



NEPAL POLICY INSTITUTE



KATHMANDU UNIVERSITY
SCHOOL OF MANAGEMENT

Nepal Policy Leadership Program

*A joint program
of
Nepal Policy Institute
&
Kathmandu University School of Management Policy Lab*

2024 Offer

“Policy Analysis and Tools: Skills Development & Experiential Learning”

Pre-Residential (online): February 17 & 24, 2024

Residential: 2-4 March 2024, Panauti, Nepal

Post-Residential (online): April & September 2024 (TBD)

**PROGRAM DESCRIPTION
(Final)**

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Abbreviations

ADB	Asian Development Bank
ANZSOG	Australia-New Zealand School of Government
BLA	bilateral labour agreement
BLMA	bilateral labour migration agreement
CDO	Chief District Officer
CIAA	Commission for the Investigation of Abuse of Authority
CoD	countries of destination
COVID-19	coronavirus disease 2019
CTEVT	Council for Technical Education and Vocational Training
DoFE	Department of Foreign Employment
ESC	employment service center
FEB	Foreign Employment Board
FEIMS	foreign employment information management system
FET	Foreign Employment Tribunal
FEWF	foreign employment welfare fund
FEWIMS	foreign employment welfare information management system
GCC	Gulf Cooperation Council
GCM	Global Compact for Safe, Orderly, and Regular Migration
GDP	gross domestic product
KUSOM	Kathmandu University School of Management
M&E	monitoring and evaluation
MoFA	Ministry of Foreign Affairs
MoLESS	Ministry of Labour, Employment, and Social Security
NGO	non-government organization
NPI	Nepal Policy Institute
NPLP	Nepal Policy Leadership Program
NPR	Nepali Rupees
NSTB	National Skill Testing Board
OECD	Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development
OSH	occupational safety and health
PDOT	pre-departure orientation training
PRAs	private recruitment agency
Q&A	questions and answers
SAARC	South Asia Association for Regional Cooperation
SSF	social security fund
SWOT	strengths, weakness, opportunities, and threats
UAE	United Arab Emirates
UK	United Kingdom
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
USD	United States Dollar

1. Introduction

1. It has now been universally accepted that good governance and effective public management are essential for accelerating economic growth and effectuating inclusive development. Both of these, however, are predicated on the proper framing of public policies along with rigorous policy analysis. This latter component, as a general rule, does not tend to feature in any critical manner in the discussion on good governance in developing countries.¹ The message then that needs to go out to policy leaders (both those that make, and those that implement, them), and both at the national and sub-national level, is that policy analysis is a critical field of study.

2. Additionally, the role of government bureaucrats is to provide sound, analytically rigorous, and evidence-based policy advice to ministers and to senior Management in the Ministries. Well-analyzed policy advice is the foundation of effective government decision making. There is a general appreciation in relevant circles in the federal and sub-national governments in Nepal that there is currently a felt need for relevant skills among public sector officials to be able to more rigorously analyze policy issues and render more robust policy advice.

3. To address this gap in practice in Nepal, Nepal Policy Institute (NPI) and Kathmandu University School of Management (KUSOM) Policy Lab have teamed up to jointly offer an annual flagship Nepal Policy Leadership Program (NPLP).² The NPLP is uniquely designed to focus not only on enhancing critical analytical skills in the broad areas of policy analysis, but also to serve as a platform for senior government officials as well as those outside the public sector to discuss issues of note in public policies, governance, and public sector management.

4. The NPLP will have a different theme every year in keeping with the dynamic nature of the changing policy landscape in Nepal. Its core, however, will remain the skills enhancement component as well as a knowledge management platform where discussions on the different dimensions of specific policies that are current in the country will be highlighted. For the inaugural program in 2024, the participants of the Program will be from among senior and mid-level government officials from federal agencies in Kathmandu.

2. Objectives of the Program

5. The objectives of the NPLP, in general, include:

- a. **Help enhance the skills sets of government officials and others on public policy analysis** (including in design, implementation, monitoring, and evaluation).
- b. **Share views and ideas on the public policy space** in the public sector in Nepal, and how that can be enhanced.

¹ See, for example, Bhatta, G. 2020. “... Those that fix the lights”: The Practice of Public Sector Management in Developing Asia. ADB, ADBI, and Routledge.

² Nepal Policy Institute (NPI) (www.nepalpolicyinstitute.org) is a Nepali diaspora-powered international think-tank and a knowledge platform dedicated to the people-centered and sustainable development of Nepal and Nepali people, including diaspora Nepali. The NPI Global Expert community has over 1,250 Nepal-origin public policy scholars, researchers, practitioners, experts, and consultants across many countries. It is registered as a not-for-profit think-tank in Nepal and The Hague, and operates as a non-party political, non-religious, and non-governmental organization. Kathmandu University School of Management Policy Lab (‘Policy Lab’) (<https://policylab.ku.edu.np/>) is the public policy think tank and a platform within Kathmandu University School of Management that aims to deal with public policy problems in Nepal in which specialist teams, university students, and experts work in a creative space to analyze complex policies, evaluate them, and recommend policy reforms that are needed. The Policy Lab acts as a center of excellence in public policy and governance in Nepal, and conducts capacity-building training and workshops on several aspects to generate policy-related knowledge and products for evidence-based policy making.

- c. **Help build a vibrant public policy ecosystem in Nepal** by providing a platform for policy makers, implementers, and researchers from both the federal and sub-national levels.
- d. **Provide opportunities to policy researchers** to interact with experienced individuals and benefit from experiential learning.

6. The Program will ultimately help yield greater knowledge of the context of public policy analysis as well as a deeper understanding of specific public policies that are current in Nepal in any given year.

3. Program Methodology

7. The Program will be predominantly based on interactions among public policy experts and government officials as well as others over a period of time that can be divided into three phases:

- a. **Phase 1 (pre-residency component):** Two online sessions (on Zoom or Teams) will be held in February 2024 (the first on Saturday, February 17, and the second a week later) (at 9 am Nepal time on both occasions) to go over the introductory, administrative, and pre-Program elements. This session will enable the maximum amount of time to be spent during the in-person component (ie, phase 2) of the Program to be devoted to the hands-on and peer learning components). The pre-residency component also includes a session with a top expert on policy analysis from New Zealand.³
- b. **Phase 2 (residency component):** An in-person, two and half day session, in residential mode in Panauti (Nepal) will be the core element of the Program. Phase 2 comprises the welcome and introductory session in the evening of the first day (ie, March 2, 2024), followed by two whole days (ie, March 3 and 4) on hands-on policy analysis work.
- c. **Phase 3 (post-residency component):** Two post-residency Program sessions will be offered; the first in April 2024 (date to be finalized) at which time the participants will be able to share their experiences in applying the knowledge and skills gained during the Residency Program.

A successive one (to be held in early September 2024, ie, six months after the Residency component) will continue the participants' learning journey as well as provide scope to continue to interact with, and learn from, their peers. The highlight of the second session will be a focus on impact evaluation of the kind of learning emphasized in the Program.

All participants will also be requested to join an informal professional network of cohort members who will carry on the learning journey into their regular professions, and will continue to share knowledge solutions related to policy analysis work. Membership to the network is voluntary; evidence has shown that such a network helps embed the learning gained during in the in-person session.

8. One particular methodological feature of the Program will be a key focus on real-world conditions,⁴ ie, concentrating on tools and methods that work in practice on the ground, and not necessarily those that are only sound in theory. This focus on real-world conditions will be in evidence during the Program through the use of a case that is occupying the minds of public policy officials in the country (ie, on issues related to overseas labour migration).

³ See **Appendix 1** for a profile of Ms. Sally Washington, Executive Director, Australia-New Zealand School of Government, New Zealand; as well as of the resource persons for the Program.

⁴ This focus on real-world conditions in the domain of public policy and governance is brought out in, for example, Odugbemi, S., and T. Jacobson. 2008. *Governance Reform Under Real-World Conditions: Citizens, Stakeholders, and Voice*. Washington, DC: World Bank.

9. A particular critical aspect of learning from real-world conditions is the focus on good practices (as opposed to ‘best practices’); and indeed, the angle this Program takes on the subject of learning from others and applying to local conditions is ‘good practice, best fit’.

10. The Program methodology also places emphasis on co-creation and self-learning as a critical part of the learning journey for participants. The co-creation will be in evidence in inputs to the design of successive offers of NPLP as well as in reformulations of the 2024 offer itself, as may be needed.

11. Finally, the methodology of the Program also focuses on a more holistic view of public policy analysis, including expanding on the term ‘policy’ to incorporate the relevant action(s) (broadly defined as a ‘project’), and also seeks to bring in external ideas and perspectives on the subject matter. In that sense, the structure of the Program will enable substantial learning from peers.

4. Broad Areas of Coverage in the Program

12. The Program focuses on the following broad areas of coverage⁵ related to the issue of public policy analysis and policy leadership:

- a. Global and strategic perspective on policy analysis and policy capability from a subject expert from New Zealand.
- b. Critical thinking and ideation process on the meaning of policy leadership, and how it can be used to direct action when it comes to policy advice.
- c. Contextual realities of policy formulation and implementation in the context of Nepal
- d. Understanding the application of specific policy analysis tools, including: political economy analysis, problem tree analysis, risks analysis, and SWOT analysis (and derived strategies).
- e. Other pertinent issues, such as ‘policy costing’.

5. Ground Rules of the Program

13. These are the ground rules that all participants and facilitators will abide by during the NPLP:

- a. **Showing respect to each other**, including through listening to different viewpoints without interrupting, and not disturbing the sessions with phone calls or messages.
- b. **Adhering to Chatham House rules**, i.e., not sharing what gets discussed in the sessions with others outside, so that free and frank discussions can take place in a safe environment.
- c. **Ensuring active participation in group discussions**, since the most effective learning takes place when everyone is comfortable with sharing own ideas and views.
- d. **Ensuring that all expected work is done prior to the sessions**; this ensures that members of the groups will be able to contribute meaningfully to group discussions. This also includes being active in the online sessions that are offered pre-program (ie, in February 2024).⁶
- e. **Keeping to time**, which enables the sessions to commence at the right time, and it also shows respect to colleagues who are already in attendance.
- f. **Communicating in either Nepali and/or English**, so that ideas and views can be effectively shared.

