing meeting at Kathmandu.

undocumented workers, cross-border mobility, reintegration and rehabilitation of returnee migrants and their families, and the roles that provincial governments can play to address these concerns were discussed during the meetings.

Honorable Member of National Human Rights Commission of Nepal, Ms Lily Thapa was the chief guest. Mr Rameshwar Nepal shared findings of the provincial-level meetings held at Hetauda, Bagmati Province; Butwal, Lumbini Province and Dhangadhi, Sudurpashchim Province. Also present were Director General of the Department of Foreign Employment Mr Krishna Dawadee and Executive Director of Foreign Employment Board Mr Rajan Kakshapati Shrestha. Representatives of IOM, SAMI, Solidarity Center, CSOs and media were also present.

General Secretary of South Asian Regional Trade Union Council Mr Laxman Basnet urged to devolve authority to the local government as envisioned by the constitution. Director General Dawadee and Executive Director Kakshapati Shrestha pledged to make the services in migration governance more efficient and effective.

## 2. Second Generation Leadership Training

NNSM organized a 14-day “Comprehensive



*Picture 2 Ms. Tulsa Rana, Modern Nepal, attends second generation leadership training.*

Training to Develop the Second-Generation Leadership of Entire NNSM Network Member Organization.” NNSM to mainstream the development of a second generation of leaders within its network member organizations designed a comprehensive semi-academic training in leadership development to carry out advocacy on foreign employment including the recruitment processes of migrant workers, localization of services, Nepal–India migration issues, age ban, gender-based violence (GBV) and other issues associated with foreign labor migration (FLM).

Altogether 14 people of whom 7 were representing various member organizations



participated in the training. Participating organizations were AMKAS Nepal, Modern Nepal, Class-Nepal, CSC Nepal, NIDS, Youth Action, Peoples' Forum, FEONA, WOREC, FNB Nepal, Maiti Nepal, PNCC and Tribhuvan University. The training started on March 30 and ended on June 10, 2021. Various leading migration experts from Nepal facilitated over 14 sessions.

The trainees understood the nexus between human trafficking and migration, especially labor migration and developed concepts on how to combat human trafficking prevalent in migration and After the training, the trainees became eligible to seed grants. These are a few examples of the outcome of the training.

### **3. Quarterly technical coordination meetings**

NNSM organized quarterly technical coordination meetings with member organizations on May 14, 2021 and July 22, 2021. The objective of the meeting held in May was to coordinate among network members during the second lockdown for effective advocacy in foreign labor migration-related issues such as rescue and repatriation, psychosocial health of migrants and their families. Member organizations shared various activities they had carried out and their plans.

issues such as rescue and repatriation, psychosocial health of migrants and their families. Member organizations shared various activities they had carried out and their plans.

The objective of the meeting held in July was to review the activities carried out, ongoing activities and plans for the reintegration of labor migrants by member organizations. All the participating organizations shared their accomplished activities. They briefly explained about the good work they have been doing in the reintegration of the foreign labor migrants. The participating organizations emphasized on the need for a comprehensive approach to address the reintegration issues. There were 22 participants in the meeting held on May and 15 in July.

### **4. Quarterly Coordination meeting with likeminded organizations at the national level**

NNSM organized virtual coordination meetings with various likeminded organizations on June 27, and physical meeting on July 30, 2021. The meeting on Rescue and Repatriation of Labor Migrant Workers was jointly organized on June 27 by the NNSM and People Forum for Human Rights (People Forum). The objective was to identify the existing mechanism for rescue and repatriation, the role of government

and CSOs for rescue and repatriation, ongoing efforts of rescue and repatriation in context of COVID-19 pandemic and way forward in case of similar emergency in future.

Altogether 62 people participated representing various national level organizations and government bodies. Mr Som Prasad Luitel from People's Forum presented on various legal as well as policy provisions for rescue and repatriation in Nepal. Mr Rajan Shreshta, Executive Director of Foreign Employment Board (FEB), said that the FEB would work to make rescue and repatriation more efficient in coordination with other government offices. Mr Harishchandra Ghimire, Under Secretary at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, assured of strengthening and reforming the service delivery by embassies, counselors, labor attaché and prioritize rescue and repatriation. Honorable Member of National Assembly Ms Sita Devkota and Honorable Member of Province Assembly also pledged to discuss rescue and repatriation at the national platforms.

