

## Skills for Employment (सीप) Monthly Bulletin: January 2021

Funded by the U.K. Government, UKaid सीप, since 2019, is brokering transformational partnerships with the private and public sector to propel growth of employment and entrepreneurial opportunities in priority sectors – commercial agriculture, light manufacturing, tourism, ICT, and construction – primarily in Province 2 and Lumbini Province. सीप uses an innovative Challenge Fund to expand market-aligned skilling, affordable financial products, and ethical migration services linked to gainful livelihoods for Nepali youth – especially migrant returnees, women, and other socially and economically excluded groups – and industry growth.

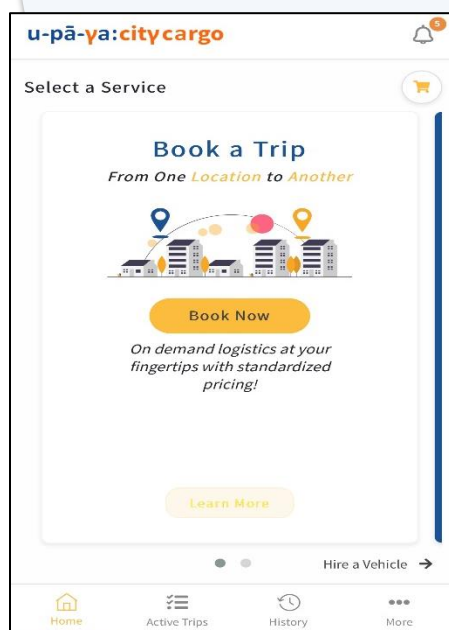
### सीप Partner Highlights

**Market-Creation Underway at the Palpali Dhaka Association to Sustain Training-based Livelihood Expansion.** With international market insights from partner Label STEP, the nine Dhaka-producing entrepreneurs who co-founded PDA with support from सीप, have continued to sharpen their understanding of the foundation-strengthening steps required to successfully access emerging markets. To optimize training for weavers, PDA and STEP are undertaking the following: i) exploring use and sourcing of high-quality natural/recycled yarn; ii) innovating and standardizing in design and colour, including by mixing different raw materials (e.g. silk, wool, cashmere, hemp, nettle); iii) developing standardized color palettes, product catalogues, and price lists; iv) building stronger story-telling and marketing capability; and v) implementing fair-trade practices at the firm level. With support from STEP, PDA also received a shipment of recycled nylon yarn from Aquafil in Italy. While exploring these options, PDA also continues to strengthen its supply chain linkages within Nepal with the Triveni Spinning Mill in Birgunj.



*PDA formalized its MOU with the Tansen Municipality for weaving training to 100*

**Genese Solution Expands Agreements with Colleges, Employers, and Job Placement Providers to Reach Scale and Strengthen Local Systems.** The British College, Institute of Engineering, Madan Bhandari College, and the Lord Buddha Education Foundation are the latest in a string of colleges to now offer Amazon Web Services (AWS) Cloud Computing as elective courses, along with certification, to build employability of students. With a total of 44 MoUs signed with colleges, primarily in Provinces 3, 2, 5, and 4, Genese continues to introduce courses from AWS and Microsoft to increase accessibility for thousands of students and to build teacher capability. Similarly, to improve job placement service, Genese has brokered cooperation with firms like Talent Connects, Mero Job, OnlineKaam and Talent Curators; and with nearly 500 employers. In December-January, Genese placed 450 students in jobs.



**NEW PARTNERSHIP to Ignite Self-Employment in the Logistics Sector with Upaya City Cargo.** Upaya is a technology-based online marketplace for intra-city logistics that connects individual and business clients with four-wheeler pickup/van and two-wheeler driver partners for efficient and hassle-free delivery of goods. Upaya aims to expedite self-employment for returnee migrants and other economically vulnerable groups by bringing them into the fold of the digital economy while bridging supply-chain logistic gaps. Upaya will integrate skilling into its business model (covering digital literacy, digital payments, customer relations, road safety, and vehicle maintenance) and expand to underserved geographies like Butwal, Bhairawa, and Pokhara; and to new market segments like agri-business. Over the next year, Upaya expects to service 2,000 drivers and 600 farmers with tailored industry- and job seeker-aligned skilling, linkage to jobs/market, and access to finance to purchase vehicle/two-wheelers.