⁵ Please note that some of the materials presented in the Program are taken from reports that have been made public but may have copyright provisions. They are used here purely for educational purposes, and wherever possible, acknowledgement of the appropriate source(s) is made in this workbook.

⁶ A considerable amount of background information and knowledge on the various subject matters will have been covered in these online sessions. This way, the substantive group discussion and co-learning opportunities will be maximized during the face-to-face interactions in March.

6. Brief Introduction of the Program Resource Persons and Featured Global Expert

Resource Persons

Dr. Gambhir Bhatta (Auckland, New Zealand)

Dr. Bhatta is currently engaged as an international consultant in the areas of evaluation capacity development, policy analysis, and knowledge management for the Asian Development Bank (ADB). Since 2017 he has also had an Adjunct appointment at Lee Kuan Yew School of Public Policy (Singapore). Prior to his early retirement from ADB in 2021 – where his roles included, among others, Chief of the Bank’s Governance Thematic Group – Dr. Bhatta was a Senior Advisor in the New Zealand state services. He has a PhD in Public & International Affairs from the University of Pittsburgh, USA, with an advanced specialization in Applied Policy Analysis, among others.

Dr. Khagendra Dhakal (Bangkok, Thailand)

Dr. Dhakal is Specialist Lecturer at King Mongkut’s University of Technology, Thailand. He is also the Chair of the Board of Directors of Nepal Policy Institute (The Hague, and Kathmandu), of which he is the founding president as well. In 2023, Dr. Dhakal was a Fellow in the prestigious Asia Pacific Leadership Program at East-West Center, Honolulu, Hawaii, where he was part of an interdisciplinary initiative that combines advanced regional analysis with experiential leadership learning. Dr. Dhakal earned his Ph.D. in Applied Linguistics from King Mongkut’s University of Technology, Thonburi, Thailand.

Dr. Pramod KC (Kathmandu, Nepal)

Dr. KC is Visiting Assistant Professor in the Department of Public Policy and Management at Kathmandu University. He is also the project coordinator for the KU Policy Lab, leading initiatives to conduct evidence-based policymaking research across various domains. Among other roles, Dr. KC has served as Senior Research Manager in the USAID Clean Air Activity, affiliated with the Energy Policy Institute at the University of Chicago, and as a foreign faculty member at School of Global Studies (Thammasat University). He holds a Ph.D. in Public Policy and Administration from Yonsei University, South Korea; and completed a Post-Doctoral fellowship at the University of Sheffield, UK.

Dr. Gopi Khanal (Kathmandu, Nepal)

Dr. Khanal has worked in all three tiers of governments in Nepal, altogether for almost 35 years. He has recently retired as Secretary in the Office of Prime Minister and Council of Ministers, and has also had many senior roles in the public service, including as Principal Secretary of Karnali Province, and as Joint Secretary at the National Natural Resources and Fiscal Commission, and at the Ministry of Federal Affairs and General Administration. He currently has a Visiting appointment at Kathmandu University’s School of Management, where he teaches graduate level courses in development economics, urban economics, and fiscal federalism. Dr. Khanal has a PhD from Kathmandu University School of Education, Nepal.

Mr. Gopi Mainali (Kathmandu, Nepal)

Mr. Mainali served with the Government of Nepal as a civil servant for 35 years. Before retiring in 2021, he served as Secretary for five years at various ministries. He also served for one year as the Financial Comptroller General of the Government of Nepal, and for more than eight years as Joint Secretary (and Head of the Infrastructure Development Division) at the National Planning Commission. His other experiences include Local Development Officer in various districts and executive secretary/officer of various municipalities. He has Master’s degrees in three subjects (Economics, Development Administration, and Taxation & Budgeting). Mr. Mainali is currently engaged with Nepal Policy Institute as an Executive Board Member.

Dr. Purna Bahadur Nepali (Kathmandu, Nepal)

Dr. Nepali is an Associate Professor at Kathmandu University School of Management (Nepal) where he is also the Program Director for the Master of Public Policy and Governance program. In this capacity he also heads the KUSOM Policy Lab. Dr. Nepali was a Fulbright Scholar at The Heller School for Social Policy and Management at Brandeis University, USA; and carried out Postdoctoral research (on political economy) from 2018-2020 at Harvard University. He has a PhD from the University of Zurich / Kathmandu University on Human and Natural Resource Studies.

Ms. Samjhana Shrestha (Kathmandu, Nepal)

Ms. Samjhana Shrestha is a seasoned international development professional with over 30 years of experience. During her tenure at the Asian Development Bank (ADB) for more than 15 years, she held key roles in the areas of project design, management, and evaluation, including shaping and evaluating strategies and policies within ADB. Ms. Shrestha has conducted applied economic research across diverse sectors, resulting in the publication of over 50 works. She has engaged in professional work with varied stakeholders in over 20 developed and developing countries, including in Central Asia, South Asia, East Asia, and Southeast Asia, as well as in the Pacific and Australia. Her collaborative efforts have included partnerships with academic institutions, multilateral development agencies, governments, business communities, and civil society organizations. She is in the Board of Directors of Nepal Policy Institute. She has two post-graduate degrees in Agriculture Economics and Economics from the University of New England, Australia.

Ms. Sharu Joshi Shrestha (Kathmandu, Nepal)

Ms. Shrestha has been working in the field of Gender and Development (as well as overseas labour migration) for over two decades, particularly with the Government of Nepal and UN agencies. She is a working member in various programs, including the Task Force for Reforms on Foreign Labour Migration, Ministry of Labour, Employment, and Social Security, 2018. Ms. Shrestha has been serving in the Executive Board of Nepal Policy Institute since its inception. She holds a Master's in Political Science from Tribhuvan University, and another Master's in Women and Development from the Institute of Social Studies in The Hague.

Featured Global Expert

Ms. Sally Washington (Wellington, New Zealand)

Ms. Washington is Executive Director for Australia-New Zealand School of Government (New Zealand) (NZ), where she is also a Practice Fellow (Policy Capability and Public Management). She was inaugural director of the NZ Policy Project, based in the NZ Department of Prime Minister and Cabinet, where she designed and led a program to improve the quality of policy advice across government. As a Principal at Washington Emerson Consulting, she worked with a range of organizations and jurisdictions seeking to improve their policy capability (including in the UK the Cabinet Office, OECD, Monash University, and Ireland). She spent seven years at the OECD where she managed a network of Heads of Prime Ministers/Presidents Offices from OECD countries, and has consulted to the UN Food and Agriculture Organization and the OECD. Ms. Washington has also worked as an adviser to a NZ Cabinet Minister (Minister for Women) and Prime Minister in policy roles, and in joint central agency teams leading public sector reform programs. She has completed an Executive Management course on *Design Thinking for Innovative Business Problem Solving* from the Darden School of Business (University of Virginia), and has a Master of Arts (first class honours) in Political Science from the University of Canterbury, NZ. She has a body of publications on a range of topics including public sector innovation, public sector management, policy capability, and foresight and futures in government.

7. Pre-Residency Component

Session 1

Saturday, February 17, 2024 (online), 9 am Nepal time (60 minutes)

Google classroom to be set and Zoom session to be arranged prior to the date of the session.

The first session (online) of the Program will cover:

1. Introductions of the participants and facilitators, including names, organizational affiliation, and very brief background of professional career to date
2. Introduction of Nepal Policy Institute, and KUSOM Policy Lab
3. Contextual basis of policymaking in Nepal
4. Brief review of the design of the program:
 - a. Genesis of the Program
 - b. Main features – skills-based; real-world application; case study based; group learning; co-creation; hybrid offer; and focus on policy leadership
 - c. What participants can expect: background analysis, experts’ brief, group discussion exercises, presentations to the plenary.
5. Structure of the second online session on February 24, 2024
6. Responses to any queries from the participants on the Program itself, as well as the upcoming Residency component at Panauti, Nepal.

Session 2

Saturday, February 24, 2024 (online), 9 am Nepal time (90 minutes)

Google classroom to be set and Zoom session to be arranged prior to the date of the session.

The second session (online) of the Program will cover:

1. Presentation on global perspectives on **“The Policy Infrastructure: Building Capability for Better Government Decision-Making”**,⁷ by Ms. Sally Washington (New Zealand) (see **Appendix 2**)
2. Ms. Washington’s presentation will be followed by a Q&A session.
3. Brief overview of the main case study (on overseas labour migration); Ms. Sharu Shrestha will provide the macro context of the importance of the subject matter.
4. Relevance of specific policy analysis tools to be covered in the Program
5. Information on:
 - a. group composition and set-ups: participants will be divided into five groups of approximately 5 individuals each. The grouping will be done with an eye on balance with respect to types of work context, gender, sectoral coverage, etc.
 - b. self-learning exercise on application of tools to participants’ own policy issue
6. Discussions on the expectations of the participants with respect to the Program (ie, ex-ante observations, to be used as comparators for purposes of learning outcomes).
7. Self-learning exercise to be carried out prior to the residency component of the Program

⁷ See **Appendix 2** for a brief description of the presentation by Ms. Washington.

Box 1. Self-Learning Exercise 1

Review the case study presented in **Appendix 3**, then note down your thoughts with respect to the question:

What do you think are the main policy issues for the Government of Nepal to keep in mind in the migration of a large number of low-skilled workers leaving Nepal for external markets? What is the main policy problem in your opinion?

We will cover this and other issues on the case study during the residency component of the Program.

