

## **Press Release**

The Government of Switzerland has agreed to provide grant assistance amounting Swiss Franc 22.5 million (equivalent to NRs 2.45 billion) to the Government of Nepal. Out of the total assistance, 19.49 million (equivalent to NRs. 2.12 billion) will be used for the implementation of Local Roads Improvement Program (LRIP) and Swiss Franc 3.1 million ( equivalent to NRs. 335 million) for Home Garden project. Two different agreements to this effect were signed and exchanged at the Ministry of Finance, Kathmandu, today.

The Local Roads Improvement Program (LRIP) is continuation of District Roads Support Program (DRSP) which is going to be completed by 16<sup>th</sup> July 2014. The objective of Local Roads Improvement Program (LRIP) is to contribute to Improved livelihoods of the people and economic development in the Program districts. The Program is scheduled to be implemented until July 31, 2018 starting from 1 August 2014. This program will be implemented in Ramechhap, Sindhuli, Okhaldhunga and Khotang district.

The Program will mainly focus on maintenance, upgradation and rehabilitation of the district roads to make them all weather rather than construction of new roads, and ensure access of rural people to improved roads. After implementation of this Program, over 3000 km roads will be maintained and keep operating year round of existing district roads. About 200 km rehabilitated and 100 km roads constructed resulting them all weather.

During and after the implementation of this Program, it is expected that the rural poor and disadvantaged group will get an opportunity to eradicate their poverty creating the employment and other economic opportunities. The Program is expected to generate 2.5 million person days of local employment, out of which 1.6 million person days of employment will be targeted for disadvantaged groups. This Program is executed by the Ministry of Federal Affairs and Local Development (MoFALD) and implemented by Department of Local Infrastructure Development and Agriculture Roads (DoLIDAR).

Similarly, the objective of Home garden project is to contribute to improved nutrition and reduced vulnerability of smallholders and disadvantaged groups, especially women, by scaling up home garden practices in Nepal. By the implementation of the project, it is expected that smallholders and disadvantaged groups will have adopted home garden practices to improve family nutrition through diversified dietary sources and Department of Agriculture, DADOs and local bodies in project districts will have integrated home garden into regular Agriculture Extension Program.

This project will be implemented in 20 districts of Mid-hill and Terai Region of Nepal in close collaboration with Department of Agriculture, Vegetable Development Directorate among others. The implementation period of the project will be 4 years commencing from 17 July 2014 to 16<sup>th</sup> July 2018.

Mr. Shanta Raj Subedi, Secretary, Ministry of Finance and His Excellency, Mr Urs Herren, Ambassador, Swiss Embassy in Nepal signed the agreements on behalf of their respective Governments.

The Government of Nepal has expressed its sincere appreciation to the Government of Switzerland for these assistance and continued support in the socio-economic development of Nepal.

Ministry of Finance  
Singh durbar,  
Kathmandu, Nepal  
April 3 , 2014  
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