The objectives of coordination meeting of likeminded organization held on July 30, 2021 were: i) to update on the work done by likeminded organizations on reintegration, ii) to

identify gaps and challenges on reintegration of returnee migrants, iii) To identify policy, and iv) to inform the participating organizations for the upcoming national conference of returnee being organized by NNSM. Altogether 21 participants attended this meeting.

### **5. Policy Forum Workshop**

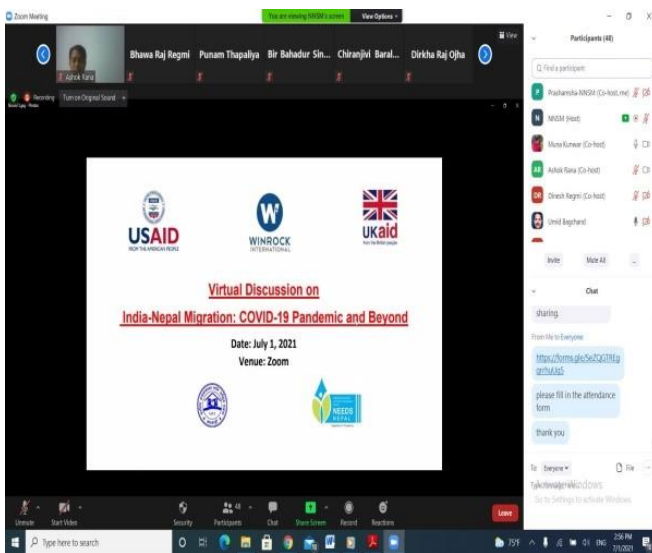


*Picture 3 Participants discusses on the given themes during the group discussion during the workshop.*

NNSM organized a policy forum workshop on Joint Action to Combat Human Trafficking in the Foreign Labor Migration Process, on August 13, 2021 in Kathmandu. The objective of the workshop was to disseminate findings of the thematic monitoring report titled "Situation of Foreign Labour Migration and Services in Local Governments" conducted by NNSM in 2020. The monitoring was carried out in Kathmandu, Makawanpur, Banke, Rupahdehi, Kailali, and Kanchanpur districts. Altogether 26

people including Mr Mahendra Bhattarai, Director of Department of Foreign Employment and representatives of government bodies, CSOs, media and trade union participated in the meeting. The meeting also developed an action plan for advocacy and to promote social media posts on the identified issues on regular basis.

## **6. Virtual Interaction on the Impact of Covid-19 Pandemic on Nepal-India Migration**



*Picture 4 NNSM in partnership with member organization NEEDS Nepal organized an interaction program on India-Nepal Migration as part of its advocacy based event.*

NNSM in collaboration with National Environment and Equity Development Society (NEEDS Nepal) organized a virtual interaction on the “Impact of COVID-19 Pandemic on Nepal-India Migration” on July 1, 2021. The objectives of the events were to

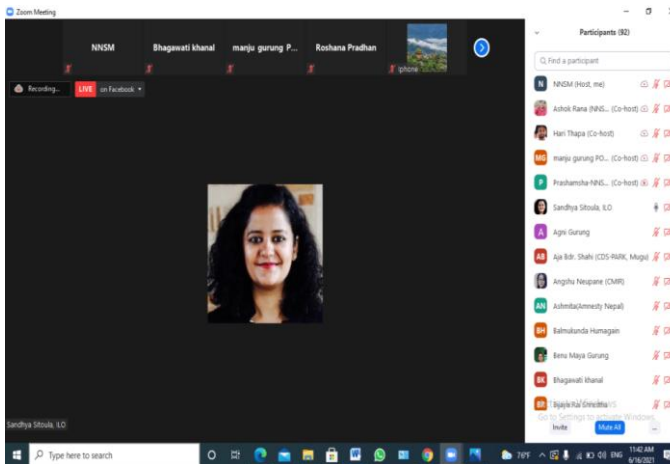
discuss on the issue of India-Nepal migration, to discuss data on labor migration to India for employment and other relevant information on it, to add momentum on advocacy of rights of migrants from Nepal to India and to urge the government to address the issue of migration from Nepal to India for employment at policy level.