8. Q&A session

8. Program for Residency Component

2-4 March 2024

Venue: Diamond Hill Resort, Panauti, Nepal

Day 1: Saturday, 2 March 2024

Time	Program Details
16:00 – 16:30	Registration
16:30 – 17:10	Introductions, and welcome session (MC: Dr. Gopi Khanal) Introductory welcome remarks from: (1) Chair of the Board of Directors of NPI, Dr. Khagendra Dhakal (2) Representative of KUSOM Policy Lab, Dr. Purna Bahadur Nepali Featured Guest speaker: Dr. Baikuntha Aryal, Chief Secretary, Government of Nepal
17:10 – 17:15	Group Photo
17:15 – 18:00	Session 1. Discussion on Critical Thinking, Policy Leadership, and Context Dr. Dhakal & Dr. Nepali
18:00 onwards	Own time for dinner, and time for self-study

Day 2: Sunday, 3 March 2024	
Time	Program Details
08:30 – 08:35	Recap of Day 1 – Dr. Bhatta & Dr. Khanal
08:35 – 09:15	Session 2. Critical Thinking, Policy Leadership, and Context (contd.) <i>Dr. Dhakal & Dr. Nepali</i>
09:15 – 10:00	Session 3. Problem Analysis (a) Real-world context of policy analysis in government (b) Political economy considerations (c) Problem analysis <i>Dr. Bhatta & Dr. Khanal</i>
10:00 – 10:30	Tea/Coffee break
10:30 – 11:30	Group work on political economy and problem analysis
11:30 – 12:15	Group presentations, and discussions, on joint analyses carried out
12:15 – 13:30	Lunch + Networking
13:30 – 14:00	Session 4. SWOT Analysis, and SWOT-Derived Strategies – Dr. Bhatta & Dr. Khanal
14:00 – 15:00	Group work on SWOT analysis and derived strategies for the case study
15:00 – 15:45	Group presentations, and discussions, on joint analyses carried out
15:45 – 16:15	Tea/Coffee break
16:15 – 16:45	Session 5. Results Chain and Design & Monitoring Framework (DMF) – <i>Dr. Bhatta & Dr. Khanal</i>
16:45 – 17:45	(including Q&A session)
17:45 – 18:20	Group work on results chain Group presentations, and discussions, on joint analyses carried out
18:20 – 18:30	Review of self-learning exercise on application of tools to own policy issue

Day 3: Monday, 4 March 2024	
Time	Program Details
08:30 – 08:35	Recap of Day 2
08:35 – 10:00	Session 6. Carrying out Risk Analysis – Dr. Bhatta & Dr. Khanal
10:00 – 10:30	Tea/Coffee break
10:30 – 11:30	Group work on risk analysis for the case study
11:30 – 12:15	Group presentations, and discussions, on joint analysis carried out
12:15 – 13:30	Lunch + Networking

13:30 – 14:00	Session 7. ‘Good practice, best fit’ component of policy learning – Dr. Bhatta & Dr. Khanal
14:00 – 14:30	Session 8. From ‘ad hoc’ to ‘deep time’ policy leadership – Dr. Dhakal
14:30 – 14:45	Q&A session
14:45 – 15:15	Tea/Coffee break
15:15 – 15:45	Session 9. Self-learning exercise on application of tools to one’s own policy issue Dr. Bhatta, Dr. Dhakal, & Dr. Khanal
15:45 – 16:30	(a) Mapping of Participants’ Expectations with Perceived Results (b) Open discussions on 2024 Program Dr. Pramod KC
16:30 – 17:15	Concluding session: (a) updates on post-residency engagement, including focus on policy evaluation and application of tools (b) co-design of the 2025 program, and (c) formal evaluation exercise Dr. Bhatta, Dr. Dhakal, & Dr. Khanal
17:15 – 17:30	Handing out of certificates, and vote of thanks... – MC: Dr. Khanal Closing remarks from Prof. Dr. Achyut Wagle, Registrar, Kathmandu University
	End of the residential segment of the NPLP 2024

(Note: Participants are encouraged to interact frequently with one another both within and outside the framework of the Program, and as a way of building a knowledge network and organically formed learning community of practice. The facilitators are happy to help in that endeavour)

9. Post-Residency Component

A loose Alumni Network will be formed which will be managed on Canvas, and which will allow participants to interact with each other as well as others outside the network in order to share knowledge, expertise, and experiences on policy analysis work on an ongoing basis.

Session 1

(Date: April [TBD], online), 60 minutes

Google classroom to be set and Zoom session to be arranged prior to the date of the session.

The first session in the post-Residency component of the NPLP will be devoted to hearing from the participants about:

- Their learning journey on policy analysis work and policy leadership for each participant, including constraints faced, lessons learned, and the degree of applicability of policy tools covered in the Program.
- Peer learning opportunities on how specific policy analysis tools may have been successfully applied in various settings.
- Responding to any queries on subject matters covered in the Program.

Session 2

(Date: September, TBD, online), 90 minutes

Google classroom to be set and Zoom session to be arranged prior to the date of the session.

The second session in the post-Residency component of the NPLP will be devoted to two main items:

- (a) Feedback from the participants about any updates to their work on policy analysis, particularly if there have been opportunities to put to use the analytical tools that were covered in the Residency Program in March.
- (b) Discussions on policy evaluation, including measuring the impact of their learning journey; the session will be led by Ms. Samjhana Shrestha (formerly with the Independent Evaluation Department of the Asian Development Bank). Further information on this session will be forthcoming closer to the date.

We will also continue with peer learning processes centered on the learning journey on policy analysis work and policy leadership for each participant, including constraints faced, lessons learned, and the degree of applicability of policy tools covered in the Program. Participants will have opportunities to engage with thematic experts on relevant subject matters covered in the Program.

Appendix 1. Biographies of Resource Persons and Others for All Program Components

Dr. Gambhir Bhatta

Dr. Gambhir Bhatta has more than 30 years of strategic as well as operational level experience in governance, public policy, public sector management and knowledge management in countries across four continents.

He is currently engaged as an international consultant in policy analysis, public sector reforms, evaluation capacity development, and knowledge management for the Asian Development Bank (ADB). He also holds an Adjunct appointment at Lee Kuan Yew School of Public Policy (Singapore). His immediate past roles have also been as Executive Director of Nepal Policy Institute, advisor at G2G Partnerships (a public company established by New Zealand's Ministry of Foreign Affairs and NZ Trade & Enterprise), and a teaching role at Heinz College of Information Systems and Public Policy, Carnegie Mellon University (USA).



Dr. Bhatta took early retirement from ADB in January 2021, where, among other roles, he was the Chief of the Bank's Governance Thematic Group, as well as of its Knowledge Advisory Services Center, in which role he also concurrently served as an Advisor in ADB's Sustainable Development and Climate Change Department. At ADB, he led various teams to design development projects and programs in Asia, and contributed directly to a portfolio of more than two billion dollars in programming in the broad areas of governance, including public policy, public financial management, anticorruption, and state-owned enterprise reforms. He led ADB teams to engage in policy dialogue with government agencies in various countries in Asia-Pacific, and provided policy advice on governance and public policy and administration reforms to governments in South Asia.

Prior to joining ADB in 2005, Dr. Bhatta was a Senior Advisor in the New Zealand State Services Commission for more than four years. Previous experiences to that include teaching at the National University of Singapore and Singapore Institute of Management, as well as working with the United Nations in Africa, and at local government level in the United States.

Dr. Bhatta has also designed and run numerous training courses over the years, including a 2-day course at the Civil Service College in Singapore on Public Sector Risk Management to mid-level Civil Service staff members in Singapore. He has also run training programs in partnership with agencies such as the ADB Institute (Tokyo), and the Korean Development Institute (Seoul).

He is the author of several books, including '*...Those that fix the lights' – The Practice of Public Sector Management in Developing Asia* (Routledge, ADB, and ADB Institute, 2019); and *International Dictionary of Public Management and Governance* (M. E. Sharpe, New York, 2006). He has a Dual Masters Degree in Economics and Political Science from Bowling Green State University (USA); and a PhD in Public and International Affairs from the University of Pittsburgh (USA) with specializations in Applied Policy Analysis, Urban and Regional Development, and Asian Studies.

Dr. Bhatta is a citizen of New Zealand, and lives in Auckland.



Dr. Khagendra Dhakal

Dr. Khagendra Raj Dhakal has served as a Specialist Lecturer at King Mongkut's University of Technology North Bangkok for the past 12 years, holding the position of Assistant Dean for International Affairs from 2011 to 2015. His areas of interest span education policy, applied linguistics, policy evaluation, and AI-powered large language models. He maintains a special interest in utilizing diasporic knowledge resources for the sustainable development of one's home country.

Dr. Dhakal earned his Ph.D. in Applied Linguistics from King Mongkut's University of Technology, Thonburi, a Master's in Education from Avondale University in Australia, and a postgraduate certificate from the University of Oregon. His doctoral research underscores the importance of "Critical Thinking" as a vital skill for the 21st-century workforce. As the developer of the Multi-Purpose Assessment of Critical Thinking (MPACT) that stemmed from his doctoral work, Dr. Dhakal has developed a method to assess critical thinking objectively as a core workplace competency. The MPACT test aims to serve industries, educational institutions, and individuals. His work on the MPACT was published in the *Educational Research and Evaluation* journal in 2023.

In 2023, Dr. Dhakal was a Fellow in the prestigious Asia Pacific Leadership Program at East-West Center, Honolulu, Hawaii, culminating in a six-month residential leadership program in Hawaii. At the East-West Center, he was part of an interdisciplinary initiative that combines advanced regional analysis with experiential leadership learning.

Dr. Dhakal is also the founding president of the Nepal Policy Institute (The Hague and Kathmandu) and currently serves as its Chair of the Board of Directors. He views the knowledge resources of the diaspora as a crucial element in the developmental efforts of their home countries by leveraging 'brain gain', and was instrumental in leading the initiative to establish a global think-tank, powered by the Nepali diaspora, for the sustainable development of Nepal.

He is a recipient of the "E-Teacher Professional Development Award" from the US Department of State in 2013 for his performance as an educator. He also serves as the country representative of IAESTE for Nepal, which provides about 5,000 paid international internships for technical experience to university STEM students globally.

Dr. Dhakal is based in Bangkok, Thailand.

Dr. Pramod KC (Kathmandu, Nepal)

Dr. KC has a diverse academic background and extensive research experience in public policy and administration. He holds a Ph.D. in Public Policy and Administration from Yonsei University, South Korea, where he was a key member of the BK21 Plus Team for International Development and Social Economy Governance. As part of this team, he conducted in-depth research utilizing thematic case study analysis, focusing on e-governance and comparative institutional development in Nepal. He completed a Post-Doctoral fellowship at the University of Sheffield, UK, where he focused on examining the impact of federalization on Nepal's health system.