**सीप Co-hosts Event with Vision and Values Overseas to Build Stronger International Linkages and Promote Skill-based Ethical Recruitment.** On January 21, सीप joined hands with V & V to organize a virtual event on ‘the importance of migrant skilling and ethical recruitment for post pandemic recovery’ as well as launch its Challenge Fund with interested fair recruitment actors, including overseas employers. All speakers and panelists – comprising of industry stakeholders in the Middle East like Sudexo, DulSCO, City and Guilds, as well the Embassy of UAE and FCDO in Nepal highlighted shared interests: opening more doors for Nepali workers and firms to access bigger markets through a skill-based recruitment model while also enabling global firms’ to connect with resources in Nepal. V & V will continue to engage with employers in destination countries to boost its placement capability. **Watch and share the [event video](#).**

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*“Migrants are an investment for the country’s future. Going out and sending money is a positive. Look at the Gurkhas and the way they are held in Nepali esteem. Look at how Nepali migrants kept the economy afloat despite COVID-19. Through innovative programming, policy support, and engagements with other Governments and employers abroad, we are committed to ensuring better support for Nepali workers.”*

**LISA HONAN**

Development Director, British Embassy, Kathmandu



**Key Event Takeaways** -*“The aging population in the west means migration will remain inevitable. Skilled migrant workers will always be needed.”*

1. There is a global shift towards skill-based ethical recruitment, responsible business practices, and gender- and diversity-inclusive recruitment. Nepali recruitment agencies should embrace these globally-emphasized values and priorities and promote them through their business models.
2. Organize follow-up conversations with H.E. Saeed Hamdan Al Naqvi, Ambassador of UAE to Nepal and Lisa Honan (Development Director, British Embassy, Nepal) to harness the influence of the Government in shaping the responsible recruitment discourse and actions by industries on both sides. UAE has taken the lead to reduce the visa fees for Nepalis; we have an opportunity to showcase UAE as a “shining example” of Nepali workforce promotion.
3. The honesty, diligence, discipline, and service-orientation of Nepalis holds the greatest value to employers in destination countries. These soft skills can be greatly augmented with technical skills, English language proficiency, and recognized certification.
4. The employment landscape in the GCC region is on a rebound. There will be ample opportunities and demand for Nepalis migrants, specifically in skilled and semi-skilled roles in the service industry. International firms are eager to harness relationships with companies like V & V.
5. Partners like FCDO and सीप can support industries, both national and international, to front-load as much of the skilling and certification in the home country before the deployment happens.
6. Closing the information gap by helping workers fully understand what they are getting into is equally important. This accountability must come from local firms who interact with the workers.

**NYMA Explores Onboarding of Additional Industries to Achieve Target Numbers.** Given the recent shortfall in reaching planned placement numbers due to the labor strike between Nov-Dec 2020 at NYMA partner Triveni Spinning Mills, NYMA has begun exploring alternative pathways to job creation impacts. NYMA partner Jagadamba Spinning Mill is fast-tracking its skilling agenda given the increased need to replace departed overseas workers, while Jaya

Spinning Mill has also expressed an interest in onboarded soon given the similarity in job roles and improvement in training curricula and delivery made possible through the NYMA-सीप partnership.

## Morang Earth Movers Leverages Municipality Funding



20-year-old Kamala Buda from Jajarkot, Far-west Nepal, is nearing the completion of her excavator operator training in Nepalgunj

The MAW Skills Academy continues to successfully mobilize funding for skilling trainees from local Municipalities. So far, collaborations for co-funding of GBP 10,755 for 53 trainees has been secured from six Municipalities across the three target geographies. The Mithila Municipality of Dhanusha, Chandranagar Rural Municipality of Sarlahi, Aurahi Municipality of Mahottari, and Harpurwa Municipality of Sarlahi, Nepalgunj Sub-metropolitan of Banke, and Kirtipur Municipality of Kathmandu are among MEPL's recent collaborators from the Government. MEPL has also secured co-funding equivalent to GBP 23,208 from Nepal Police and 13 NGOs for 123 trainees. To date, MEPL has facilitated training for 498 youth and placements for 186.

### Recommended Practices for Successful Engagement with the Government

1. Important to first build a strong training brand and demonstrate your capabilities. MEPL's JCB aligned and GoN-recognized curricula and certification, modern and practical training equipment, quality training delivery, and employment placement service gives us good content for marketing our training ability and interests.
2. Regular sustained engagement with local government is essential, especially during FY budget preparation period (June-July) to persuade allocation of budget for skilling. Employ a combination of in-person visits, to build familiarity and trust, as well as follow-on correspondences via emails & phone.
3. Use your visits to sensitize officials about the value of investing in training in emerging and industry-aligned job roles—that come with guaranteed job placements—rather than opting for traditional trainer-oriented occupational trades.



- Based on interview with Tara Bakhariya, CEO, MAW Skills Academy

**Rojgari Service Begins PPP with the Lumbini Province and Secures Equity Funding from Business Oxygen Fund (BO2).** In January 2021, with support from Mr. Anup Banskota of the IT *Pratisthan* at the Lumbini Province and सीप's Regional Manager Sanjay Gyawali, Rojgari formalized its agreement for a public-private cooperation. This partnership will help the Government and Rojgari Service move closer toward maximizing reach and service for job seekers in the Province. Rojgari will i) feature the public-led [rojgari.lumbini.gov.np](http://rojgari.lumbini.gov.np) in its job registration and linkage platform [www.rojgari.com](http://www.rojgari.com); ii) cross-promote industry job demands in the Government's page; and iii) help process the employment requests received via Government's page. As this engagement proceeds, Rojgari and Lumbini Province will explore other avenues to strengthen its job creation system. In lieu of the growth potential demonstrated by Rojgari, this month, BO2 confirmed equity funding to strengthen the foundations that सीप is building to support the enterprise ecosystem in Nepal. BO2's funding is especially critical for Rojgari to sustain business operations given its significant Pandemic-induced revenue decline in 2020. More details on how BO2 will complement सीप's efforts will follow.

