



Call for proposals: Terms of Reference

BACKGROUND & PURPOSE

Established in 2015, Issara Institute is an independent NGO (U.S. 501(c)(3) not-for-profit corporation) based in Asia and the United States is tackling issues of human trafficking and forced labor through worker voice, partnership, and innovation. Issara Institute works in partnership with global brands and retailers to open up opportunities to engage with their suppliers, the recruiters working with those suppliers, and the workers within these workplaces and labor migration channels.

In the context of Nepal, labor migration has long been an integral part of Nepali society. In order to maximize the benefits of labor migration, the Government of Nepal has been working to make labor migration safe, orderly, and dignified through new policies and initiatives, strengthened cooperation at the national, regional and international levels, and increased efforts to understand and respond to the evolving dynamics of labor migration within global supply chains.

There are a number of ongoing challenges in both policy and practice within the migration process: unethical and exploitative recruitment practices enabled by stark information asymmetries between job seekers and recruiters, leading to high recruitment fees and debt bondage that can lead to forced labor and trafficking. However, there are also exciting emerging opportunities in 2024 for driving more ethical labor recruitment down to the first mile in Nepal, due to changes in legislation in Europe that are forcing global corporations to take more responsibility for how foreign workers are getting recruited into jobs in their global supply chains. Global brands and retailers, now, must take more responsibility for the well-being of Nepali workers in their supplier sites across the globe now than ever before.

The purpose of these awards are to leverage Issara Institute's partnerships with global business as well as its technical competencies in worker voice and technology to make the most of these new policy and partnership opportunities for Nepali migrant workers, working together with Nepalese civil society, government, and business. Together we aim to expand livelihood opportunities and strengthen networks of support to Nepali migrant workers, their families, and communities that will yield measurable impact in the lives and well-being of workers, and also make significant contributions to the ongoing initiatives of the Government of Nepal in achieving its National Plan of Action (2023) and national commitments towards the SDGs, decent work, gender equality, and digital transformation in foreign labor migration.

The following 4 objectives of the Project are based on Issara Institute’s theory of change and that of the Inclusive Labor Monitoring (ILM) Action Network, bringing business, civil society, and workers together within the spirit of Human Rights Due Diligence (HRDD). Civil Society Partners that are part of the network will be focusing on ethical recruitment for foreign labor migration conducting the following activities:

1. **Empower jobseekers and workers:** To educate and empower prospective migrants, connecting them directly to as broad a range as possible of real, comprehensive, and transparently advertised job opportunities, in a non-exploitative manner. Activities conducted by local organizations could include community-based outreach and capacity building for prospective migrants and community leaders, including empowering workers through the Golden Dreams smartphone app as a technology to educate and increase access to a wider range of employment opportunities abroad.
2. **Detect and intervene:** To detect illegal and unallowed recruitment fees being charged by informal brokers at the village and community level, and work with relevant stakeholders to get those fees paid back to jobseekers whenever possible. Activities conducted by local organizations could include training local authorities and case management and legal aid to ensure migrant workers’ access to justice.
3. **Best-Fit Matching:** To help align zero fees jobs with confirmed zero fees job seekers, and legal fees jobs with job seekers that have paid legal fees. Activities conducted by local organizations could include introducing prospective migrants to Golden Dreams App, and collaborating with progressive recruitment agencies to help establish direct, transparent communication and connection between recruitment agencies, job seekers, and workers.
4. **Ecosystem transformation:** Exchange of experiences, good practice, and lessons learned as a basis for building solidarity around what works and what is needed for more ethical supply chains. Activities conducted by local organizations could include active participation and contribution to multi-stakeholder events, and evidence-based policy advocacy and government capacity building informed by Inclusive Labor Monitoring.

Eligibility criteria and required documents:

1. The organization must be legally registered at relevant national, provincial, or local authorities of the Government of Nepal.
2. Work in the target provinces: Koshi, Madhesh, Bagmati, and Lumbini selected based on the foreign migration trends
3. Please submit the following:
 - a. A cover letter explaining your organization’s proposed project activities and implementing areas/locations (districts/municipalities/rural

municipalities within the provinces mentioned above) with reference to the aforementioned objectives and illustrative activities with detailed financial proposals.

- b. Organization's registration and renewal certificates
- c. Detailed organization profile including information about the Board Members, leadership, and staff.
- d. Tax office registration and Tax clearance certificate
- e. Audit report of the year 2079 BS (2022/2023)

This partnership is initially for one year with possibility of extension subject to availability of funds, approval of activities from the Government of Nepal, performance, and also based on calendar of operations.

Budget: \$15,000 USD to \$50,000 USD annually (based on the scope of work)

Thank you for your interest in partnership with Issara Institute!