

USAID/Nepal Education for Income Generation Program Winrock International

The Education for Income Generation (EIG) project provides training to disadvantaged and conflict-affected youth (ages 16-30) to increase their income, through employment and agriculture. The cornerstone of this project is its demand-driven approach: creating training courses that meet the needs of the labor market and linking youth to pre-identified employment opportunities. The program builds on Winrock's previous work in Nepal. EIG has four components:

- Entrepreneurial literacy, life skills, nutrition and health, and peace-building
- Vocational skill training for employment
- Increased rural incomes from agricultural productivity and enterprise training
- Scholarships for dalits and other targeted youth

The integrated 10-month entrepreneurial literacy course sets people on the path to become entrepreneurs, commercial farmers or employees. The course covers a variety of topics, including: life skills, peace-building, HIV/AIDS awareness, health, entrepreneurship training, reading, record keeping, math, business planning, and profit/loss calculation. It also serves as a foundation for additional training in vocational skill areas or agricultural productivity. Seventy percent of literacy graduates receive training in vocational education or agriculture.

In vocational education, the project ensures that at least 80 percent of the skill trained graduates are employed three months after graduation by using a demand-driven approach. Jobs are identified, and EIG conducts trainings and links graduates to the opportunities. Many of the opportunities are in construction (electrical wiring, masonry, brick making, carpentry), as well as service industries such as beautician, mobile phone repair, hotel services, sweets and snack shops and mechanics.

High-value agriculture, such as off-season vegetables and goats are important income-generating activities for rural smallholders in Nepal. EIG uses a market-driven, value-chain approach to increase income and food sufficiency by linking trained farmers to markets while building the capacity of local service providers to provide on-going fee-based services and inputs to the farmers. EIG builds the capacity of agro-vets, traders, distributors and manufacturers along the value chain to ensure smallholder farmers can access inputs.

Finally, EIG provides scholarships to *dalits*, disadvantaged youth to enable them to pursue studies in the formal education system as well as some selected technical fields. National and district-level advisory and coordination committees provide guidance to the program, help secure additional local resources and synergies and ensure sustainability of program initiatives.

Outcomes and Results:

- EIG has developed a 10-month four-volume curricula for business literacy and trained over 700 teachers to deliver the course. More than 30,000 disadvantaged youth graduated from the program.
- Conducted eight job market assessment studies covering all 15 districts of the Midwest and more than 11,000 disadvantaged youth have completed skills training, of which 50 percent are women. More than 82 percent of those graduated have jobs or self employment with monthly incomes on average of 4,000 rupees only 3 months after training.
- Additionally, 43,089 marginalized youth have been trained in high-value agricultural production and are linked to private sector agriculture input (seed, drip irrigation equipment, etc.) and output markets. They have, on average, more than doubled their income and increased their access to nutritious foods (vegetables and animal source-protein). More than 10,000 youth increased their income by an average of at least \$250 after participating in EIG's entrepreneurship training. In the food insecure Karnali Zone, 9,580 households have been increasing food security (increased more than 3 months of their food requirement) through EIG-supported activities in staple crop production, food and seed storage, and off-season vegetable production.
- Finally, 421 dalits are studying to become teachers, agriculture extension agents or community health workers through the scholarship program.