Currently, Dr. KC serves as Visiting Assistant Professor in the Department of Public Policy and Management at Kathmandu University, where he is actively engaged in both teaching and research. He also holds the role of project coordinator for the KU Policy Lab, leading initiatives to conduct evidence-based policymaking research across various domains. His prior roles have included, among others:

- (a) Senior Research Manager in the USAID Clean Air Activity, affiliated with the Energy Policy Institute at the University of Chicago.
- (b) Foreign faculty member at School of Global Studies (Thammasat University).
- (c) Consultant for the 'Nepal-Pakistan Country ODA Portfolio Evaluation,' collaborating with KOICA Headquarters and Seoul National University to monitor, evaluate, and conduct research on bilateral projects between the Governments of Nepal and Korea.
- (d) Policy and Advocacy Consultant with the Governance Lab (Nepal) where he designed the syllabus on Daayitwya Public Policy Fellowship.

Dr. KC is based in Kathmandu, Nepal.

Dr. Gopi Khanal



Dr. Khanal has worked at all three tiers of governments in Nepal, altogether for almost 35 years. He has recently retired as Secretary in the Office of Prime Minister and Council of Ministers, and has also had many senior roles in the public service, including as Principal Secretary of Karnali Province, and as Joint Secretary at the National Natural Resources and Fiscal Commission, and at the Ministry of Federal Affairs and General Administration.

His areas of expertise are fiscal federalism, urban planning, local governance, and development economics. He is currently an adjunct faculty member at Kathmandu University's School of Management, where he teaches graduate-level courses in development economics, urban economics, and fiscal federalism. Dr. Khanal has participated in a course on Public Policy Analysis from the London School of Economics. Dr. Khanal has a PhD from Kathmandu University School of Education, Nepal.

Dr. Gopi Khanal is based in Kathmandu, Nepal.

Mr. Gopi Nath Mainali

Mr. Mainali served with the Government of Nepal as a civil servant for 35 years. Before retiring in 2021, he served as Secretary for five years at various ministries. He also served for one year as the Financial Comptroller General of the Government of Nepal, and for more than eight years as Joint Secretary (and Head of the Infrastructure Development Division) at the National Planning Commission. His other experiences include Local Development Officer in various districts and executive secretary/officer of various municipalities.



Mr. Mainali has authored 12 books as well as several professional articles in journals and leading magazines. He now engages as a freelance policy analyst, delivering motivational talks to students and public servants. He has Master's degrees in three subjects (Economics, Development Administration, and Taxation & Budgeting). Mr. Mainali is currently engaged with Nepal Policy Institute as an Executive Board Member.

Mr. Gopi Mainali is based in Kathmandu, Nepal.

Dr. Purna Bahadur Nepali (Kathmandu, Nepal)



Dr. Nepali is an Associate Professor at Kathmandu University School of Management (Nepal) where he is also the Program Director for the Master of Public Policy and Governance program. In this capacity he also heads the KUSOM Policy Lab. Dr. Nepali was a Fulbright Scholar at The Heller School for Social Policy and Management at Brandeis University, USA; and carried out Postdoctoral research (on political economy) from 2018-2020 at Harvard University. He has a PhD from the University of Zurich / Kathmandu University on Human and Natural Resource Studies.

Ms. Samjhana Shrestha

Ms. Samjhana Shrestha is a seasoned international development professional with over 30 years of experience. During her tenure at the Asian Development Bank (ADB) for more than 15 years, she held key roles in the areas of project design, management, and evaluation, including shaping and evaluating strategies and policies within ADB. Her professional journey includes stints at various national and international institutions, making her adept at multi-agency and donor coordination activities.



Her expertise extends to designing, leading, and guiding the implementation of analytical studies. Her publications cover a wide array of development issues, encompassing the evaluation and impact assessment of projects and policies in agriculture, environment, and biodiversity. She has also delved into topics such as access and quality in formal and non-formal education, labour allocation patterns in transitional economies, and gender and inclusion of caste, ethnic, economic, and religious minority groups. Ms. Shrestha has conducted applied economic research across diverse sectors, resulting in the publication of over 50 works.

She has engaged in professional work with varied stakeholders in over 20 developed and developing countries, including in Central Asia, South Asia, East Asia, and Southeast Asia, as well as in the Pacific and Australia. Her collaborative efforts have included partnerships with academic institutions, multilateral development agencies, governments, business communities, and civil society organizations. She is in the Board of Directors of Nepal Policy Institute. She has two post-graduate degrees in Agriculture Economics and Economics from the University of New England, Australia.

Ms. Samjhana Shrestha is based in Kathmandu, Nepal.

Ms. Sharu Joshi Shrestha



Ms. Sharu Joshi Shrestha holds a Master's in Political Science from Tribhuvan University, and another Master's in Women and Development from the Institute of Social Studies in The Hague. She is a working member in various programs, including the Task Force for Reforms on Foreign Labour Migration, Ministry of Labour, Employment, and Social Security, 2018.

Ms. Shrestha is the recipient of the International AFFUND Prize for Pioneering Development Project 2003 for the leading the program "The Asia Pacific and Arab State Regional Program on Empowerment of Women Migrant Workers" in Nepal (including Jordan and Indonesia). She served in the Social Welfare Council for many years, and also led several UN programs on women empowerment. She has published more than 50 articles in various newspapers, journals, and magazines. Ms. Shrestha has been serving in the Executive Board of Nepal Policy Institute since its inception.

Ms. Sharu Joshi Shrestha is based in Kathmandu, Nepal.

Featured Speaker at the Pre-Residency Program, February 2024 (Ms. Sally Washington)

Ms. Sally Washington is Executive Director for Australia-New Zealand School of Government (ANZSOG) Aotearoa (New Zealand), where she is also a Practice Fellow (Policy Capability and Public Management). She has worked in senior roles in Aotearoa and internationally.



Ms. Washington was inaugural director of the New Zealand Policy Project, based in the New Zealand Department of Prime Minister and Cabinet, where she designed and led a program to improve the quality of policy advice across government. This involved collaboration across the senior policy community to share and build overall system capability. Her work directly led to three key frameworks (launched by the NZ Prime Minister in 2016) to improve policy quality and capability (on organisational capability, on skills required of policy practitioners, and on the quality of policy advice itself). More information on the Policy Project and access to the policy improvement frameworks and tools can be found at: www.dpmc.govt.nz/policyproject.

As a Principal at Washington Emerson Consulting, she worked with a range of organizations and jurisdictions seeking to improve their policy capability (including in the UK the Cabinet Office, OECD, States of Jersey, South Australian Department for Education Monash University, Ireland, and others). She spent seven years at the OECD where she managed a network of Heads of Prime Ministers/Presidents Offices from OECD countries and has consulted to the UN Food and Agriculture Organization and the OECD.

From 2012 to 2014, Ms. Washington was associated with the (now disbanded) Performance Hub (a joint policy unit of the State Services Commission, the Treasury, and the Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet) in New Zealand. The Hub was charged with improving the overall performance of New Zealand's public management system. She was responsible for leading the corporate centre support for Functional leadership teams to develop an overall operating model including the design of a capability maturity model and dashboard to report benefits and progress (savings and capability) to Ministers. As part of the Better Public Services joint venture she led work on innovation capability in the public service, including research on the innovations following the Canterbury earthquakes, and the production of a diagnostic tool for assessing organisational innovation capability.

Ms. Washington has also worked as an adviser to a New Zealand Cabinet Minister (Minister for Women) and Prime Minister in policy roles, and in joint central agency teams leading public sector reform programs. Her work as Executive Director of ANZSOG Aotearoa-New Zealand sees her contributing across ANZSOG offerings including teaching, thought-leadership, and advisory work.

She has completed an Executive Management course on *Design Thinking for Innovative Business Problem Solving* from the Darden School of Business (University of Virginia), and has a Master of Arts (first class honours) in Political Science from the University of Canterbury, New Zealand. She has a body of publications on a range of topics including public sector innovation, public sector management, policy capability, and foresight and futures in government, among them:

1. "Hindsight, Insight, Foresight: Three Lenses for Better Policy-Making." *International Review of Public Administration*, March 2023.
2. "An Infrastructure for Building Policy Capability: Lessons from Practice." *Policy Design and Practice* (Taylor & Francis), November 2022.
3. "Strengthening Policy Capability: New Zealand's Policy Project." *Policy Design and Practice* (Taylor & Francis), March 2018 (with Michael Mintrom).
4. "'Hands Up': Mentoring in the New Zealand Public Service." *Public Personnel Management*, 32, 2 (Summer, 2003), USA (with Gambhir Bhatta).

Ms. Washington is a citizen of New Zealand, and lives in Wellington.

Appendix 2. Brief Information on the Featured Talk on Policy Infrastructure

The policy infrastructure: building capability for better government decision-making

Featured Presentation for the Online Session on February 24, 2024 at the Nepal Policy Leadership Program

Many organisations and governments are working to improve their policy advisory systems. This challenge can be framed as building an ‘infrastructure’ to support good policy advice and good government decision making. This framing broadens the improvement process from a narrow focus on people and skills (“we just need to train people better”) to a systemic approach that includes the range of systems, processes, capabilities, and leadership to enable and support good policy. What does a good policy advisory system look like? What skills and capabilities are required to design and deliver good policy advice?

Optional pre-reading:

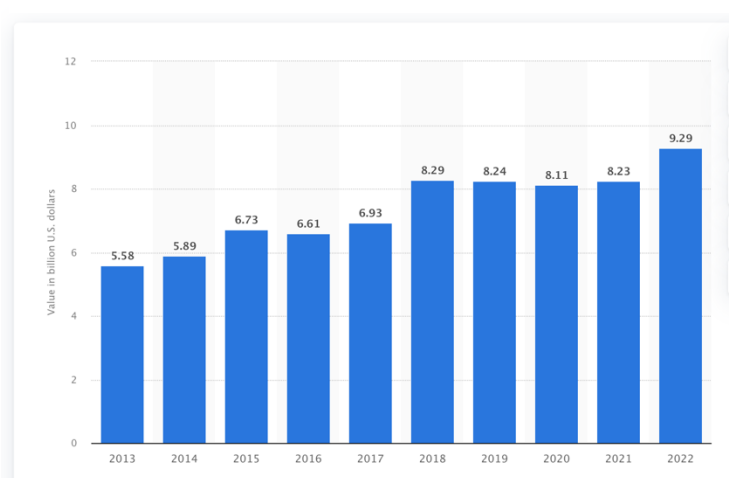
- Sally Washington (2023) [Full article: An infrastructure for building policy capability – lessons from practice \(tandfonline.com\)](#)
- Sally Washington and Michael Mintrom (2018) [Full article: Strengthening policy capability: New Zealand's Policy Project \(tandfonline.com\)](#)

Appendix 3. Case Study for the Program – Overseas Migrant Workers

Introduction

The case study to be used in the NPLP offer for 2024 deals with a very critical issue in current day Nepal – that of millions of young Nepalis going abroad for employment, and remitting billions of dollars in hard-earned money that more or less sustains the economy. Indeed, it is reported that almost a quarter of the country gross domestic product is contributed by remittances from labour migrating overseas.

