

THERE IS NO GREATER JOY THAN A HEALTHY AND POSITIVE LIFE

COMPLETION OF MANPANG KHOLA-I MHS

The 16 kW Mangpang Khola-I MHVEP of Budhathum VDC of Dhading district has been completed on 26 October 2008. The scheme has directly benefited 200 household of ward nos. 4, 5 and 8. The household composition of the community consists of 32 Dalit HHs, 4 Ethnic HHs and 164 other HHs. They are organized into 22 COs, of which 11 are male COs and 11 female COs. The project with gross head of 20 m and design discharge of 160 lps is completed with the total cost of Rs. 2,946,707. *(Based on information provided by Suresh Shrestha, EDO, Dhading)*

ASSESSMENT OF SOCIO ECONOMIC IMPACTS IN RURAL ENERGY SERVICE

The World Bank is carrying out study on the socio economic impact assessment of the Nepal's Rural Energy Technology with support of the Energy Sector Management Assistance Programme (ESMAP). The World Bank has been supporting Micro Hydro promotional authorities in Nepal since 2003 under Power Development Fund (PDP) through the Micro Hydro Village Electrification Component (MHVEC). The bulk of Nepal's energy supplies (about 91 percent) comes from traditional sources, mainly from fuel wood (68 percent), agriculture waste (15 percent), and dung production by livestock (8 percent).

Nepal's micro hydro development is supported by a host of international donor agencies. The UNDP-financed Rural Energy Development Programme (REDP) which is also designated as the Project Management Office of the World Bank-funded MHVEC is one of the prominent "best practice" programme of the Government of Nepal (GoN). Alternative Energy Promotion Center (AEPC) under the Ministry of Environment, Science and Technology is the implementing agency. REDP supports for the promotion of micro hydro projects in areas where the national grid is not expected to reach in the foreseeable future. Recently the World Bank has restructured the PDP and allocated additional resources to support micro hydro development. Building on the successes achieved under the REDP, the World Bank support, together with ongoing Carbon finance operation would extend electrification activities beyond the 25 districts to total 40 districts by expanding the micro-hydro installations to an aggregate 15 MW.

There is significant anecdotal evidence of the positive impacts of access to electricity in rural areas in Nepal on the lives of the poor, particularly on women – reflected in health and education benefits, and income generation opportunities. One of the key purposes of this study therefore is to evaluate the development impacts of initiatives supporting micro hydro schemes and to find ways to further enhance these impacts to the broader community. Further, the broad objective of this knowledge product is to operationalize an M&E framework for the micro-hydro schemes that can be executed on a sustainable basis by AEPC. Complementing this goal, the study will also facilitate an improved understanding of the developmental and poverty reduction impacts of rural electrification particularly using alternative energy sources in remote areas. Specifically, the study objectives are three-fold (1) quantify the impacts into intermediate and final indicators as a way to establish causality. These indicators will be tangible, monitorable, and easy to collect, (2) collect evidence on load growth in the micro-hydro communities to establish the future investment needs, and (3) develop institutional capacity to manage results on a systematic basis and assess capacity to organize alternative energy projects in rural communities.

CALL TO TAP ALTERNATIVE ENERGY SOURCES

Minister for Environment, Science and Technology Ganesh Saha has underlined the need to conserve and utilize culture and heritage of Mithila. The minister also called for optimum utilization of natural resources. This is the age of science and technology, Saha said, calling on all concerned to educate youths and make them techno-savvy. He made this remark while inaugurating an orientation organized by the Alternative Energy Promotion Centre (AEPC) of the Environment Ministry and District Development Committee, Dhanusha. Dr. Govinda Raj Pokharel, Executive Director of the APEC, stressed the need to tap solar power in urban areas of Dhanusha and build biogas plants in rural areas of the district. According to an estimate, 1.96 lakh households have biogas plants. Local Development Officer Bindu Prasad Guragai said, "Access to technology should be ensured for all through alternative energy programmes. Sambhu Mishra of the District Technical Office called on the state to harness sources of renewable energy at a time when the country has been witnessing protracted load-shedding hours. *(Source: Himalayan Times, 29 September, 2008)*

CONDOLENCE

We express our heartfelt condolence for the sudden and untimely demise of our colleague, Mr. Prabhakar Paudel, Technical Officer of District Development Committee: District Energy and Environment Section, Rukum. We all pray for his departed soul to rest in eternal peace. May the Almighty grant the bereaved family the strength and courage to overcome this loss.