



Newsletter

MCA-Nepal

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MCA-Nepal Launches 18 km Cross-border Transmission Line

MCA-Nepal prioritized and advanced the 18 km cross-border line with the launch of its procurement of the 400 KV Transmission Line (TL) from New Butwal to the Nepal/India border. The notice was published on 15 March 2024 with a submission deadline of 16 May 2024. The selected bidder will work on the design, supply, delivery, installation, testing, and commissioning of the TL.

Earlier, the 40th MCA-Nepal

Board meeting held on 6 March 2024, decided to advance the 18 km Nepal portion of the Butwal-Gorakhpur power TL on a priority basis by separating it from the larger 315 km TL. The Board determined that expediting the cross-border section would help to meet the obligations of the cross-border power trade agreement between Nepal and India.

“MCA-Nepal Board made this determination collectively owing to the critical importance of this segment to the Government of Nepal (GoN) and the Nepal Electricity Authority (NEA). The separation of the 18 km segment from the larger TL network will enable a quicker procurement process and its implementation to ensure that the line is completed on time by May 2026 to connect with the lines under construction on the Indian side of the border.” shared Mr. Nabin Raj Singh, Joint Secretary and Spokesperson, Ministry of Energy, Water Resources and Irrigation, post the Board meeting.

The cross-border TL is a critical component of the Electricity Transmission Project and will facilitate cross-border electricity

trade to meet Nepal’s needs. In October 2019, both the Governments of Nepal and India agreed to the financing and ownership framework that will govern the implementation of the New Butwal – Gorakhpur cross-border TL.

For the remaining 297 km TL, MCA-Nepal continues to work to procure the services of design-build contractors to complete the construction of the TL within the agreed timeline.

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Happy New Year 2081 B. S.!

Millennium Challenge Account Nepal (MCA-Nepal)

PROCUREMENT ACTIVITIES

Market Outreach for RMP



Mr. Khadga Bahadur Bisht, Executive Director, MCA-Nepal, addressing the Market Outreach event.



MCA-Nepal organized a market outreach event in Kathmandu on 27 March 2024.

The event was organized to share information on the upcoming procurements related to the Road Maintenance Project specifically the application of Full Depth Reclamation (FDR) and Superpave in road maintenance works with potential bidders.

The event provided detailed information on the objective of the procurements and its timeline to potential bidders alongside necessary procurement, procedures, principles, and guidelines of MCA-Nepal. 89 people representing various national companies attended the event. A similar outreach is planned for potential bidders in New Delhi, India on 15 April 2024.

The procurement is aimed to be launched by July 2024.

Financial Bids for the Construction of Three Substations Opened

MCA-Nepal opened financial bids received from six technically qualified bidders for the construction of three substations on 26 February 2024. A total of seven bids were originally submitted by the deadline. Out of the seven, bids of six technically qualified bidders, i.e. KEC International Limited, Linxon India Private Limited, National Contracting Company Limited, Siemens Limited, Tata Projects Limited and Techno Electric and Engineering Company Limited were opened.

The procurement for the plant design, supply, delivery, installation, testing and



Financial bids received from six technically qualified bidders for the construction of three substations being opened on 26 February 2024.

commissioning of three substations has been divided into three lots: 400 kV Ratmate Substation and works at Lapsiphedhi and New Hetauda Substation under Lot 1, 400 kV

New Butwal Substation under Lot 2 and 400 kV New Damauli Substation under Lot 3.

Earlier on, technical bids were opened on 19 October 2023.

Technical Bids for Consulting Services for Capacity Building Activities to Enhance Electricity Use Opened

MCA-Nepal organized a bid opening event for Consulting Services for Capacity Building Activities to Enhance Electricity Use, a thematic area under its MCA Partnership Program (MPP) on 16 February 2024.

A total of eight technical bids submitted by domestic and international bidders were

opened in the presence of their representatives. Financial bids will be opened after the completion of the technical evaluation.

Earlier to the bid opening, a pre-proposal meeting for the procurement was organized in Kathmandu on 2 January 2024 to provide required information,

scope of work and terms of reference to interested potential bidders.

The MPP is a sub-activity under the Electricity Transmission Project (ETP) that will complement the project to share the benefits of the ETP with affected communities for enhanced electricity use.