Figure A3.1. Value of Remittances, Nepal, 2013-2022 (USD billions)



<https://www.statista.com/statistics/880745/nepal-value-of-remittances/>

In 2022, about \$350 billion worth of international remittances flowed to developing economies in Asia. The economic contribution of remittances, commonly measured by their relative share of a country's gross domestic product (23% in Nepal) is substantial in the country which is considered a major migrant source country.⁸

Over the years, however, there have been several policy issues that have been raised with respect to this phenomenon, and it has become relevant for these issues to be analyzed rigorously. Information for this case study provision has been taken from the National Labor Migration Report for 2022 (the latest

official report of the Government of Nepal through the Ministry of Labour, Employment, and Social Security). Participants are encouraged to go over the main report, time permitting, but at a minimum familiarize themselves with the materials and issues contained in the Executive Summary of the report and reproduced here (please see pages xxx).

In the next several pages, the Executive Summary of the 2022 report from the Ministry of Labour, Employment, and Social Security (on *Nepal Labor Migration Report 2022*. Kathmandu) is presented. Participants are encouraged to review this, and also skim over the key points in the main report (available at: https://moless.gov.np/storage/files/post_files/Nepal%20Labour%20Migration%20Report%202022.pdf). Relevant sections of the report to review include: Chapter 3 (on Status of Labour Migration in Nepal), and Chapter 4 (on Thematic Exploration). Our group exercises will use some of the data/evidence that is presented in the status report of the Ministry.

⁸ To get a proper perspective, it is noted that the share of remittances from overseas workers to GDP in the Philippines was 9% and 8% in Pakistan (source: <https://www.statista.com/statistics/880745/nepal-value-of-remittances/>).

Box A3.1. Nepal Labor Migration Report 2022 – Executive Summary
Ministry of Labour, Employment, and Social Security, Kathmandu

The Nepal Labour Migration Report 2022 summarises the major trends and activities in labour migration governance in the country. For analytical purposes, it focuses on quantitative database retrieved from the Foreign Employment Information Management System (FEIMS) maintained from 2019/2020 to 2021/22. Together with qualitative data, the report primarily features an assessment of policies and programmes on temporary labour migration of Nepali citizens to several countries of destination. The report is a continuation of earlier labour migration reports.

Temporary labour migration of Nepali human resources to several labour destinations has become a common phenomenon. At the household level, financial support from family members overseas has had a significant impact in advancing the family's educational, financial, entrepreneurial, and social life. Remittances are contributing to the social and economic development of hundreds of thousands of migrant households. Despite severe disruptions caused by the COVID-19 pandemic in the global economy, hundreds of thousands of Nepalis continued to opt for foreign employment, resulting in a remittance inflow of NPR 961.2 billion (ca. USD 7.5 billion) in 2020.

The labour migration sector in Nepal is governed by a host of institutions, starting with the Ministry of Labour, Employment and Social Security (MoLESS) as the apex body in setting policy on labour migration. The Department of Foreign Employment (DoFE) has the task of regulating the sector, the Foreign Employment Board (FEB) is involved in supporting migrant workers and their families' welfare and reintegration while the Foreign Employment Tribunal (FET) is dedicated to adjudicating legal cases related to labour migration. Provincial ministries and local level units also provide supportive functions to the labour migration sector. Private recruitment agencies (PRAs) play an important function in linking aspirant migrant workers with employers abroad while medical centres, pre-departure orientation training providers, and insurance companies all provide their respective services to ensure the smooth functioning of the labour migration process.

In recent years, MoLESS has been implementing a coordinated effort to strengthen labour migration governance and enhance effective service delivery in Nepal and beyond. These include shifting labour migration-related services such as application for and issuance of labour approval by DoFE and application to the FEB for financial assistance onto online platforms. Similarly, policies related to immigration—especially aimed at migrant workers—in the major countries of destination (CoDs) have seen significant changes. In particular, policies aimed at imposing limits on labour migration or reserving jobs and opportunities for their nationals were evident across all the major Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) countries. A wage protection system and development of accessible complaint mechanisms have also been established in recent years.

Nepal has continued to prioritise entering into and renewing bilateral labour migration agreements (BLMAs) with various labour destinations to ensure safe, orderly and dignified migration of Nepali migrant workers. So far, the government has established specific and formal bilateral labour relations with 10 different countries, mostly in the GCC region. While labour relations with each country have their own distinctive features, formalising agreements provide an important position for Nepal to initiate conversations to ensure decent work for Nepali migrant workers. In recent years, the focus of the Government of Nepal has been on renewing, if not upgrading, the agreement with the hope of incorporating recent reforms in both Nepal and the countries of destination. The renewed labour agreements with Malaysia in 2018 and the United Arab Emirates (UAE) in 2019 stand testimony to Nepal's continued efforts in this regard. Similarly, during their sixth joint committee meeting in December 2021, Nepal and Qatar agreed to upgrade the bilateral labour agreement (BLA) signed in

2005 while the agreements with Israel in 2020 and the United Kingdom in 2022 provide important insights into the government's priority in finding new labour destinations for Nepali human resources.

Between 2019/20 and 2021/22, more than 1.1 million labour approvals were issued. While the number of labour approvals issued saw a significant decline in the COVID-19 years of 2019/20 and 2020/21, there was a revival in 2021/22 when the impacts of the pandemic gradually subsided. Nepal welcomed back 203,934 returnees in 2020/21 and 470,978 in 2021/22. Although the lack of comprehensive data does not permit asserting conclusively, most of these returnee migrants are likely to have migrated again, especially in recent months.

Labour migration from Nepal is still a phenomenon dominated by men with women migrant workers accounting for less than 10 per cent of the total labour approvals issued in 2021/22. Madhesh and Province 1 account for the largest share of migrant workers, with each being home to more than a fifth of the total labour approvals issued in 2021/22. In contrast, Bagmati accounts for the largest share of women migrant workers in foreign employment.

While Nepali citizens migrated to 150 countries between 2019/20 and 2021/22 for employment, the six GCC countries and Malaysia remain the preferred destinations for the overwhelming majority of Nepali migrant workers in the reference period. Countries like Croatia, Cyprus, the Maldives, Malta, Poland, Romania, Turkey, and the UK have also emerged as important employment destinations in the last few years. Between 2019/20 and 2021/22, although most of the women Nepali migrant workers went to the GCC countries, countries like Croatia, Cyprus, Jordan, Malta, Romania and Turkey were the more prominent, and emerging destinations for women compared to men.

Migrant workers' health and safety continue to be crucial issues. In 2021/22, 1395 Nepali migrant workers (including 39 women) were reported to have died, with most deaths certified as having occurred due to 'natural causes' in and by CoDs. More than 150 cases of deaths of Nepali migrant workers have each been reported annually in Malaysia, Saudi Arabia, Qatar and the UAE in 2019/20–2021/22. In addition, a significant number of Nepali migrant workers return home with mild to severe injuries and illnesses. The health risks migrant workers face are linked to their exposure to occupational safety and health hazards, poor working and living conditions, lack of access to social protection, including medical/health services, language and cultural barriers, and forced overtime labour, among others. The FEB disbursed a total of NPR 769.95 million (ca. USD 5.9 million) as financial assistance to 1395 families of deceased migrant workers in 2020/21 through the Foreign Employment Welfare Fund (FEWF).

Nepali migrant workers have been subjected to an exploitative recruitment process, employment contract fraud and abuse by employers. Women migrant workers are especially vulnerable to violence and face risks of abusive treatment in many countries of destination. More than 1300 new cases related to such fraud, abuse and exploitation were filed at the FET between 2019/20 and 2021/22. MoLESS has adopted and implemented a range of policies and legal instruments to address these issues. These include a ban on the use of agents, conferring rights to the Chief District Officer (CDO) to investigate and punish individual agents involved in fraud and cheating, and an 'employer pays' model for recruitment. The government has also prioritised the reintegration of migrant workers through skill development and certification, and also programmes dealing with financial literacy, vocational training, recognition of prior learning, psychological support, and shelter. Through the Reintegration Programme (Operation and Management) Directive for Returnee Migrant Workers, 2022, the government has stressed three diverse yet inter-related dimensions of the reintegration efforts: social integration, employment, and entrepreneurial development.

Recognising the conditions on the ground and in an attempt to redress any shortcomings, MoLESS is considering working on the following areas in the immediate future:

Strengthening legal and policy framework: MoLESS is cognisant that forthcoming revisions of the national labour migration legislation will have to address the issues of irregular migrant workers and those in domestic work, and also deal with the issue of human trafficking and smuggling that are often conflated with labour migration. The recruitment fees and related costs will also be elaborated upon in the forthcoming amendments of the Foreign Employment Act to ensure strict implementation of the principle of ‘employer pays’ and fair and ethical recruitment. MoLESS is also planning to incentivise PRAs practising fair and ethical recruitment and is also re-evaluating the current policy that requires the PRAs to send a certain number of migrant workers annually in order to get their licence renewed since this has led to PRAs focusing on numbers than the service provided.

Enhanced e-governance of labour migration and services: MoLESS recognises the importance of and need for raising awareness among migrant workers and their families using both traditional and new forms of media about the online platforms and services that have been introduced for better and faster service delivery as well as on issues such as their rights, compensation and grievance-registration mechanisms to further enhance safe migration. It is also crucial to address various hindrances constraining public’s access to these digital services.

Decentralisation of services: MoLESS recognises the importance of collaborating with provincial and local governments and other relevant agencies to decentralise various labour migration-related services such as the regulation of PRAs and the pre-departure orientation training (PDOT) centres; access to job opportunities abroad; health check-ups, biometric check-ups, grievance registration and settlement; and insurance claims, financial assistances and scholarships.