Mr Dinesh Regmi, Kantipur daily and Mr Umid Bagchand, BBC-Nepal, made brief presentation on the issues of migration from Nepal to India. Ms Punam Thapaliya, CTIP Coordinator at Hamro Samman, Winrock International, highlighted the need to study the short- and long-term impact of COVID-19 pandemic on migrants to India. There were 109 participants.

## **7. International Domestic Workers’ Day: Making decent work a reality beyond COVID-19**

NNSM in collaboration with Pourakhi Nepal and South Asian Regional Trade Union (SARTUC) organized a virtual interaction on June 16, 2021 to celebrate International Domestic Workers’ Day. The theme for the tenth-year celebration was “International Domestic Workers’ Day: Making decent work a reality beyond COVID-19.” The objectives of

the program were to raise the issue of domestic workers in Nepal and those in destination countries to urge the government of Nepal to ratify ILO Convention 189 and to discuss data on domestic workers in foreign labor migration for advocacy of domestic workers' rights.



*Picture 5 Ms. Sandhya Sitoula, ILO, presented on the ILO Convention 189 and the status of domestic workers across the globe.*

Sandhya Sitoula, National Project Coordinator at ILO-Nepal, made a brief presentation on the ILO Convention 189 also known as Domestic Workers' Convention. This was followed by a detailed presentation by Mr Hom Karki, Senior Sub-editor of Kantipur daily, on Nepali migrant domestic workers in various destination countries. Ms Sharu Joshi Shrestha urged the government to change the traditional mindset towards domestic workers as unskilled labor.

Altogether 115 people participated in the interaction.

## **8. Information Desk at Tribhuvan International Airport (TIA)**

NNSM in coordination with FEB and with the support of Hamro Samman, Winrock International, has been operating Information and Support Desk at TIA from January 1, 2021. Two Information Counselors have been working at the Desk. The main purpose of this Information Desk is to collect data of migrant workers going for foreign employment, provide information to them on safe foreign employment, information about contact details of supporting agencies in Nepal and countries of destination and information on compensation provided by FEB to the injured/dead migrant workers or their families, and free cadaver transportation to the families of deceased migrant workers, among others.

From January to September 2021, a total of 27,255 men and 3,337 women migrant workers who flew from TIA for foreign employment with labor permit, took the services provided from the Desk. In addition, Information Booklets on safe migration published by NNSM and FEB were distributed to them. A total of 369 families availed free



cadaver transportation facilities through TIA support staff.

## 9. Publications

### a. Information Booklet

NNSM has revised its booklet titled “*Baideshik Rojgariko Lagi Jankari Pustika*” for returning and aspiring migrants. A total of 2,000 copies have been printed and NNSM plans to distribute them to aspiring and returnee migrants through member organizations in the future. NNSM has also uploaded the booklet to its website. The material is expected to help both NNSM members and returning migrants to understand the availability and location of referral services.

## Other Activities

### 1. Visit to Minister for Labor, Employment and Social Security



Picture 6 NNSM team visited the MoLESS and held a meeting with Honorable Gauri Shankar Chaudhari, Minister

NNSM delegates visited the Minister for Labour, Employment and Social Security honorable Gauri Shankar Chaudhari, on April 13, 2021.

The purpose of the visit was to request for collaboration and cooperation between the Ministry and NNSM on labour migration issues and urge the government to include CSOs during policy formation and reformation.

