Nepal

Country Brief
Green Jobs in Asia Project

Project Description
The Green Jobs in Asia project directly contributes to the national programs and initiatives relating to climate change, environment and disaster management and recovery from the economic crisis. Through enhanced capacity of ILO constituents, sound policy guidance, and the undertaking of gender-responsive field activities on green employment in specific economic sectors, the project aims to assist five Asian countries in shifting to a low-carbon, environmentally friendly and climate resilient economy that helps accelerate the jobs recovery, reduce social gaps, support development goals and realize decent work.

It is envisaged that upon completion of the project, ILO constituents and national partners will be knowledgeable about the impacts of climate policies on the labour market and the potential for gender responsive green jobs creation/maintenance. They will have acquired the capacity and the elements to take part in the national discussions on climate change and to respond to these changes, including in the context of the development and implementation of DWCPs. They will also contribute to developing specific policies and programs for the promotion of green jobs employment opportunities in critical sectors.

The immediate objectives of the project are:

i. Promote the capacity of ILO constituents to engage in dialogue on green jobs through increased access to reliable sources of data and information on green jobs and training, including on the employment impacts of environment-related policies and good practices on green jobs;

ii. Green jobs mainstreamed in national labour and social policy of participating countries;

iii. Green Jobs demonstration programs which respond to the different needs of women and men, implemented in key sectors selected based on the basis of research and consultations.
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ILO constituents are a key project target group with a view to creating long-term capacity and the conditions of social dialogue to mainstream green jobs into social and employment policy, integrate green jobs policies into the DWCP, contribute actively to climate and environment related policies at the national level, and facilitate a just transition for enterprises and workers towards a low-carbon, environmentally friendly economy. In Nepal, project objectives were focused on two main areas; namely, developing constituents’ capacity on green jobs, and support for mainstreaming green jobs into national plans, policies and programmes.

Project accomplishments

Capacity Building

The National Conference on Green Jobs in Nepal took place in April 2011 for more than 70 delegates from Government agencies, employers and workers’ organizations, NGOs, academia, private sector and development partners. The event was an opportunity to mobilize the ILO constituents and social partners and engage them in dialogue on coherent policies and effective programs leading to a green economy with green jobs and decent work for all. The Conference focused on both international and national experiences with regard to promoting green jobs and the opportunities and challenges associated with greening the labour market. This was followed by a tripartite foundation training on green jobs successfully delivered in September 2011 to 42 participants from Government (Labour and Environment Ministries), trade unions and Employers’ representatives. The training sessions were designed to engage ILO partners in dialogue about the effects of climate change and appropriate policy responses in the world of work, as well as focusing on how to adapt to broader environmental challenges, while optimizing possible opportunities arising from them.

The Employers’ organisation, the Federation of Nepalese Chambers of Commerce and Industry (FNCCI), conducted a green jobs best practices study of 5 industries/enterprises aimed at identifying environmentally friendly businesses that are advocating green jobs and decent work. Exploring the agricultural, manufacturing, forestry and food sectors, the study highlighted areas where the adoption of environmentally sound practices and technologies can result in cost-savings, improved productivity, enhanced working conditions and quality improvements. The project also funded the production of three video documentaries on green jobs case studies with a
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view to raise awareness about the role of the private sector in promoting green jobs. Together, these activities sought to strengthen the capacity of employers in regards to green jobs, enhancing their understanding and commitment on employment and skills strategies for advancing greener growth in Nepal.

The General Federation of Nepalese Trade Unions (GEFONT) in Nepal has also prepared a position paper on green jobs as well as conducted a study on green jobs best practices (five case studies) resulting in a final best practices report on green jobs in Nepal. Two green jobs orientation workshops were organised with a view towards promoting social dialogue on climate change and to facilitate discussions on the linkages between the environment, workplace conditions and labour standards. The two workshops were organized in Kathmandu and Birtanmode in August 2012 and focused on how trade unions, their affiliates and partners can engage in social dialogue for practical action within the workplace and take a more proactive advocacy role in advancing green jobs efforts. Altogether 67 participants (20% women) from various trade unions participated in these workshops. In addition, a green jobs mapping study in Nepal was conducted by the firm GHK Consulting. The study analysed environmental, economic and employment linkages in Nepal to tabulate both direct and indirect green employment opportunities with a view to establishing a baseline estimate of the scale and distribution of green jobs in Nepal. The study focused on nine sectors: agriculture, forestry, tourism, energy, construction, waste and wastewater management, transport and manufacturing.

Policy

A 12-member multi-stakeholder National Task Force (NTF) was formed under the chairmanship of Secretary of Ministry of Labour and Employment, the designated focal ministry that provides policy and guidance to ensure overall coordination of green jobs related issues at the national level. The NTF meetings were held in 7 April and 29 September 2012 to endorse the methodology of the green jobs mapping study, which will be used to inform policies in support of green economy.

Challenges and opportunities

While workers and employers have voiced strong support for advancing green jobs in the country, more systematic training and capacity building at all levels will be necessary to ensure
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social partners are able to translate these expressions of interest into effective action. At the same time, further in-depth work is needed to guide policy makers on including green jobs in development plans, policy and regulatory interventions in order to promote an enabling environment for green employment in Nepal.

Lessons learned

There was interest among the trade unions and employers’ representatives to further explore green initiatives and decent work practices highlighted in the study. The constituents welcomed the results of the green jobs mapping study, best practices documentation and documentary and agreed they would help further promote green jobs in Nepal. The workshop participants also indicated the results of the good practices study would be disseminated to the social partners at the national and local levels, and transcribed into action plans for future advocacy on green jobs throughout the country.