Access to justice: MoLESS underscores the need to work closely with the CoDs and take up issues related to wage theft, fair and ethical recruitment, migrants in irregular situations, forced labour, exploitation and abuse during joint committee meetings and other bilateral discussions. MoLESS has been underscoring the need to highlight the plight of irregular migrant workers during bilateral discussions with the CoDs while also strengthening the PDOT curriculum in a manner that adequately addresses these issues. Towards that end, MoLESS aims to provide free legal support services to migrant workers, including through the implementation of the new directives, information dissemination, documentation and translation related services, and by working with diaspora, international organisations, bar councils and trade unions in the CoDs.

Health and safety of migrant workers: MoLESS recognises the need to carry out regular and effective inspection of the workplace and living conditions of migrant workers. In line with this report’s findings that a large number of Nepali migrant workers are employed in unsafe employment practices, MoLESS notes the need to organise occupational safety and health training for migrant workers prior to and after their arrival in the CoDs in coordination with Nepali diplomatic missions. MoLESS also realises the importance of informed migration, sensitisation, greater awareness, and the need for implementing country-specific PDOT curriculums as well as post-arrival orientation. MoLESS will continue engaging with CoDs to ensure that employers implement standard occupational safety and health protocols at the workplace.

Social protection: It has been recognised that the establishment of a bilateral social security mechanism could enhance the protection of migrant workers. MoLESS will continue to explore ways by engaging with employers’ and workers’ organisations on how this can be designed and implemented in a way that is gender responsive and also sensitive to the condition of workers in the informal sector. Priority will be given to the inclusion of migrant workers in the social security scheme in Nepal, namely the Social Security Fund (SSF).

Labour diplomacy: In addition to analysing migration-related policy priorities of the CoDs and gathering feedback on the meeting agenda in advance, MoLESS will continue collaborating with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MoFA) and other relevant agencies and stakeholders before participating in bilateral

and multilateral meetings and events in order to successfully seek the support of the CoDs in its priority areas. MoLESS will continue to engage with national, regional and international partners to protect and promote the human rights of migrant workers. Further, Nepal will actively seek opportunities to play leading roles in forums like the GCM and the UN Network on Migration, the Colombo Process, the Abu Dhabi Dialogue, and the South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation (SAARC) Technical Committee on Labour Migration, to ensure that the issues and concerns of Nepali migrant workers are adequately raised and addressed. MoLESS will also institutionalise the practice of documenting the discussions at preparatory phases and proceedings of such events.

Multi-stakeholder Collaboration: MoLESS is gearing up to improve dialogue at the national, provincial and local levels while also exploring possibilities for setting up an inter-ministerial committee or a working group for better vertical and horizontal coherence among government institutions on matters dealing with labour migration. In line with the GCM's 'Whole of the Government' and 'Whole of the Society' principles, the Ministry will continue engagements and consultations with organisations of returnee migrants, trade unions, CSOs, PRAs, academia and the media to improve policies and practices in the labour migration sector and also before engaging with the CoDs in pursuit of new agreements or review and amendment of existing ones.

Return and reintegration: As also directed by the recent directive on reintegration, MoLESS will take into account local and community occupational and labour market contexts, skills profile, and the capital and knowledge of returnee migrants in designing and implementing sustainable reintegration programmes. Priority will be given to endogenous planning processes and capacity enhancement of local governments, particularly of the employment service centres (ESCs). MoLESS will explore ways to support the shelters set up to assist Nepali migrant workers and returnees.

Skilling, skill recognition and certification: MoLESS recognises the need to collaborate with the CoDs and the private sector in identifying demands and implementing demand-driven country-specific skill training programmes targeted at migrant workers. MoLESS will continue working closely with institutions such as the FEB, the Vocational Skill Development and Training Centre (VSTDC), the Council for Technical Education and Vocational Training (CTEVT), and the National Skill Testing Board (NSTB) to design and implement training programmes aimed at migrant workers. It will also promote skills testing and its mutual recognition in CoDs.

Disaster/crisis response and recovery plan: MoLESS acknowledges the importance of developing an emergency crisis preparedness, response and recovery plan and strategy for the protection and support of migrant workers in CoDs and also after their return, particularly given how the COVID-19 pandemic caught the government, non-government and private sectors off-guard. MoLESS is cognisant of the need to mobilise support from relevant stakeholders such as the PRAs, diplomatic missions, international organisations, diaspora organisations, and migrant workers in this endeavour.

Remittances: While acknowledging the importance of policies and schemes to incentivise migrant workers so that they remit through formal channels, efforts are also necessary for proactively curbing the practice of using irregular channels for remittance. MoLESS will work with the concerned governmental institutions, financial institutions and money transfer operators towards this end. Alongside, MoLESS will continue working to expand the existing financial literacy programme for migrant workers and their families besides raising awareness and facilitating access to financial services.

Communication and outreach: MoLESS will continue to strengthen efforts aimed at informed migration through timely, accurate and easily accessible information made available to aspirants, migrants and returnees about safe migration and the risks of irregular migration; their rights and responsibilities; dos and don'ts; occupational safety and health (OSH); culture and language services available to them including in seeking justice in CoDs and on utilising their remittances (social and economic); welfare services; mental and psychosocial issues; access to justice-related services; and opportunities for

employment and enterprises after their return to Nepal. Apart from regular PDOTs, such awareness-raising and information dissemination activities will also be carried out through both traditional and new forms of communication.

Migration data and further knowledge: MoLESS will identify gaps and opportunities in labour migration data and the information management system. MoLESS recognises the need to assess existing information systems such as the Foreign Employment Information Management System (FEIMS) and the Foreign Employment Welfare Information Management System (FEWIMS) to resolve gaps and discrepancies in the data being recorded, particularly with regard to disaggregation and standardising of data on skills and occupational categorisation, deaths and injuries, grievances and case settlements, etc. While adhering to relevant legal provisions, priority will also be accorded to making the data and information managed by various government agencies publicly accessible.

Source: Ministry of Labour, Employment, and Social Security. 2022. *Nepal Labor Migration Report 2022*. Kathmandu.

While there are many issues inherent in the Report that the Government is considering working on for the immediate future, and brought out in the Executive Summary, for purposes of this Program, these five are put forward for use during the Program (one of them, on voting rights, is not covered in the Report, but is included in this Program given its criticality):

1. **Policy Issue 1.** There are **institutional weaknesses** to manage labor migration effectively.
2. **Policy Issue 2.** Government has serious concern about the **safety and security of potential women migrants** going to specific countries and regions.
3. **Policy Issue 3.** Despite the Supreme Court order to give **voting rights to labour migrants**, Government has not been able to give effect to the order.
4. **Policy Issue 4.** **Safety and security considerations of labor migrants** in various countries have worsened, evidence by the rising number of deaths among migrants over the years.
5. **Policy Issue 5.** **New labour markets** are opening up for unskilled, semi-skilled, and skilled labourers from Nepal; Government wishes to maximize these opportunities.

Further details on these policy issues are provided below.

Each issue will be tackled by one group, whereby the participants in that group will subject the policy issue to the following analytical coverage:

1. Problem analysis, taking into account political economy considerations.
2. SWOT analysis (and deriving strategies from the same).
3. Results chain of various areas of coverage.
4. Risk analysis of recommended steps that are to be recommended to the Government.

Each group will then share their analysis in plenary for feedback.

For Group 1 – Policy Issue 1. There are **institutional weaknesses** to manage labor migration effectively.

The concept of ‘institutional weaknesses’ includes considerations of organizational capabilities, legal and policy lapses, information gaps, coordination issues, and the like. *(Review the Executive Summary for main points)*

The Executive Summary presented above alludes to the following weaknesses:

Members of the Group:

1. Narayan Prasad Bhatta
2. Kabindra Nepal
3. Tula Raj Sunuwar
4. Shankar Adhikari
5. Samjhana Devkota
6. Mina Regmi Poudel

- (a) Lack of comprehensive data with the relevant institutions of the Government about the full picture of the migration situation in Nepal (this has implications for the foreign employment information management system at MoLESS). This is with particular regard to disaggregation and standardising of data on skills and occupational categorisation, deaths and injuries, grievances and case settlements, etc.
- (b) Nepali migrant workers being subjected to an exploitative recruitment process, employment contract fraud, and abuse by employers.
- (c) Lack of awareness among migrant workers and their families about the online platforms and services as well information on, for example, their rights, compensation, and grievance-registration mechanisms. There are also gaps constraints in the public’s access to digital services.
- (d) Issues around coordination with provincial and local governments and other relevant agencies to decentralise various labour migration-related services such as the regulation of PRAs and the pre-departure orientation training centres; access to job opportunities abroad; health check-ups, biometric check-ups, grievance registration and settlement; and insurance claims, financial assistances and scholarships.
- (e) Gaps in access to justice, for example, legal support services to migrant workers, including through the implementation of new directives, information dissemination, documentation and translation related services, and by working with diaspora, international organisations, bar councils and trade unions in the countries of destination.
- (f) Gaps in organizing occupational safety and health training for migrant workers prior to and after their arrival in the countries of destination in coordination with Nepali diplomatic missions.
- (g) Lapses in enhancing social protection for migrants, particularly in the informal sector.
- (h) Lapses in multi-stakeholder collaboration on this issue and the need to improve dialogue at the national, provincial and local levels. (The collaboration is from the perspective of ‘whole of government’ as well as ‘whole of society’).
- (i) Issue of strengthening provisions for returns (eg, enhancing skills profile) and reintegration of migrants in the society and economy (eg, labor markets), as well as skilling, skills recognition, and certification.
- (j) Ensuring proper coverage of migrants in cases of disasters and crises (such as COVID-19).
- (k) Need to strengthen the remittance transfer processes and systems such that migrants remit funds through formal channels (as opposed to, for example, *hundi*).

For Group 2 – Policy Issue 2. Government has serious concern about the **safety and security of potential women migrants** going to specific countries and regions.