## 2. Issues a Joint Press Release

संयुक्त प्रेस विज्ञप्ति  
(मिति: २०७८ जेठ १४)

कोरोना भाइरस (कोभिड-१९) को दोस्रो लहरबाट नेपाल लगायत विश्वका विभिन्न मुलुकमा सन्तान उत्पन्न भएको तथा कोरोना भाइरस सङ्क्रमणबाट पुगेको मानवीय क्षतिको अवस्था सर्वविदितै छ, यस भाइरसबाट भइरहेको/हुनसक्ने जोखिमलाई मध्यनजर गर्दै नेपाल सरकारले पनि उच्च सतर्कता अपनाई मुलुकभरजसो नै महामारी रोकथामका लागि 'निषेधाज्ञा' जारी गरेको छ ।

कोभिड-१९ को दोस्रो लहरका क्रममा ठूलो मात्रामा संक्रमण फैलदै गएपछि नेपाल सरकारले २०७८ वैशाख २२ (तदनुसार २०२१ मे ६) मध्यरातदेखि काठमाडौं र भारतको नयाँ दिल्लीबीच साताको दुई उडानबाहेक सबै अन्तर्राष्ट्रिय उडानहरू स्थगित गरेको अवस्था छ, विशेष चाटडो उडानहरूलाई भने अनुमति दिइएको छ । यसको प्रत्यक्ष प्रभाव खाडी तथा मलेसिया लगायत अन्य मुलुकहरूमा वैदेशिक रोजगारको सिलसिलामा रहेका लाखौं नेपाली आप्रवासी श्रमिकमा परेको छ, कतिपय श्रमिकहरूको भिषाको अवधि सकिएकोले टिकट लिएर बसेकालाई कम्पनीले निकालेर होटेलमा महङ्गो भाडा तिर्नुपर्ने अवस्थामा हाल उनीहरू स्वदेश फर्कनबाट बञ्चित भएका छन् ।

यहाँ स्मरणीय छ, वैदेशिक रोजगारीमा रहेका आप्रवासी श्रमिकहरूले आर्जन गरी पठाएको विप्रेषण (रेमिटेन्स) ले स्वदेशमा रहेका उनीहरूको घरपरिवारका साथै सिङ्गो नेपालको अर्थतन्त्रमा समेत योगदान पुर्‍याएको अवस्था छ, कामदारलाई भैपरी आउने महामारीको अवस्थामा पनि द्रुत उडान गर्नुपर्नेमा नेपाल सरकारले कम धामो दिएको कुरा विगतको अनुभवले पनि देखाउँछ । कोभिड-१९ को दोस्रो लहरबाट निर्जित यस असहज परिस्थितिका कारण विभिन्न गन्तव्य मुलुकमा रहेका घर फर्कने चाहने नेपाली आप्रवासी श्रमिकहरूलाई सुरक्षा मापदण्ड अपनाई सुरक्षित तवरले स्वदेश फिर्ता फर्काउने व्यवस्था मिलाउनुका साथै तत्कालको व्यवस्थापन अर्को गर्ने, खर्चको व्यवस्थापन, कन्सी परामर्श, परिवारमा सहज पुनःस्थापना, गोपनीयता र आर्थिक तथा सामाजिक पुनर्पुष्ठीकरणमा कसरी जोड्ने भन्ने कुरामा ध्यानदिँदै नेपाल सरकारलगायत सम्बन्धित सबै सरकारी निकायलाई यथाधिकतम कदम चाल्न र प्रभावकारी भूमिका निर्वाह गर्नका लागि आग्रह गर्दछौं ।

स्वदेश तथा विदेशमा रहनुहुने सम्पूर्ण आप्रवासी श्रमिक तथा तिनका परिवारका सदस्यहरूलाई यस विपद्को घडिमा महामारी रोकथामका लागि उच्च मनोबलका साथ स्वास्थ्य मापदण्ड पालना गरी सहयोग गरिदिनुहुन समेत हार्दिक अनुरोध गर्दछौं ।

संयुक्त हस्ताक्षरकर्ताहरूः

- १) अशोक राणा, सुरक्षित आप्रवासनका लागि राष्ट्रिय संजाल (NNSM)
- २) बेनु माया गुरुङ, महिला तथा बालबालिका वैश्वविद्यनविद्द सहकर्मी समूह नेपाल (AATWIN)
- ३) सुनिल न्यौपाने, श्रम रोजगार पत्रकार समूह (LEJOG)
- ४) हरि थापा, वैदेशिक रोजगार पत्रकार समाज (FEJS)
- ५) भारती सिलवाल गिरी, नेशनल नेटवर्क अगेन्ट गर्ल्स ट्राफिकिङ (NNAAT)
- ६) रिता थापा, इन्टर-जेनेरेसनल फेमिनिस्ट फोरम (IGFF)

Picture 7 NNSM issued a joint press statement in regards to the rescue and repatriation of migrant workers.

