

“An Initiative to Safe Migration and Migrant Rights in Nepal”

Facts and Addressed Needs



Supported by



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Background

POURAKHI, Nepal (An organization of Returnee Women Migrant Workers) is a NGO established in 2003 with proactively works to ensure the rights of women migrant workers in the entire phase of foreign labor migration through the process of information, counseling, advocacy and empowerment. It has branch offices in 16 districts of Nepal.

Migration is the major determining factor of the Nepali economy, which has suffered from prolonged conflict, political instability and unrest. Remittance income makes up nearly 23.6 percent of Nepal's gross domestic product (Nepal Migration Yearbook 2010). Every month, nearly 1,600 Nepalese travel to the Gulf states for temporary work and thousands more go to other countries in the Middle East (Source: Migrant Workers' Access to Justice series). The numbers of Nepalese seeking and engaging in foreign employment has dramatically increased over the past two decades, making Nepal the largest sender of migrant labor per capita in Asia.

The 2011 census shows that 1,921,494 people or 7.25 percent of the total population of Nepal were out of country (Central Bureau of Statistics–CBS 2011). Nepal received remittance money from foreign employment as follows:

Fiscal Year	Nepalese Rupees in Billion	Remarks
2008/09	209	According to Nepal Living Standard Survey 2010/11, a total of 55.8% of households received remittance in Nepal
2009/10	231	
2010/11	253	

Source: Ministry of Foreign Employment

Due to lack of livelihood option to sustain their family, women are also forced to migrate. although they are not aware of legal provisions and necessary documents for foreign employment. To reduce the women vulnerabilities and advocate migration rights, POURAKHI and AWO International are in partnership for project entitled **“Minimization of Unsafe and Forced Migration of Vulnerable Women in Kathmandu District of Nepal and Promotion of Migrants Rights in Nepal”**. The project has been targeting in seven VDCs (Chhaimale, Talku, Setidevi, Chalnakhel, Sangla, Futung and Jhor) within Kathmandu district since December 2012.

Project in Nutshell

After successful implementation of thirteen months Pilot Phase (2012-2013) in the above same seven VDCs, the project has been added promotion of migrants rights for whole Nepal from 2014–2016 through Nationwide Radio program and establishment of Central level Migration information centre at Gongabu Bus Park, Kathmandu.

The project should advocate on the following issues to reduce forced migration are:

- Safe migration: awareness, skill training, legal process, compensation and rescue operation to vulnerable women migrant workers
- International instruments ratification like UN 1990, ILO 189
- Review in foreign employment act and policies: women-friendly and age bar

- Domestic violence
- Migrants rights
- Women empowerment: economic and social
- Re-integration package development for returnee women migrant workers

Expected Results

<p>Impact: Unsafe and forced migration of vulnerable Nepali women has been reduced</p>
<p>Outcomes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Vulnerable women migrants enjoy safe migration and migrant rights ● Vulnerable women migrant (potential and returnee) of the targeted VDCs have improved their socio-economic status ● Migration/ foreign employment related policies and provisions are positively influenced and effectively implemented

Baseline Survey

The baseline study was carried out with an innovative approach using workshops for the first time in this project. The first workshop mainly focuses on preparation of baseline study while the second workshop mainly focuses on analysis of result from survey.

Data and information was collected from 5,858 household within seven VDCs (Chhaimale, Talku, Setidevi, Chalnakhel, Sangla, Jhor and Futung) as per the questionnaire developed and finalized after pre-test. Almost all the houses were visited by project staffs and enumerators. The secondary Information was collected from DOFE, FEPB, NAFIA, Foreign Employment Health Association in Kathmandu District Headquarter and other relevant stakeholders. The project team collected all secondary data and information required for indicators as baseline level as of April 2014.

All the cleaned data was analyzed and finally report was prepared by Project team in consultations with expert and representatives from organization and AWO International.