The 2022 Nepal Labour Migration Report highlights that:

“Nepali migrant workers have been subjected to an exploitative recruitment process, employment contract fraud and abuse by employers. Women migrant workers are especially vulnerable to violence and face risks of abusive treatment in many countries of destination. More than 1,300 new cases related to such fraud, abuse and exploitation were filed at the FET between 2019/20 and 2021/22.” (p. xix)

Members of the Group:

1. Khom Raj Koirala
2. Khil Raj Rai
3. Gyanhari Ghimire
4. Munaka Neupane
5. Pramod Simkhada
6. Janga Bahadur Rai

It adds furthermore: *“The migration landscape of Nepal has changed rapidly with the scale of transnational migration for employment having grown tremendously over the last three decades. The large-scale labour migration of Nepali citizens, particularly women, has been driven by a multiplicity of factors: poverty, lack of employment opportunities at home, conflict and other social, environmental and political factors, and the demand of skilled and low-skilled migrant workers coupled with the offer of higher wages in the countries of destination. For women, it has also been fuelled by patriarchal social norms, gender inequality, stigma surrounding women’s work and mobility, and escape from violence, including sexual and gender-based violence (SGBV) from husbands and others in the family...” (p. 53)*

It is also reported that due to unresolved challenges in sending domestic workers abroad, many women resort to illegal routes, increasing the risks associated with their employment abroad. And, among other issues relevant here are that of human trafficking and of Nepal’s commitment to relevant international treaties and conventions that govern the strict control of the same.

The 2017 ILO Report on Migrant Women Workers (https://www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/---ed_norm/---declaration/documents/publication/wcms_554814.pdf; see also attached) is very relevant reading. See Box A3.2 for some context.

Box A3.2. Issues on Female Migrant Domestic Workers and Government Policies

While labour migration is an important livelihood option for women and has empowered many migrant households, there are various reports of verbal, physical and sexual abuse of female migrant domestic workers (MDWs). Cases have included mental health issues, suicide cases, forced pregnancy and returnees with a child born in the destination country. This has led at times to Government-initiated restrictions of the movement of would be MDWs. Examples include banning travel to Lebanon for domestic work in 2009-2010 due to the number of reported suicides; banning workers under 30 years of age from working in Gulf countries, and subsequently below 24 years of age... Whilst such bans have been implemented with a view to protecting female MDWs, they undermine a central provision in the Foreign Employment Act 2007 to end discrimination between men and women in the context of searching for, engaging in, and returning from foreign employment. An ILO/WIF study in 2015 found that bans prompted more circuitous and costly routes as women from Nepal travel to India in order to circumvent the ban.

Source: ILO, 2017. *Migrant Women Workers and Overt Migration Policies in Nepal: A Law and Policy Baseline Study*. Geneva, p. 9

Review also, for example, the 2020 AMKAS-Nepal report on “Protection, Not Restrictions! Organising and Mobilising Returnee Migrant Workers to Lift Gender-Based Migration Bans and Restrictions, Nepal – Women Migrant Workers in Nepal” (<https://apwld.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/01/AMKAS-NEPAL-final.pdf>). (Document attached)

For Group 3 – Policy Issue 3. Despite the Supreme Court order to give **voting rights to labour migrants**, Government has not been able to give effect to the order.

The Supreme Court of Nepal in March 2018 issued a directive order in the name of Office of the Prime Minister and Council of Ministers and other ministries concerned, including Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the Election Commission, regarding the external voting rights of Nepali migrant workers. To date, there has been no progress on this issue. Review also the NPI Policy Briefs on i-Voting and international experiences on external voting. (All documents attached)

Members of the Group

1. Dr. Kiran Rupakheti
2. Arjun Bhandari
3. Manju Sharma Subedi
4. Damodar Wagle
5. Sita Niraula Phuyal
6. Chiranjibi Luitel

<https://thehimalayantimes.com/kathmandu/supreme-court-issues-directive-order-to-ensure-voting-rights-of-nepali-migrant-workers>

SC issues directive order to ensure voting rights of Nepali migrant workers
By The Himalayan Times Online (Published: 11:39 am Mar 22, 2018)

KATHMANDU: The Supreme Court of Nepal on Wednesday has issued a directive order in the name of Office of the Prime Minister and Council of Ministers (OPMCM) and other ministries concerned, including Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the Election Commission, regarding the external voting rights of Nepali migrant workers.



The public interest litigation (PIL) was filed before the Supreme Court demanding the legal mechanism to ensure “external voting or out of country voting” in order to ensure the voting rights of Nepali migrant workers abroad. The bench of Justices Sapana Pradhan Malla and Purushottam Bhandari issued the directive order.

According to a press release issued by Law and Policy Forum for Social Justice (LAPSOJ), on Wednesday, the application seeks to preserve the underlining right of ‘opportunity to vote’ of migrant workers

— as an as an inherent right falling within the ambit of right to vote and freedom of expression — and create an opportunity to participate in election through out of country mechanisms.

LAPSOJ had filed the PIL at the apex court on April 27, 2017. Considering the significance of the case, the show cause notice on the case had been issued by the court on May 4, 2017 and the case had been placed under priority hearing.

Yesterday, during the main hearing advocates Hari Phuyal, Barun Ghimire, Anurag Devkota, Alok Pokharel and Kedar Dahal argued before the Supreme Court on behalf of the applicant organisation.

Over four million Nepali voters are said to be living abroad in 110 different countries. The exponential rise in foreign labour migration has produced a snowball effect on the economy of the nation, the press release states, adding that the government has largely failed to follow up on the implementation of its own laws and policies. The statement further reads that the most important decision on migrants’ welfare has also been the most discarded.

According to the statement, the directive order issued by the Supreme Court would serve as a well-timed opportunity for Nepali workers abroad to take part in public affairs of their country and choose their representatives who will voice and vouch for their rights and access to justice in the future.

Disenfranchised – millions of Nepalis have no voting rights

Marissa Taylor, March 21, 2022, Kathmandu

<https://www.recordnepal.com/disenfranchised-%E2%80%93-millions-of-nepalis-have-no-voting-rights>



The estimated 3.5 million migrant workers who live and work outside of Nepal are eligible to vote. But despite their numbers, there are no provisions for them to vote, disenfranchising almost 10-12 percent of the country's entire voting population. (*The Record*)

The last time 52-year-old Bilbahadur Gurung voted in an election was more than 20 years ago.

In 2002, at the age of 31, Gurung left his family and home in Syangja to go to Qatar as a migrant worker. Over the next 20 years, Gurung worked his way up the ranks and today, works in the accounts department of a construction company.

“It’s not easy living apart from your family, seeing them only once a year. But I had to do it to make a living,” said Gurung.

In the 20 years that Gurung has been abroad, Nepal has gone through massive changes, transitioning from a constitutional monarchy to a republic and from a unitary model to federalism. But Gurung has had no say in any of this. With local elections now coming up in April, he would finally like to exercise one of his fundamental rights – the right to vote.

According to a [UN report](#), Gurung is among the approximately 2,600,000 Nepalis currently working outside of Nepal. Although there is no accurate, up-to-date data on the number of migrants who are abroad, [estimates](#) place this figure as high as 3.5 million, or 12 percent of the current total population. All of these migrants are eligible to vote but despite their numbers, there are no provisions for migrant workers to vote, disenfranchising 10-12 percent of the entire voting population. As per Nepali law, citizens are required to cast their votes from their official place of residence and there are no provisions for absentee voting.

“I have a Nepali citizenship and a Nepali passport, but every time someone talks about voting, I don’t feel like a Nepali because I have no voting rights outside of the country,” said Gurung.

Besides representing a significant portion of the total population, migrant workers have had an outside impact on the economy and development trajectory of the country. Remittances that come from the millions of migrant workers currently working abroad have in recent years been equivalent to over a quarter of the GDP. In the fiscal year 2018-19, migrants sent home [8.79 billion USD](#), over 28 percent of the country’s GDP. That year, Nepal was the [19th biggest beneficiary of funds](#) sent by migrants around the world, according to a World Bank report.

These remittances have helped expand the middle class and pushed Nepal’s graduation out of the least developed country category. But without the right to vote, they have little-to-no say in who gets elected and what policies are drafted.

“A large portion of our country’s economy falls on the shoulders of people like me and yet, when it comes to exercising our right to choose our leaders, we are completely deprived,” said Gurung. “It makes me feel like the government sees us as only ‘remittance-making’ machines and nothing more.”

Back in 2018, acting on a public interest litigation (PIL) filed by the Law and Policy Forum for Social Justice in Kathmandu, the [Supreme Court had issued a directive](#) to the government to facilitate ‘out of country’ voting for Nepali diaspora across the world. Four years later, no progress has been made. And with local elections just around the corner, millions of Nepalis will yet again have no say in who gets elected, and by extension, no say in the policies and laws that will govern them.

The Election Commission, the constitutional body mandated with conducting elections in the country, has been advocating for absentee voting but officials say that their hands are tied.

“There are no regulations, no laws. Until a law is passed by Parliament, we can’t do anything,” said Chief Election Commissioner Dinesh Thapaliya. “But we have been persistently pushing for such provisions to be available for Nepalis across the world.”

The right to vote is a universally guaranteed right. Article 21 (3) of the [Universal Declaration of Human Rights](#) clearly states: “The will of the people shall be the basis of the authority of government; this will shall be expressed in periodic and genuine elections which shall be by universal and equal suffrage and shall be held by secret vote or by equivalent free voting procedures.”

Migrants themselves have been demanding the right to vote for years now and have been [supported](#) in their fight by the General Federation of Nepalese Trade Unions (GEFONT). Yet, there has been no movement at all on the issue since the Supreme Court order.

“Despite speaking about this vehemently for years, the state has done little to make us feel like we’re a part of the country,” said 56-year-old Dharam KC, who has been working in Saudi Arabia since 2000. KC has not been able to cast his vote once since then, despite numerous momentous elections taking place. KC, like most migrants, cannot afford to take time off from their jobs to travel all the way back to their home districts in order to cast their vote.

In addition to not giving migrant workers their voting rights, migrants also have no representation in any of the government bodies that formulate policies and laws on the welfare and safety of migrant workers, said KC.

“Representatives of manpower agencies, politicians, and lawmakers are part of the Foreign Employment Coordination Committee but not a single migrant worker is a part of it,” he said.

According to the 2020 [Nepal Labour Migration Report](#), the latest national report, in the last decade since 2008-09, the Department of Foreign Employment has issued over 4 million labor permits to Nepalis. “Not being able to vote is a violation of human rights in a democracy. More than 150 countries around the world have a legal framework for [out-of-country voting](#). This includes many countries that are just as, or even more, constrained and capacity challenged as Nepal,” said Khagendra Dhakal, co-author of a policy brief titled [‘External Voting Rights for Nepalis Abroad: Reflections from International Practices’](#) for the think-tank, Nepal Policy Institute.