National Network for Safe Migration (NNSM),

Alliance Against Trafficking In Woman And Children In Nepal (AATWIN), Labor Employment Journalist Group (LEJoG), Foreign Employment Journalist Society (FEJS), National Network Against Girls' Trafficking (NNAGT), and Inter-Generational Feminist Forum (IGFF) jointly issued a press release on May 28, 2021 urging the government to rescue and repatriate Nepali migrant workers during the second wave of COVID-19 pandemic.

### 3. NNSM meets with Right Honorable Vice President



Picture 8 NNSM met with Right Honorable Vice President Mr. Nanda Bahadur Pun on August 10, 2021 at the Office of the Vice-President.

NNSM met with Right Honorable Vice President Mr Nanda Bahadur Pun on August 10, 2021 at his office. During the meeting delegates from NNSM discussed the contemporary issues of foreign labor migration

along with the return and reintegration of the Nepali migrant workers.

Vice President expressed his solidarity in making foreign labor migration safe, productive and dignified.

### 4. Wage Theft Report Launch



Picture 9 NNSM carried out the study on wage theft with data support from its member organizations PNCC, People Forum, Pourakhi Nepal and AMKAS Nepal and published a report.

Thousands of Nepali migrants working in various destination countries suffered from COVID-19 pandemic. Nepali workers in the Gulf countries, Malaysia, and other destination countries have also been directly affected by the pandemic. On the one hand, Nepali migrant workers were at risk of Coronavirus

infection, while on the other hand, some lost their jobs while other were not fully paid for their work. Showing the reasons for Coronavirus, some employers forced workers to quit their jobs, to take unpaid leave, cut wages, and stole wages. The study was supported by Solidarity Center. NNSM launched the report on Situation Analysis of Wage Theft of Nepali Migrant Workers on September 1, 2021.

### **5. Consultation Meeting on Access to Justice of Migrant Workers**



*Picture 10 Dr. Jeevan Baniya CESLAM, shared some preliminary findings from a research study on access to justice.*

NNSM organized a Consultation Meeting on Access to Justice of Migrant Workers on 13 September 2021 in Kathmandu. Major objectives of the Consultation were to discuss on the existing context of access to justice including wage theft and social security of migrant workers among the concerned stakeholders and, to make policy

recommendations for better access to justice mechanism for migrant workers.

Advocate Som Luitel presented paper titled on 'Access to Justice for Migrant Workers'. Mr. Luitel mainly highlighted on the dimensions of access to justice, state of access to justice, key issues, and challenges on access to justice and recommendations for improvement on access to justice.

Dr. Jeevan Baniya from CESLAM shared some preliminary findings from a research study recently conducted by CESLAM.

### **6. Provincial-level Interactions**

NNSM with support from Solidarity Center organized Provincial level interactions at Butwal of Lumbini Province; Surkhet of Karnali Province and Dhangadhi of Sudurpashchim Province in September 2021.



*Picture 11 Participants attend the interaction program organized by NNSM with support from Solidarity Center.*



The interactions aimed to collaborate and coordinate among stakeholders for safe, orderly and regular migration with special focus on India migration. Representatives of the local governments, government line agencies, civil society and media participated in the interactions held in the three provinces.

## **Upcoming Activities**

### **1. National Conference of Returnee Migrant Workers 2021**

NNSM is organizing a two day long National Conference of Returnee Migrant Workers on October 2021. During this conference NNSM plans to bring together the stakeholders including the returnee migrants in partnership with various member organizations and likeminded organizations such as ILO, Solidarity Center, SaMi and others to discuss on the burning issue of the reintegration of returnee migrant workers. The conference will be organized as part of Hamro Samman Project activities.

### **2. Digitalization of Pre-Departure Orientation Training**

NNSM is going to digitalize Pre-Departure Orientation Training in collaboration with FEB and Hamro Samman Project, Winrock International.

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