

# SKILL *Insight*

*A newsletter compiled by SKILL-Nepal*

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## Seasonal Migration to India

Most of the villages in Far and Mid West of Nepal are sans sons, fathers, husband and brothers. A glimpse of the male member can be seen only during the plantation season and festivals. The men of the family flock to the neighboring city across the border in search of work. Their plight is the hard hitting reality of rural Nepal, poverty.

*"Barsa bhari khana pugdaina"*, this is what the migrating group has to say. Food insufficiency and lack of alternative means of livelihood (beside farming) is the major reason that has compelled these youth to leave their country. They take loan from the local shopkeepers for their travel expenditure.



Cook & Waiter training, Surkhet

The system of repayment varies according to place. *In Dailekh, if a person borrows N.C Rs.1000 to go to India then he has to pay back I.C Rs. 1000 after he comes back to the village. However, with the establishment of cooperatives in different villages, the trend of borrowing money (@36% interest) from these cooperatives is taking a leap.*

It is difficult to find accurate estimate of population migrating to India. However, our observation and interaction in different working districts (Mid & Far West Nepal) depict that thousands of Nepalese youths go to India for work. Most of the people in western corner of Nepal have been to India but never to the capital of their own country. Our survey amongst key informant personnel in 13 VDCs of Doti and Dadeldhura alone depict that on an average 231 people go to India from one VDC. Similarly, as per our interaction with the migrant workers in Dadamadi and Nawmuleh VDC(Dailekh), at least one male member of every family go to India from their village.

Most of them work as labourers in different factories and survive on meager income of I.C Rs. 1800 to 2000 per month. These people live in a cramped room in huge numbers in order to save their money. They take any money paying work that is available, be it that of a guard, porter, dish washer or labour work in factories. Having worked and lived in an unhealthy environment, their health deteriorates and their living condition remains the same and even worsens in some case. Adversely, however, getting infected with HIV/AIDS while in India is common and that too is alarmingly high among youths. They are unable to find good work because they are unskilled. A skilled person can earn around I.C Rs. 6000 per month.

Frequently visited cities in India are Gujarat, Himachal, Madhyapradesh, Mumbai, Delhi and Goa. There are few organization in India established for safeguarding and protecting the rights of these migrant worker. To name a few, *Mulprabha Akhil Bharat Nepali Ekta Samaj, Pashupati Association and Krantikari Labour Kosh.*

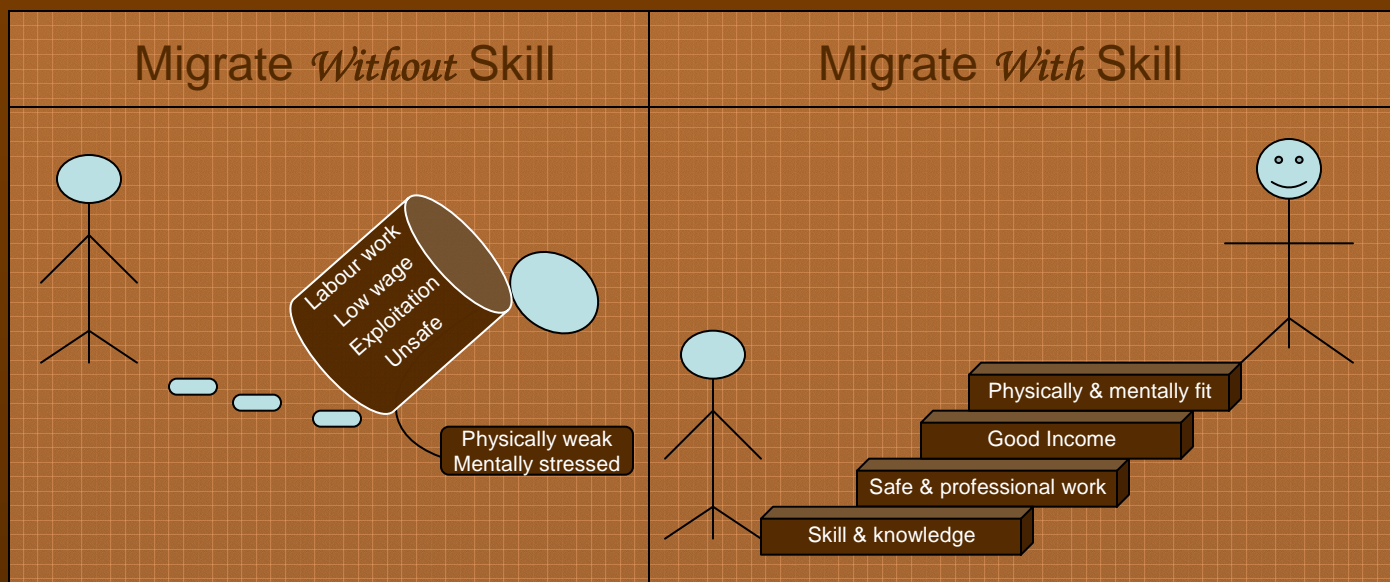
The bottom line is that despite all the odds, people migrate to India so that they can earn money. We cannot deny the fact that India's thriving economy presents endless opportunity for Nepali workers. Skill development training in marketable trade can make a difference in their lives. According to the migrants, skill in trades like cooking, house wiring, driving, carpentry, masonry, painter, photography, computer hardware and electronics can fetch them a better paying job.