ELECTRICITY TRANSMISSION PROJECT

Land Acquisition for Transmission Line

MCA-Nepal has made notable progress in acquiring land to build tower pads for the transmission line in nine project districts except in Kathmandu district. As per Section 9 of the Land Acquisition Act, 1977, public notices with full details of the land parcels to be acquired were issued in all

nine districts. Post the publication of the notice, Compensation Fixation Committee (CFC) Sub-committees formed to recommend compensation rates for the lands to be acquired have completed field verification visits in all nine districts.

Discussions on Compensation Fixation Timeline

MCA-Nepal organized a meeting with the Compensation Fixation Committee (CFC) in Palpa district on 13 March 2024 to expedite the land acquisition process for the construction of transmission line under Electricity Transmission Project (ETP).

Mr. Khadga Bahadur Bisht, Executive Director, MCA-Nepal discussed the compensation fixation timeline with CFC members and district-level stakeholders during the meeting.

Similarly, Mr. Bisht also conducted meetings with CFC chairs of Nawalparasi (Bardagha Susta East) and Nawalparasi (Bardaghat Susta West) districts to discuss the timeline of the land acquisition process in those districts.



Mr. Ananda Kafle, CDO of Palpa district, participating in the CFC meeting, organized in Palpa on 13 March 2024.



Mr. Khadga Bahadur Bisht, Executive Director, MCA-Nepal, discussing on the timeline with CFC members and district-level stakeholders in Palpa on 13 March 2024.

CFC Sub-committees Complete Field Verification Visits

CFC Sub-committees formed to recommend compensation rates for the lands to be acquired by MCA-Nepal completed field verification visits in all nine districts by March 2024.

These were carried out under the leadership of respective Assistant Chief District Officers in seven districts whereas Administrative Officers took the lead in Nuwakot and Palpa.

Officials from related government agencies alongside elected representatives were a part of the visits organized by MCA-Nepal.



CFC Sub-committee members in Sindhupalchowk district during a field visit to verify identified lands for acquisition.

Forest Census

MCA-Nepal has been expediting works related to forest census in districts that will be affected by the Electricity Transmission Project. Extensive

consultations with Community Forest User Groups and Leasehold Forest User Groups were organized prior to the forest census works.

Forest Census Completed in Seven Districts

MCA-Nepal completed forest census works in seven districts namely Chitwan, Dhading, Makwanpur, Nawalparasi East, Nawalparasi West, Palpa and Tanahun by March 2024.

The activity was carried out to document and provide details of forest area and the number of trees that need to be cleared in the community and to identify leasehold and government forests affected by the Electricity Transmission Project. Based on the data collected, MCA-Nepal will plan appropriate mitigation measures.

The census will be carried out in all ten districts where the Electricity Transmission Project will be implemented.



The forest census works being carried out in Nawalparasi (Bardaghat Susta West) district.

Additional Consultations with CFUGs in Dhading

MCA-Nepal organized additional consultations with Community Forest User Groups (CFUGs) in Dhading from 28 - 30 January 2024 with representatives from eight CFUGs. The additional consultations were carried out as identified by the forest census field verification team.



The additional consultation meeting organized with Community Forest User Groups (CFUGs) in Thakrey, Dhading.

Bhasme Lamapokhari Community Forest User Group, Setidevi Community Forest User Group, Jharlang Community Forest User Group, Juretham Community Forest User Group, Barhamure Community Forest User Group, Yakata Community Forest User Group, Sulikhola Community Forest User Group and Bhasme Pakha Community Forest User Group took part in the consultations.



The additional consultation meeting organized with Community Forest User Groups (CFUGs) in Siddhalekh, Dhading.

Household and IOL Surveys to inform Resettlement Action Plan

MCA-Nepal conducted Household and Inventory of Loss (IOL) surveys in Tanahun district in February 2024 to obtain socio-cultural, demographic and economic information on project-affected families as per the Resettlement Policy Framework approved by the MCA-Nepal Board of Directors.

Such surveys have been carried out in nine districts to be affected by the construction of transmission lines. The survey is an integral part of MCA-Nepal's Resettlement Action Plan.