## Prabhu Bank Improves and Increases Outreach and Uptake of Credit for Migrants

After an enhanced marketing and outreach campaign coupled with collaborations with recruitment companies like Vision and Values, Prabhu Bank is showing progress in the uptake of financial products, especially credit to aspiring and returnee migrants.

## Label STEP Adapts given COVID-19 Effects in the International Market and Expands Co-investors

With slow-down in the international demand for carpets, STEP continues to explore the domestic market and new international market opportunities. STEP partner R.T. Galaicha, for instance, has received bulk carpet orders from a local industry in Hetauda, Bagmati Province. In addition, STEP plans to diversify from its previous exclusive focus on custom rugs to Jodi rugs (traditional Tibetan weaving style) to tap into the carpet demand from China. For this, STEP has identified two other local weaving suppliers in Sarlahi to onboard as partners—to build their weaving capacity and enable more job creation. This month, over 100 weavers in STEP affiliated newly established workshops in Sarlahi were provided weavers empowerment training also comprising financial literacy, Fair Trade Standards, and GESI. With its steadily growing network of industry partners, Label STEP expects to create livelihoods for over 300 weavers by March 2021.



*New NP Rugs Workshop in Province 2*

Partner	Trained/In-training	Employed	Total Capacity
<b>N.P. Rugs</b> , Dabari, Hariwon-3, Sarlahi	30	23	100 weavers
<b>Vijaya Laxmi Organization with Bagmati Udhog</b> , Bagmati - 5	To start 2 <sup>nd</sup> week of Feb.	NA	50 weavers
<b>R.T. Galaicha</b> , Taiwan Basti	To start 1st week of Feb.	NA	100 weavers
<b>Kaju Rugs</b> , Shanti Chowk, Hariwon	36	36	36 weavers
<b>Tekani</b> , Tekani	36	30	36 weavers
<b>Gunjaman Galaincha</b> , Bagmati – 12	25	25	25 weavers
<b>Sanchamaya</b> , Bagmati – 12	25		25 weavers
<b>Total</b>	<i>152 trained/in-training</i>	<i>114 placed</i>	<i>372 weavers</i>

To monitor progress of weavers, STEP is soon launching a flagship Weaver Empowerment App, a digital system that allows national and international exporters and assessors to stay connected. Master weavers at the local workshops have been trained on App usage and updates.

**Shreenagar Agro Farm Mobilizes Government Agriculture Knowledge Centers and Local Cooperatives to Reach and Service Target Groups through a Collective Partnership Model.** SAF has forged cooperation with Government Agriculture Knowledge Centers in four districts of Lumbini Province. Similarly, they continued engaging about 35 local cooperatives in the Province. These local Government centers and Cooperatives have the needed networks to serve as reliable supply of trainee pipeline for SAF and offer complementary interests and assets. With the Government Knowledge Centers, SAF is focused on the Maize value-chain currently, providing need-based training and the market linkages necessary to ensure productive new-found earnings for farmers. The Cooperatives, on the other hand, bring a robust network of migrant households, especially women and indigenous communities along with access to finance, which SAF will service and supplement through market-relevant skilling, especially on agri-enterprise, and linkage to markets. SAF has currently onboarded two Cooperatives that have mobilized about 100 women for training. To date, SAF reports to have trained about 900 people—of which nearly 600 have benefitted from livelihood creation.

**NEW PARTNERSHIP to Position Returnee Migrants for Entrepreneurship Success with Training-linked Credit from Sana Kisan Bikas Laghubitta Sansthan (SKBBL).** SKBBL will mobilize its network of 100 grass-root level Small Farmer Agricultural Cooperatives in Siraha, Saptari, Sarlahi & Dhanusha of Province 2 and Pyuthan, Banke, Baridya, Dang, Rolpa, Kapilvastu, Rupandehi & Nawalparasi in Lumbini Province to provide tailored financial products, especially credit to returnee migrants, alongside an entrepreneurship-building service package. This will include vocational/entrepreneurial skilling to enable and promote self-employment primarily in the agriculture, dairy, livestock, and retail value chains. SKBBL aims to reach and empower about 7,500 Nepalis through credit access and 14,000 through savings and remittances products.

**Nepal SBI Bank Seeks Stronger Linkages with Local Groups and Firms.** In an effort to improve Nepal SBI Bank's outreach and linkages with the migrant population, this month, सीप's Regional Manager Mohammad Sabir Ansari facilitated conversations between the Bank and local authorities at the SaMi project-supported Migrant Resource Centers and other local groups such as Mitra Dhanusha, Migrant Workers Rights Protection Forum, Migrant Multi-purpose Cooperative, Recruitment Agencies, SODEC, and Manakamana Training and Skill Development Institutes.