LRP interview with returnee migrant worker at Satungal VDC during pilot test of baseline survey questionnaire



Baseline workshop participants

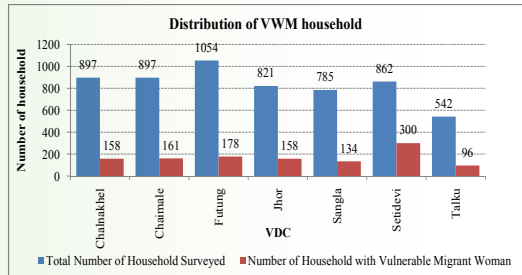
Facts and Findings

Vulnerable Women Migrant (VWM)

This study includes only those households which have at least one vulnerable women migrant (VWM) in the household. The vulnerable women migrant are categorized into three groups:

- (i) Current migrant (CM): those who are currently in foreign countries for employment,
- (ii) Returnee migrant (RM): those who are returned from foreign employment, and
- (iii) Potential migrant (PM): those who are willing to go for foreign employment

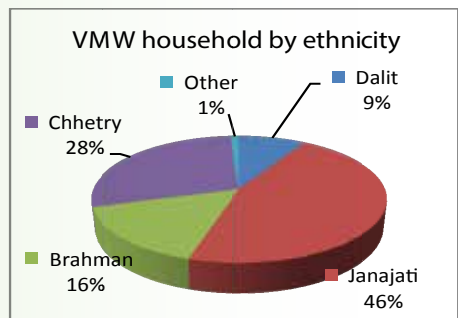
Among total surveyed households of 5,858 in the target seven VDCs, 1,185 households have at least one vulnerable women migrant. Therefore, the target household becomes 1,185 and only these households were included in detail household survey. Hereafter, the target household is referred as VWM (Vulnerable Women Migrant) household.



VDC	Type of Vulnerable Women Migrant Worker			Total
	Current Migrant (CM) women	Returnee Migrant (RM) women	Potential Migrant (PM) women	
Chalnakhel	28	11	138	177
Chhaimale	32	18	134	184
Futung	23	23	146	192
Jhor	20	8	150	178
Sangla	17	4	135	156
Setidevi	18	22	292	332
Talku	15	3	92	110
Total	153	89	1087	1329

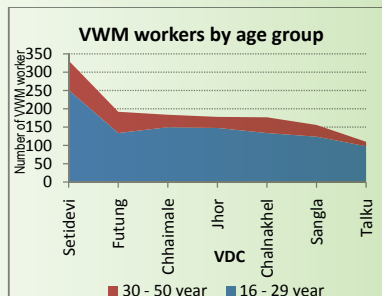
Ethnicity

Within VWM households in all targeted VDCs, the majority of household belongs to Janjati (46%), Chhetry (28%), Brahman (16%), Dalit (9%) and 1% others. On the other hand, the project does not have any specific strategy to target particular religion or ethnicity but priority will be given to Dalit, Janjati household of VWM worker.



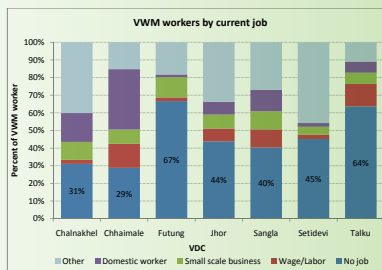
Age Group of VWM Worker

The majority of VWM worker is of 16–29 age groups with 78.1% and 21.4% VWM worker belongs to 30–50 age groups. The remarkable point was that one migrant worker of Chhaimale found to be 15 years old only and five were above 50 years old.



Current Job

Of the total VWM workers, 45% workers have no job and 55% workers had some jobs such as domestic (11%), running small-scale business (8%) and laborer on daily wage basis (6%). About 30% VWM responded that they had some work but not fixed type of job; so they could not categorized their job in any category and noted as other job during survey.