Household surveys being conducted in Tanahun district to obtain socio-cultural, demographic and economic information of project-affected families.

Consulting Women to Understand their Concerns



A focus group discussion with mothers' groups and members of the Community Forest Users Groups under progress in Dhading district.

MCA-Nepal organized Focus Group Discussions (FGDs) with mothers' groups, Community Forest Users Groups at Municipalities/Rural Municipalities affected by the Electricity Transmission Project in Dhading, Nuwakot and Tanahun districts in January and February 2024.

The discussions were organized to understand the concerns of women from different communities in the land acquisition process.

Similar FGDs were conducted in Sindhupalchowk, Makwanpur, Chitwan, Palpa, Nawalparasi (Bardaghat Susta East) and Nawalparasi (Bardaghat Susta West) earlier.

This is an integral step to ensure women are not adversely impacted during the implementation of MCA-Nepal's Resettlement Action Plan.

Boundary Wall Fence Construction Completed

MCA-Nepal has completed the construction of a boundary wall fence around 20.27 hectares of land at the Ratmate Substation construction site in Belkotgadhi, Nuwakot. The fence demarcates the land for the substation and will pave the way for smooth construction once contractors are selected. The land was acquired after 104 households were compensated as per the Land Acquisition Act 1977.

Ratmate Substation is one of the three 400 kV substations to be constructed under the Electricity Transmission Project.



The Completed boundary wall fence around 20.27 hectares of land at the Ratmate Substation construction site in Belkotgadhi, Nuwakot.

LIVELIHOOD RESTORATION PROGRAM – RATMATE

Trained PAPs in Ratmate Running Small-Scale Businesses

The two-year Livelihood Restoration Program (LRP) being implemented at the Ratmate Substation site is close to completion. By the end of the program, it has benefitted around 270 project-affected people in Belkotgadhi Municipality, Nuwakot.

The program is an integral component of MCA-Nepal's resettlement action plan based on international standards to ensure improved means of livelihood for physically and economically displaced people.

Agricultural skills of 106 PAPs (44 male and 62 female) were enhanced with four types of agriculture advancement trainings in commercial agriculture farming, goat farming and management, poultry farming and management and rice farming. Similarly, 163 PAPS (77 male and 86 female) were equipped with various vocational skills via 18 types of trainings in computer operation, agroveter management, automobile maintenance, beautician, electrician, coffee making, cooking, Dhaka weaving, doll making, driving, fresh meat house



Ms. Urmila Rai, a poultry farming entrepreneur, taking care of her chicks.

operation and management, heavy equipment, plumbing/snacks making, tailoring, basic photography, proposal writing and web designing. Apart from the trainings, related input supports were also provided to participants of the agriculture-based trainings, and start-up support to the trainees of vocational skill-based trainings.

The program also facilitated to establish a cooperative for the PAPs at Ratmate, for which various trainings useful to run the cooperative were provided to 72 PAPs (40 male and 32 female).

In addition, the PAPs benefitted from trainings in business plan development, financial literacy, adult literacy and orientations on gender and social inclusion and life skills among others.

At present and after acquiring skills and knowledge from trainings that were delivered, 12 PAPs are currently running their own businesses; such as small-scale restaurants, agroveter shops, fresh meat houses; providing services in plumbing and carpentry and generating Dhaka woven products, dolls and cushions.



Ms. Mamata Rai selling dolls produced by herself after completing her doll making training.



Ms. Pampha Rai running a beauty parlor after completing her beautician training.

Sharing of Best Practices in GSI

MCA-Nepal organized an interaction program to share best practices on mainstreaming Gender and Social Inclusion (GSI) under the Livelihood Restoration Program (LRP) in Ratmate, Nuwakot on 31 January 2024.

Expressing his commitment to promote equitable rights in the municipality, Mr. Jagat Bahadur Gurung, the Mayor of Belkotgadhi Municipality, opined at the program, "The inclusive approach of the LRP should be replicated in all settlements affected by the project."

Ms. Bindiya Rajbhandary, the Chief of the Women, Children and Senior Citizen Section in Nuwakot, congratulated MCA-Nepal's consultant SAPPROS Nepal for the stupendous efforts toward empowering the project-affected people in Ratmate and said, "We are willing to coordinate and collaborate further with likeminded organizations to foster the rights of children, women and senior citizens in Belkotgadhi Municipality."