External voting rights are currently exercised by wealthy countries like Canada, Sweden, Denmark, Austria, etc, where voters cast their vote through the post, at polling stations in their respective embassies, or online. But it has also been implemented by developing countries like Nigeria, Turkey, and Mexico.

In South Asia, the only country that absentee online voting is Pakistan, where voters can log into their national overseas voting system and cast their ballots. India too — despite its [32 million overseas population](#) — has not been able to do much on allowing its migrant citizens to exercise voting rights. In 2010, it amended the Representation of People Act, [allowing voting rights for all overseas citizens](#) and

giving them voter identities, but overseas voters must be physically present at their original constituency to vote, making it infeasible for most migrants to actually cast their votes.

Most countries, including Nepal, have been unable to formulate plans and policies to make external voting facilities available because of various administrative and financial limitations.

“There are a lot of limitations when it comes to ensuring Nepal’s out-of-country population gets voting rights, despite it being a fundamental human right. Our inconsistent government leadership is the biggest hindrance, of course,” said former chief election commissioner Bhoj Raj Pokharel, who peer reviewed the policy brief. “Countries around the world carry out out-of-country voting through the post or by installing voting booths at embassies, but neither of these options is feasible for Nepal. This is because we have a dismal postal service and our population is so scattered that placing voting booths at embassies across the world will be very expensive and laborious.”

In the policy brief, Dhakal, and his co-author Isha Mandal, add: “For the government the primary reasons for not being able to demonstrate progress on this matter has to do with the administrative issues on ballot secrecy and transparency and the logistic issue of conducting elections in territories where they lack jurisdictional capacity.”

According to Dhakal, the only way to ensure migrant workers, and the rest of the Nepali voting diaspora, their voting right is through internet voting, which is currently being practiced by eight countries in the world, including [Estonia](#) and France.

“I-Voting [internet-based voting] can be an efficient, legally hassle-free, trustworthy and economical method. Every one of us has a smartphone connected to the internet in our hands, why can’t we embrace the technology that we already have?” he said.

Having said that, [complications could arise with i-voting](#) as well.

“A lot of migrant workers could be taken advantage of by political parties by influencing their decision making or the whole voting process could be hacked and rigged,” said Pokharel. “Unless the people trust technology and the political parties, and the parties trust each other, this system will remain a sweet, distant dream.”

Dhakal is more optimistic, saying it is doable as long as there is political will. But for the near future, and the upcoming elections, it appears that migrants like Gurung and KC will once again not be able to cast their votes.

“We are being treated as complete outsiders. Robbing us of our right to choose our political leaders is an injustice,” said KC. “Every year, you hear news of poor labor migration laws and facilities affecting the welfare of Nepalis abroad, but when it comes to actually allowing us to choose leaders who could perhaps bring actual change to our situations abroad, the state denies us our rights.”

For Group 4 – Policy Issue 4. Safety and security considerations of labor migrants in various countries have worsened, evidence by the rising number of deaths among migrants over the years.

Consider the data in Table A3.1 below. The 2022 Nepal Labour Migration Report summarizes the situation as follows in the report:

“Migrant workers’ health and safety continue to be crucial issues. In 2021/22, 1395 Nepali migrant workers (including 39 women) were reported to have died, with most deaths certified as having occurred due to ‘natural causes’ in and by CoDs. More than 150 cases of deaths of Nepali migrant workers have each been reported annually in Malaysia, Saudi Arabia, Qatar and the UAE in 2019/20–2021/22. In addition, a significant number of Nepali migrant workers return home with mild to severe injuries and illnesses. The health risks migrant workers face are linked to their exposure to occupational safety and health hazards, poor working and living conditions, lack of access to social protection, including medical/health services, language and cultural barriers, and forced overtime labour, among others.” (p. xviii)

Members of the Group:

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5. Hari Prasad Odari
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7. Bimala Regmi

Table A3.1. Causes of Deaths Among Overseas Migrant Workers (2008-09 – 2021-22)⁹

Fiscal Year	Cause of Death								Total		
	Cardiac Arrest	Heart Attack	Natural Causes	Traffic Accident	Suicide	Workplace Accident	COVID -19	Other Causes	Men	Women	Total
2008/09	26	2	24	8	9	6	0	15	87	3	90
2009/10	106	10	118	67	25	44	0	48	399	19	418
2010/11	100	48	118	60	62	61	0	100	541	8	549
2011/12	134	37	102	101	66	41	0	165	632	14	646
2012/13	116	32	106	104	81	27	0	261	716	11	727
2013/14	190	79	138	112	96	79	0	194	864	24	888
2014/15	268	90	247	121	113	113	0	54	1,000	6	1,006
2015/16	148	94	246	103	109	81	0	32	789	24	813
2016/17	64	64	252	122	89	61	0	103	737	18	755
2017/18	72	114	126	127	132	67	0	184	801	21	822
2018/19	86	33	136	115	111	62	0	210	730	23	753
2019/20	66	37	87	76	66	41	0	285	641	17	658
2020/21	65	36	162	114	130	21	0	618	1,118	28	1,146
2021/22	33	57	215	129	98	50	207	606	1,356	39	1,395
Total	1,474	733	2,077	1,359	1,187	754	207	2,875	10,411	255	10,666

Note: The data from 2008/09 to 2018/19 is based on the date of application for financial assistance made by migrant workers’ families while for 2019/20 to 2021/22, it is based on date of decision made by FEB on the application for assistance.

Source: Data from 2008/09 to 2018/19 are from MoLESS, Nepal Labour Migration Report 2020; Data for 2019/20 to 2021/22 from the FEWIMS, 2022.

For further data and analysis, see the 2022 Nepal Labour Migration Report (pp. 107-112).

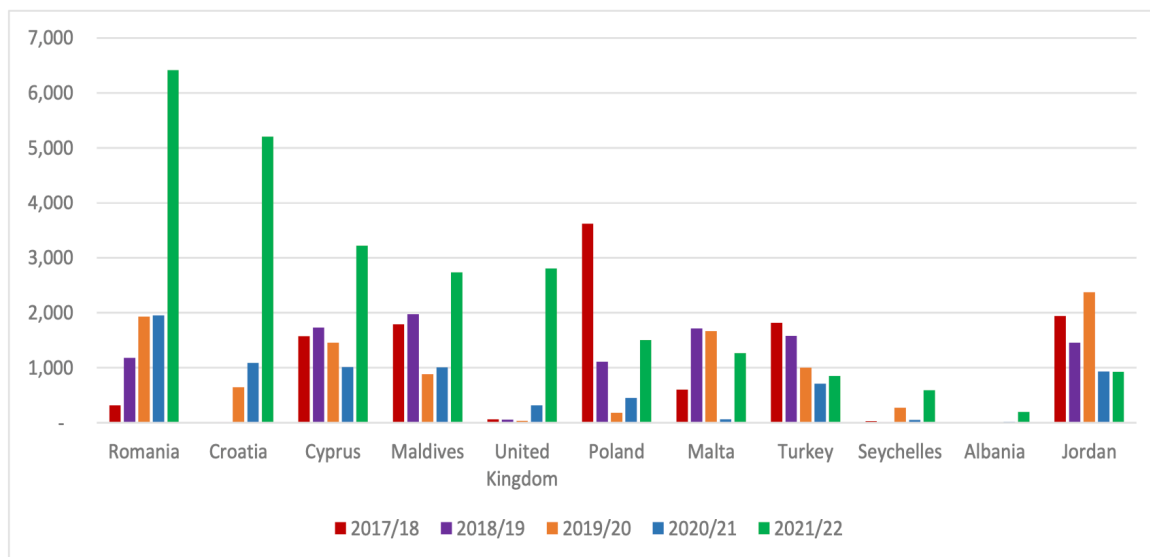
⁹ While the figures above are from the official government report (*Nepal Labor Migration Report, 2022*), *The Kathmandu Post*, quoting the Department of Foreign Employment, on January 17, 2024, cited the following figures for deaths of overseas migrant workers in recent years: (i) 2019-20: 680; (ii) 2020-21: 1,275; (iii) 2021-22: 1,509; and (iv) 2022-23: 1,208 (see <https://kathmandupost.com/gandaki-province/2024/01/17/concerns-mount-over-rising-nepali-migrant-deaths>).

Policy Issue 5. New labour markets are opening up for unskilled, semi-skilled, and skilled labourers from Nepal; there are opportunities to maximize these opportunities. (*Review the Nepal Labour Migration Report, 2022*); the figure and text below are from the 2022 report, pp. 61-62.

Members of the Group:

1. Sangita Ojha
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4. Dipendra Paudel
5. Moti Bahadur Shrees
6. Narendra Pariyar
7. Santosh Bhandari

Figure A2.2. New Labour Approvals Issued (by Emerging Countries of Destinations)



Source: Data for 2017/18 and 2018/19 from MoLESS, Nepal Labour Migration Report 2020: 124-31; Data for 2019/20 to 2021/22 from FEIMS.

Several countries have more recently emerged as prominent destinations for Nepali migrant workers. Among these are countries from Central and Eastern Europe—Albania, Croatia, Poland, and Romania—and Cyprus and Turkey in West Asia.

The number of labour approvals issued for the Maldives increased from 2,450 (including 1,789 new approvals) in 2017/18 to 6,591 (2,735 new approvals) in 2021/22. Jordan and Malta have also seen a significant increase in the number of Nepali migrant workers going there.

The rising popularity of these destinations could be due to the policy introduced by DoFE in 2022 to provide individual labour approvals to workers seeking to migrate to countries like Albania, Croatia, Poland and Romania, among others, so long as they provided a self-declaration that both the country and employment is safe.

The number of labour approvals for Nepalis going to the United Kingdom (UK) increased by 95 per cent in 2021/22 compared to 2017/18. The increase is due to the UK’s exit from the European Union, causing labour shortages and resulting in the introduction of various temporary visas by the UK government for migrant workers for seasonal work. UK government data shows that 559 Nepali citizens were given temporary visas (including extension of stay) in 2021 and 415 in the first quarter of 2022. Information collected in 2022 by *The Guardian* and the Bureau of Investigative Journalism, UK, reveals that between January and March of 2022, Nepal ranked the fourth highest among the list of source countries for seasonal workers.