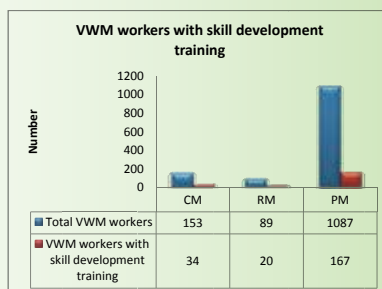
Average Annual Household Income and Expenditure

On an average, the annual household income was estimated to be Rs. 264,678 and annual household expenditure was estimated to be Rs. 233,437 in the program area. During baseline survey it was very difficult to get information on income and expenditure of the household as the household members were not willing to disclose their real status through the interview with the enumerators.

Skill Development Training

Out of 1,329 VWM workers, only 221 (i.e. 17%) have received some skill development training such as Beautician, Tailoring, Handicraft, Agriculture, Caregiver, etc. till the survey period.

Among CM, only 22% have such training, among RM also only 22% have such training. In case of PM, 167 workers (i.e. 15%) have received such training.

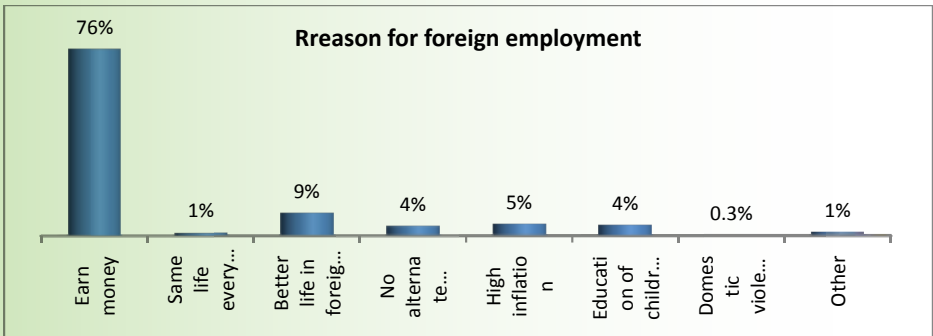


The important fact is that, within 221, 83 VWM (37.5%) have received skill development training only from ongoing project during Pilot phase (Dec. 012–Dec. 013). Implementation work within same seven targeted VDCs.

Reason for Foreign Employment

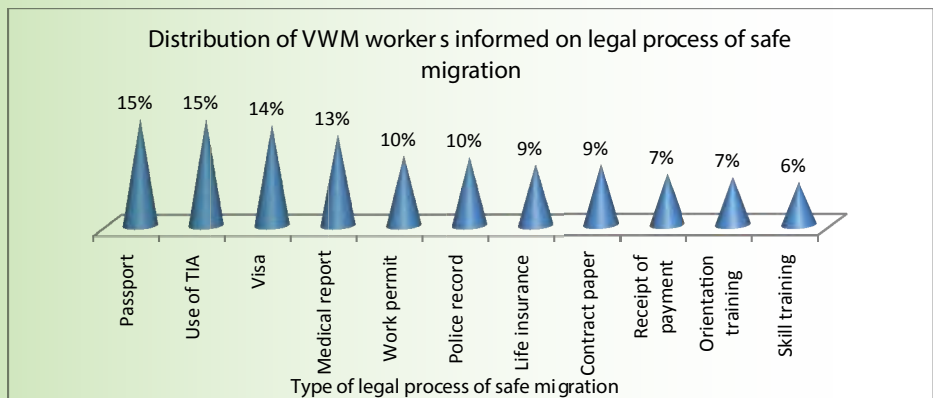
The survey has noted that two-third of VWM workers (76%) wanted to go abroad for foreign employment simply to earn money. Perhaps it was easy response to the question. However, there were 9% VWM workers who wanted to go for foreign employment for better life in

hope that life in foreign country will be better than the current situation. There are few VWM workers who responded that the main reason of foreign employment as due to high inflation in the country, for children's education, due to no option in the country. It was remarkably noted four VWMs have told the enumerator that they wanted to go to abroad for foreign employment because of domestic violence.