*Note: The content of the article above is based on the information collected from migrant workers and locals in Far and mid west Nepal. However, the condition of population migrating to India from all over the country is pretty much the same.*

## SKILL-Nepal's Intervention

Thousands of men migrate to India in search of work without any skill at their disposal. As a result, they get exploited and land up doing menial and unsafe job. They leave their family for maximum months in a year, take loan and cross the border in the hope of earning money but most of them come back with meager income in their hand.

Having realized the fact that skill development training can enhance their capacity to get safe and skilled job with good income, SKILL-Nepal has identified these migrating group as a needy and potential target group.



In an attempt to support these migrant workers, SKILL has joined hands with Helvetas/Nepal. In order to capacitate them with employable skill, SKILL has conducted following activities:

- A poster illustrating the importance of skill training has been used as a medium of disseminating information. We have initiated this work in Dailekh and have plans to cover other districts in future.
- Registration Desk for collecting demand for skill training from these groups have been set up in SOSEC, Dailekh. Further, we will be extending it to other potential districts.
- Interaction workshop in alliance with LLINK/Helvetas was conducted with these groups in Dailekh and Jajarkot to identify the following:
  - \* Current area of work & Potential employable trade
  - \* City/town frequently visited by Nepalese workers
  - \* Appropriate time for training these groups
- Visit potential city in India to identify employable trades and based on the possibility, create linkage with employers.
- Conduct training in marketable trade. Inclusion of session on HIV/AIDS.

Few participants of our previous events have managed to get good work outside Nepal. Their income range and change in living condition has encouraged us to cater to migrating group specifically.

SKILL will conduct income verification of the trainees six months after the training in order to see the impact of the event.

## CASE STUDY

Name: Jaya Prakash Prasad Sah

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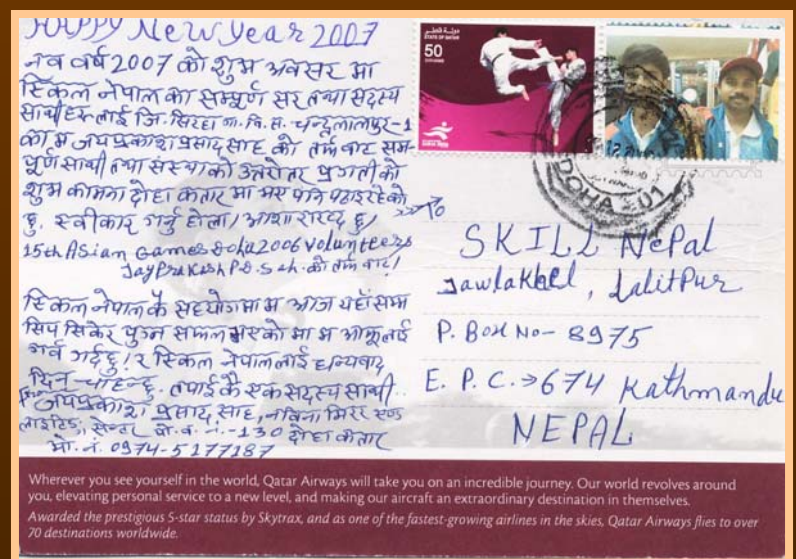
In the absence of employment opportunity in the country, thousands of youth turn to International market. Nepalese workers currently employed abroad are now estimated to amount to about 100 billion NRs annually, 25 percent of the gross domestic product. Amongst the many, Jaya Prakash Sah is one of the SKILL graduates who has been successfully working in Doha, Qatar as an electrician for past few years.

In 1998 he participated in house wiring training conducted by SKILL in Siraha. After a year of rigorous and fruitful work in this profession at local level, he took part in upgrading training (Electrical Motor rewinding). Soon after that he opened his own electrical workshop and enjoyed the benefit of being multi skilled. Financial ease made his life comfortable. He could send his children to school and provide basic necessities to his family. However, things started to get difficult with the conflict. The frequent bandh and extortion from the warring sides affected his business. Consequently, he had no option but to seek an alternative means to make a living. Foreign employment was a common phenomena in his village. He decided to take the plunge. Unlike many of his friends, he was lucky because he was skilled thus didn't have to go and do labour work. He managed to earn better income and work in a safe environment.



Jaya Prakash was scared when he first joined his work wondering what he had learnt as electrician in Nepal would be applicable in the new country or not. His apprehension turned out to be futile. The knowledge and skill he had gained in the training was no different from his work. At SKILL, we have always made sure that the training is imparted in line with globally accepted standard. The session have been made flexible so that few adjustments can be made according to the local requirement. To keep in tune with the changing technology, the curriculum is revised in a gap of 2 years through Develop a Curriculum (DACUM) process. In consideration to the increasing trend in foreign employment, we have made an effort to include a person (who have worked abroad in the same field) as a panel member in the DACUM process.

Today, he holds the post of a supervisor. He constantly requests us to send our graduates (*has taken the responsibility of sending visa*) as there is lots of demand for electricians. Jaya Prakash is a confident person, very different from what he was nine years back. He is financially stable and content in keeping his family self sufficient.



New Year Greetings from Jay Prakash

For further information, please contact

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