

# Small Grants Programme



Empowered lives.  
Resilient nations.

Project: The Global Environment Facility's Small Grants Programme, Nepal (SGP)

## Background

It is local communities in the developing world who are often the first to feel the effects of environmental degradation and climate change. The realisation that these communities are at the forefront of efforts to prevent and reverse damage to the environment led to the setting up of the Global Environment Facility's Small Grants Programme in 1992. The programme was started following the Rio Earth Summit and has so far given out 12,000 grants to local conservation initiatives in 122 countries

## The Nepal programme

Since it was set up in 1996, the Nepal Small Grants Programme has funded 131 local initiatives for environmental conservation with 49 biodiversity conservation projects, 40 climate change mitigation projects 21 projects to reverse land degradation, 10 international waters protection project, 10 capacity building projects and one project to eliminate persistent organic pollutants. These projects have all involved local communities in conserving their local natural resources in ways that enhance human well-being and livelihoods and deliver global environmental benefits.

Alongside its regular funding from GEF, in 2011-12 SGP Nepal is being funded by the Satoyama Initiatives for a landscape level community development and knowledge management project.

## Award winning projects

The following three SGP-supported projects have won international awards. These and many other projects have had an important demonstration effect leading to replication and further donor support — all arising from maximum grant support of \$50,000.

- **Vultures** — The vultures of Nepal and India face extinction as their populations have plummeted due to poisoning by the drug diclofenac that farmers use to treat their cattle. Under a 2008 SGP grant, Bird Conservation Nepal established a 'vulture restaurant' in Nawalparasi, central Nepal. This led to a doubling in the number of breeding nests of vultures in the area in just one year. This success led to the department of livestock and local people making Nawalparasi and Dang diclofenac-free districts and it being replicated in four other areas of Nepal. This initiative won the World Wildlife Fund's Abraham Conservation Awards in 2010.
- **Land rehabilitation** — The steep slopes, dense populations and reliance of local communities in Nepal's midhills on natural resources for their livelihoods have caused soil loss and other forms of land degradation. SGP funded projects in 2004 and 2008 in Makawanpur, central Nepal, have transformed 1,620 hectares of degraded slash and burn land into stable agroforestry systems planted with nitrogen fixing and fodder trees and intercropped with bananas, pineapples and other useful plants. This has stabilised the land and increased

## Details of SGP Nepal

Nepali name:	विश्व वातावरण कोषको साना अनुदान कार्यक्रम
Duration:	1996 to June 2014 (to end of Phase 5)
Donor:	The Global Environment Facility (GEF)
Budget for Phase 5:	\$2.4 million for July 2011 to June 2014, plus \$280,000 from the Satoyama Initiatives
Fund manager and monitoring agency:	United Nations Office for Project Services (UNOPs)
Implementing partners:	NGOs and community organisations
Projects supported to October 2011:	131 projects in 49 districts



Land rehabilitation in Makawanpur

environment, energy, climate change



UNOPS

the incomes of over 5,000 households. This project won the Sasakawa award of the United Nations Environment Programme for 2010/11. This initiative has been replicated in Udayapur in eastern Nepal with support from other donors that has rehabilitated 1,202 hectares of land benefitting 8,117 households.

- **Pollution control** — A 2009 grant enabled the Center for Public Health and Environment Development (CEPHED) to raise awareness about the damaging effects of persistent organic pollutants (POPs) and to begin eliminating a major source of this pollution. The findings of a study on the damaging effects of the industrial chemical polychlorinated biphenyl (PCBs) were communicated to many of Kathmandu Valley's grill-making workshops. These workshops traditionally use transformer oil, which generates PCBs. The project then supported a workshop to use a non-polluting alternative type of welding machine (see photo). Following this example, 20 other workshops have invested in such machines. This project won the Polychlorinated biphenyls (PCB) Elimination Network (PEN) Award, 2011.

### Technologies that reduce carbon emissions and save forests

Many Nepalis rely on firewood and farm residues for cooking and kerosene for lighting. These sources of energy give off carbon dioxide, produce harmful smoke and lead to forest loss. SGP has supported 40 alternative energy projects, which reduce the use of fossil fuels and firewood and reduce the emission of CO<sub>2</sub> by 20,762 tonnes per year.

- **Rice husk stoves** — Support in 2006/07 in Bara district has led to eight workshops being set up across the Terai to produce rice husk stoves fuelled with a waste product from rice mills. The more than 100,000 such stoves sold so far save about 5 kg of firewood per day and in total save 150,000 tonnes of CO<sub>2</sub> per year!
- **Smoke hoods** — Support in 2010 led to the installation of 280 smokehood stoves in the northern district of Rasuwa. The combination of stove improvements, the insulation of kitchen walls and the installation of smokehoods have reduced firewood consumption by almost a half and made kitchens almost smoke-free. This makes a great contribution to reducing the respiratory infections that damage the health of so many Nepali children.

### Multiple impacts

Most SGP projects have multiple positive impacts including the following three whose benefits include supporting environmentally sound livelihoods and protecting traditional cultures.

**Organic farming** — More than 220 women farmers of Arghakhanchi district, central Nepal have had their crop production certified as organic by an internationally-recognized agency. As of 2011, 133 hectares of land is each year producing 10 tonnes of coffee, 32 tonnes of ginger, 15 tonnes of turmeric, and 4 metric tons of chilli and other spices. Much of this organic produce is being sold to South Korea.

**Protecting an endangered culture** — The Raute is the last ethnic group in Nepal who follow a traditional nomadic lifestyle. They live in the forests of Nepal's western hills. With SGP support in 2007–2009 a Nepalese NGO documented their lifestyle and advocated for their well-being by facilitating meetings with adjoining communities. This contributed to these communities agreeing to the Raute's use of community forests for their livelihoods (see photo).

**Traditional medicine** — A network of traditional healers (amchis) in the Himalayan district of Mustang runs a school, which is educating a new generation of amchis, and clinics, which treat thousands of patients each year. SGP support in 2007–2010 enabled the network to set up a system for tracking patients and their treatment, to prepare an amchi health worker curriculum for certification and to cultivate 11 of the medicinal and aromatic plants used by amchis.

### Importance for achieving the MDGs

Most SGP projects have contributed to the environmental sustainability MDG (MDG 7). Many have also improved rural livelihoods thus contributing to the poverty MDG (MDG 1) and to improving the economic situation of many poor rural people.



The handover of the demonstration dry welding machine



The Raute barter wooden containers for rice and other foodstuffs

#### For more information:

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🌐 [www.undp.org/sgp](http://www.undp.org/sgp) and [www.sgp.org.np](http://www.sgp.org.np) to find out more about SGP globally, to see details of all Nepal projects and to learn how to apply for funding

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