Knowledge on Safe Migration Process

Of the total, only 15% have informed that they should have their own passport; 15% knew that they should use TIA while going abroad for foreign employment; 14% have information that they should have valid visa; 13% knew that they should have true medical report indicating that they are medically fit to work abroad; 10% knew that they should have police record, 10% knew that they need work permit to work abroad; 9% knew that they should have life insurance; 9% knew that they should have company contract prior to foreign employment; 7% were aware of receipt of payment during foreign employment process; 7% were aware of orientation training provided by Department of Foreign Employment; and 6% knew that they should have skill training before going to abroad for foreign employment.

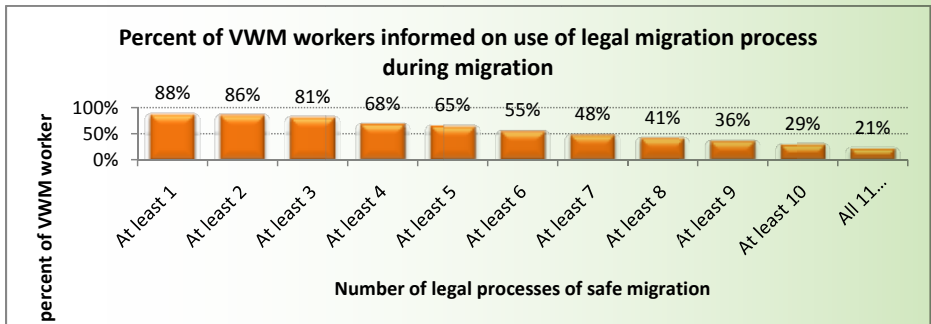


It is noted that the least VWM workers knew that they need some skill training for foreign employment. Based on POURAKHI Nepal experience, usually VWM workers thought that they would have any kind of job easily in foreign country. They even did not know about

orientation training provide by Department of Foreign Employment migrants worker before going to abroad. Attracting point is that, none of the VWM workers of Talku VDC were aware of all processes.

Practice of Legal Process

In this context, there were only 52 CM and RM who have used all eleven legal processes of safe migration channel, this becomes 21%. The project has targeted to increase this percentage to 60% by the end of 2016. However, 213 (i.e. 88%) RM and CM workers knew at least one process of safe migration channel while going abroad for foreign employment and the remaining 29 (i.e. 12%) workers were completely unaware of these legal processes while going abroad although they had completed all processes through brokers or agents.

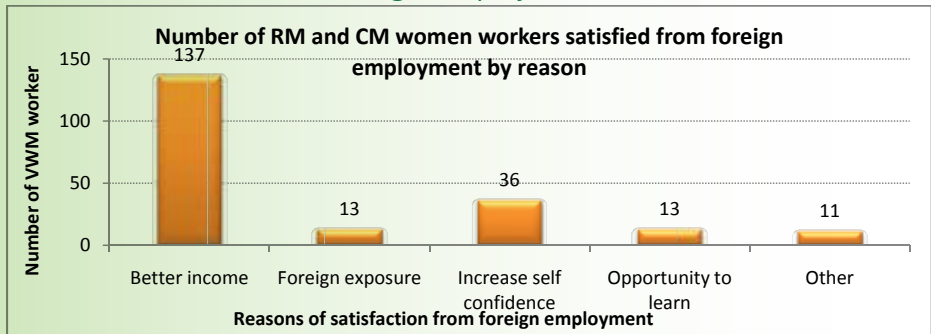


Fraud Cases during Foreign Employment

The major fraud cases considered so far in the baseline survey are: during processing of passport, charging extra fee, change of job at last moment particularly at the airport before departure, change or additional contract paper, and false medical report.