The event provided a platform for project-affected people at Ratmate to share their success stories.



Mr. Jagat Bahadur Gurung, the Mayor of Belkotgadhi Municipality, addressing the interaction program on mainstreaming Gender and Social Inclusion (GSI).

A total of 66 participants including the Deputy Mayor, Chief Administrative Officer, Municipal Executive Member and ward representatives took part in the event.



Ms. Bindiya Rajbhandary, the Chief of the Women, Children and Senior Citizen Section in Nuwakot, addressing the interaction program on mainstreaming Gender and Social Inclusion (GSI).

ROAD MAINTENANCE PROJECT

Disclosure of RAP in Dang

MCA-Nepal organized a Resettlement Action Plan (RAP) disclosure event for the Road Maintenance Project (RMP) at the local and district levels in Dang district on 10 - 11 February 2024.

The event was organized in the presence of the Chief District Officer of the district and elected representatives of Gadhawa Rural Municipality and Lamahi Municipality. The event informed the communities of the structures to be affected and discussed compensation applicable as per the provision of the Land Acquisition Act, 1977. The action plan is based on international standards to ensure improved means of livelihood for physically and economically displaced people.



The Resettlement Action Plan (RAP) disclosure event, organized for the Road Maintenance Project (RMP) at Gadhawa Rural Municipality in Dang district on 10 February 2023.

MCA-Nepal will maintain and upgrade 40 km of road section from Dhankhola to Lamahi of the East-West highway in Dang district by introducing innovative, climate-smart and cost-effective sustainable technologies on road maintenance.

COMMUNITY VOICES

Aspirations Become a Reality for Kamal

Kamal Bahadur Saru Magar, a 44-year-old lives with his wife and two sons in Ratmate, Nuwakot. He began his journey as a breadwinner at a young age and faced several financial hardships early on in his life. Kamal migrated to work in a restaurant in India several years back. After ten years of hardship, he decided to return to Nepal and pursue his own venture to start a restaurant business. With his previous learnings and experience, he opened a small fast-food restaurant at Mahadevphant, Nuwakot that helped him earn a meager NPR 10,000 a month. Besides his small hotel business, his family also relied on their land cultivating limited vegetables and fruits for their livelihood.

His life changed for the better after his land fell within the area designated for the MCA-Nepal's electricity substation site in Nuwakot. Kamal was not content with the income he was making and had always wanted to expand his business. He had halted his plan to scale up his business for sheer lack of ideas. However, his aspiration became a reality when he was compensated for

the land acquired and took part in the Livelihood Restoration Program (LRP) implemented by MCA-Nepal for people like him, whose lands were acquired for the construction of the Ratmate Substation.

Leaving the ancestral land was not an easy decision but the financial compensation provided to Kamal and his family as per the Land Acquisition Act 1977 opened doors for him to upscale his small-scale business. He also purchased a piece of land at Mahadevphant where he plans to build a house in the future.

The Livelihood Restoration Program (LRP) was implemented soon after the land acquisition process to restore the livelihoods and income of physically and economically affected people. Household surveys were carried out under the program to determine the kinds of training project-affected people preferred to meet the objective of the program.

Kamal enrolled in the program and expressed a strong desire to be a part of Sweets and Snacks Making Training. The two-month training enhanced his cooking



skills and gave him ideas to expand his menu. Prior to the training, his menu was limited to three to four dishes a day, whereas after the training he added popular local items like Samosa, Chowmein, Momo, and Thukpa. He also includes new food items according to festivals and seasons.

Kamal's wife also supports him in the business. Additionally, she also enrolled in the program and opted for Goat Farming and Management Training. She was provided with a goat shed and two baby goats post her training to start a goat-rearing business.

Today Kamal and his wife are saving their earnings to fulfill a dream of constructing a house.

Kamal shares with joy, "I am thankful for the skills the LRP has given me. My business is gradually improving because of the training I attended. Currently, I make a net profit of more than NPR 20,000 per month. I am confident that it will continue to thrive over time." This is double the amount he used to make prior to the program.

Like Kamal, around 270 people have been supported and are benefitting from the program.



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