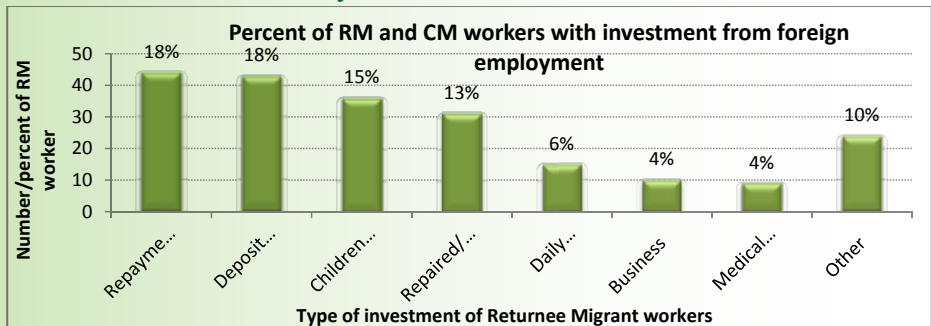
VDC	Type of fraud cases during foreign employment					
	Passport	Medical report	Extra fee	Change or additional contract paper	Change of job at last moment	Other
Chalnakhel	2	0	3	1	1	0
Chhaimale	1	2	17	1	1	0
Futung	0	2	7	4	4	1
Jhor	1	1	1	2	1	1
Sangla	0	1	5	2	4	1
Setidevi	0	0	4	0	0	0
Talku	0	0	1	0	1	1
Total	4	6	38	10	12	4
% as of total CM and RM	2%	2%	16%	4%	5%	2%

Satisfaction Level from Foreign Employment



During interview with RM and family of CM workers, it was found that some 5% workers were satisfied with foreign employment because they could study and join the family through foreign employment. This group was categorized in other reason of satisfaction. However, some 32 workers were reluctant to respond regarding their satisfaction from foreign employment, which can be noted as not much satisfied.

Use of Remittance Money

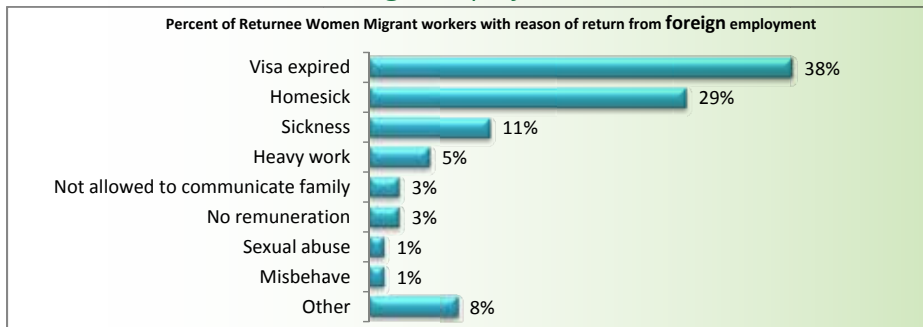


Majority of VMM workers take loan to pay the brokers and buying tickets, etc. while going for foreign employment, and they repay the loan gradually after earning money from foreign employment. The baseline survey has also revealed that about 18% returnee and current migrant workers had used their remittance in repaying the loan.

However, the same percentage workers were able to deposit the money at bank. About 15% workers were using their money in children education, 13% workers have used to repair or build the house. There were 4% workers whose money was used in medical treatment of household members.

The data shows that only 4% workers have used their valuable money earned from foreign employment in business. However, 6% workers responded that their money was just used for nothing worth and 10% workers had used for other unspecified purposes. It is noted that some 30 respondents (12%) were not willing to respond this question for no cause. It can be assumed that this group might not have used properly their remittances.

Reason of Return from Foreign Employment

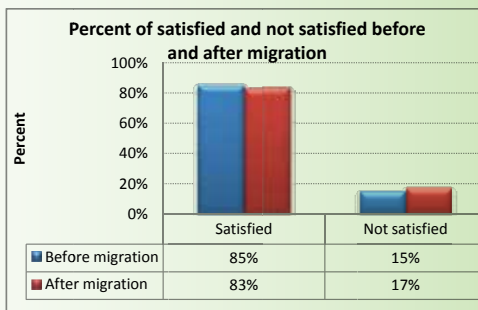


Among total 89 returnee women migrant workers, the baseline survey has collected the reasons of their return from 73 returnee women migrant workers. The 16 returnees were not willing to answer in detail so the enumerators did not force them during interview. However, the program should track them and support them for empowerment development.

Generally, women migrant worker receives visa for two years and contract duration is also for two years for most of Gulf countries. In case of Israel, the domestic workers get visa for five years and in case of Qatar, they get visa for three years. If they could not renew their visa, they have to return.

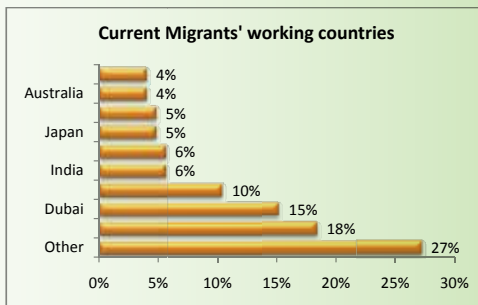
Family Relationship before and after Foreign Employment

Before going to foreign employment, 64 returnees were satisfied with their family whereas after returning from foreign employment only 54 returnees were found simply satisfied with the family; and 4 returnees felt that they were more beloved in the family than before; and one returnee told that she had better status in the family after earning money from foreign employment. However, there were cases that foreign employment had reduced family relationship and created problem in the family after migration. For example, five returnees had explored very sadly that their husbands married another women in their absence. There were some cases of domestic violence, domination within family and not willing to stay with family before migration.



Destination Countries

The baseline has noted 28 countries as destination countries of current women migrants.



Among these countries, most of CM workers were working in Kuwait, followed by Dubai, Malaysia, India and so on.

Community Alert Groups (CAGs)

Community Alert Group (CAG) is a loose network in all seven targeted VDCs. It has core member and advisors ranges from 11–13 individuals in each VDC. Representatives from returnee women migrant workers, youth club, women group, teacher, cooperative, etc. are in core members whereas VDCs secretary and representatives from political party at VDCs level are as advisors of the group.

Major role of CAG is to lead as well as support on safe migration issues, migrant rights and women rights at VDC level in coordination and cooperation with project, local government body and existing networks in the society.

Migration Information Centre (MIC)

A total of eight migration information centers (one in each targeted VDC) whereas one central level migration information centre will be established at Gongabu Bus Park in Kathmandu. The objective of such MICs is to amplify information dissemination, counseling and support on safe migration and migrants' right.

Radio Program

The project has been broadcasting Radio Program on bi-monthly basis through national radio channel (Radio Nepal) on Safe Migration, Migrants' rights and lobbying to effective implementation of existing law and policies. The program is being meaningful to sensitize people on migration and its inter related issues throughout the country.

Conclusions

The project has successfully completed baseline survey in all seven targeted VDCs through full enumeration principle. The total target households of 1,185 have 1,329 vulnerable women migrant workers (Potential, Current and Returnee).

Regarding target of project that the government actors should have initiated process for policy reforms and effective policy implementation, the project may also advocate and create pressure to government of Nepal on the issue of international instruments ratification like UN 1990, ILO 189, etc.

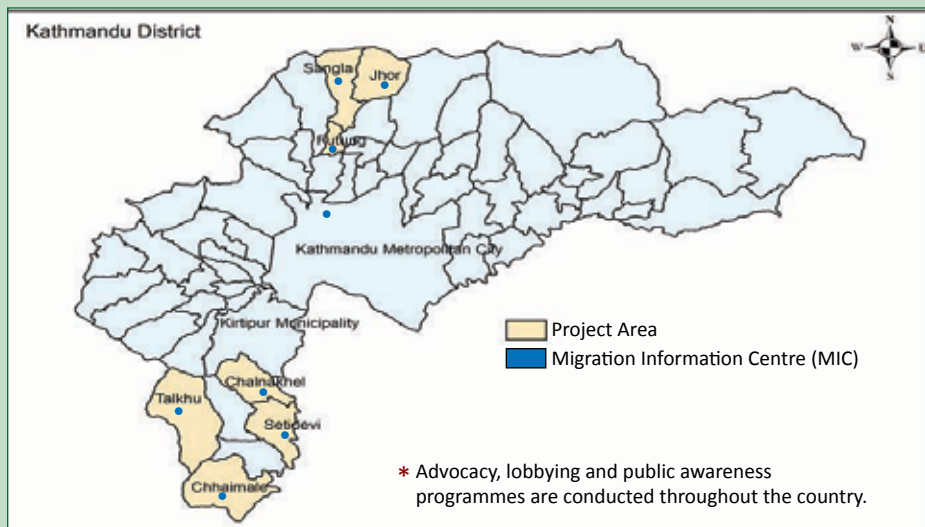
Furthermore, the project may approach and consult with government of Nepal for the development of district level as well as national level strategic plan (3 to 5 years) for safe migration. On the basis of that particular plan, safe migration issues will be in focus within government system, which will reflect in promotion of migrant rights within district as well as at national level.

As per the perception of targeted community people, there is need of different activities to address awareness rising on safe migration, economic empowerment of vulnerable women migrant workers, effective implementation of existing law and policies related with migration and support to develop network for the long-term sustainability of impact groups.

Recommendations for Further Project Implementation

- i Within 1,185 households, there are 1,329 vulnerable women migrant worker are in seven targeted VDCs. The majority belongs to 16–29 age groups with 78.1% and 21.4% VWM worker belongs to 30–50 age groups. This indicates that the project has to focus mainly to the VWM workers of age group 16–29 in order to reduce forced migrant through capacity building and awareness program on safe migration. The project has to cooperate, facilitate and support to reintegration program for 30-50 age group VWM workers. The re-integration program may be either economic or social or both.
- ii Within VWM households in all targeted VDCs, the majority of household belongs to Janjati (46%), Chhetry (28%), Brahman (16%), Dalit (9%) and 1% others. On the other hand, the project does not have any specific strategy to target particular religion or ethnicity but priority will be given to Dalit, Janjati household of VWM worker.
- iii On classification of migrant type, it is noted that almost half of the PM workers were jobless and around one-third PM workers had no specific job; so these PM are highly risk for forced migration. There are 862 such women in the program area. In order to reduce forced migration, the project can develop suitable strategy to engage jobless VWM workers in close coordination with government line agencies and other relevant as well as concerned stakeholders.
- iv Currently, the ongoing project (2014–16) have planned to provide entrepreneurship development training to 210 vulnerable women migrant worker and skill development training to 60 VWM. Of course, the participants for both training will be selected within 1,329 vulnerable women migrant worker from all seven targeted VDCs where minorities will be in priority.
- v Four VWM workers were found willing to go for foreign employment due to domestic violence. This is a challenge for Pourakhi to address these groups for women empowerment.
- vi Among 242 returnee and current migrant, only 21% workers were well informed that they had used all eleven legal processes of safe migration during foreign employment process. The project has targeted to increase this percentage to 60% by the end of 2016. It is recommended that the legal issue and also aware about safe migration legal process in target area through national level radio program, and the central level migration information centre must be in function.
- vii Migrant workers and their family members need to be aware on productive utilization of remittance that leads them to financially sustain in longer run.

viii To integrate the stakeholders, more networking and alignment among government stakeholders, policy makers, like-minded organizations, international and regional migration forum, international funding agencies, bilateral and multilateral funding agencies are needed to address migration and development. The project should play a role to facilitate this process.



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