

EVALUATION OF LO-NORWAY-GEFONT PARTNERSHIP PROGRAMME ON THE PROMOTION AND PROTECTION OF THE RIGHTS OF NEPALI WORKERS IN MALAYSIA

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I. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Union to union cooperation in the protection of migrant workers is a good strategy especially in countries where widespread and rampant violations of worker's rights are observed. The ability to forge an effective cooperation would advance the interest of trade union movements both in the receiving and sending countries. However, union to union cooperation has tremendous challenges as this involves transnational laws that govern labour organising, policy making and social attitude and prejudices framing that affect the isolated and unorganised ranks of workers despite the existence of labour unions that purports to protect these workers.

Malaysia is home to at least 6 million foreign workers who are vastly unprotected primarily due to a lack of comprehensive migration policy that promotes and protects the rights of migrant workers from neighbouring countries in Asia such as Indonesia, Philippines, Myanmar, Bangladesh and Nepal.

In the last couple of decades, Nepal has been deploying its citizens in the Gulf countries and in Malaysia. In recent years, though, Malaysia has become a more attractive destination of Nepali workers despite the widely known harsh working conditions. With an average one death a day for Nepali workers in Malaysia between 2005 and 2015 (www.malaysiakini.com/news/327999; www.freemalaysiatoday.com/category/nation/2017/01/21/report-386-nepalese-migrant-workers-died-here-in-2016) or 2945 deaths. It is more compelling to know the potentialities for a dynamic trade union cooperation that could alter the landscape of abuses, violence and death.

GEFONT is the largest trade union in Nepal with a membership capacity of 400,000 affiliate members from agriculture, construction, domestic worker, textile and garments (<https://www.gefont.org/GG2303390.html>). About 800,000 Nepali workers in Malaysia (pers com, Embassy of Nepal diplomat in Malaysia) are actively participating in the economic development of the country, with most of them found in the manufacturing sector.

GEFONT through its partnership with LO Norway is pushing for a better deal in organising Nepali migrant workers in Malaysia for the promotion and protection of worker rights by engaging the Malaysian Trade Union Congress (MTUC).

This cooperation agreement between GEFONT and LO Norway was signed sometime in September/October 2015, to the effect that the agreement will cover from January 2015 to December 2018.

GEFONT Support Group (GSG) Malaysia was founded before LO Norway provided the financial support to carry out migrant rights protection programme. There are about 17 committees formed, including three women's committee, in Kuala Lumpur, Selangor, Perak and Johor. Organisationally, GSG demarcates committees according to regions: Kua-

la Lumpur, Selangor, Perak and Johor. Attempts are now being done to found GSG in Penang.

While there may be more than 2000 Nepali workers who are members of GSG Malaysia, visibility of their membership is limited outside the workplace, when “ruptures” occur where members or co-workers experience a particular problem such as accident, death or grave employment violation. There is also visibility of GSG membership when they celebrate cultural festivities near the place where they live. Here is a situation of a membership who cannot present himself/herself as a strong group vis-à-vis the “actors” or representatives of the employers. In addition, this membership is not able to translate the cooperation and support between members when immediate superiors/bosses begin to question their level of assertiveness of their rights as workers. While the GSG may be known outside the workplace but such network of members cannot make a strong presence or cannot present themselves as an organised force in front of their bosses especially to open negotiation on the improvement of their work conditions. It is hoped that this is a transition stage that the membership has to go through rather than a permanent feature of GSG.

Although in the eyes of the Malaysian public GSG may be an Association, members must be cognisant of the fact that GSG is a vehicle for the assertion of their rights as migrants. In this scenario, GEFONT Nepal and GSG Malaysia must take stock of the main objective of the cooperation program and that is to strengthen Nepali workers’ capacity to improve the working and living conditions in Malaysia through strategic organising.

II. OVERVIEW OF THE PROJECT

The Norwegian Confederation of Trade Unions (LO-Norway) has been supporting the General Federation of Nepalese Trade Unions (GEFONT) in strengthening its efforts since 2012, in the latter’s work among Nepalese migrants in Malaysia. This is an evaluation exercise to assess the performance and progress of this cooperation and to see whether the objectives are met thus far. This assessment also describes the strengths and weaknesses of the programme and its partners. Time period covered in this evaluation project is from January 2015 to September 2016 or roughly 19 months or a year over before the cooperation program agreement ends.

Table 1 shows the baseline data and the output that is expected when the cooperation agreement ends in 2018. There are three main themes that this program focuses on: networking, legal aid and training, which could vastly facilitate organising the ranks of Nepali workers and therefore reduce the extent of vulnerability of abuses and exploitation. The basis of the improvement would somehow strengthen Nepali workers’ ability to organise themselves and to be a force to be reckoned with as they fill the labour gaps across the sectors of the economy.

Table 1
Mapping of Achievements based on Indicators as stated in the Proposed Study
(2015-2018) and Appendix to the Cooperation Agreement.

Item	Indicators	2014 (Base-line)	2015	2016
Networking	At least 8.000 new potential migrant workers equipped have been trained in the migration process.	10.000	600	2.850
	At least 100 member of GEFONT support group from Malaysia received training on migrant issues.			2.850
	At least 1.200 new Nepali migrant workers joined in GSGs from selected destination country.	1.785	358	2.173
Legal aid	At least 12 new Area support in Malaysia established and functioning.			6
	At least 4 Zonal Malaysia returnee migrant committee formed and functioning in Nepal			3
	At least 200 Nepali migrant workers in Malaysia will receive legal support			2.205
Training	Frequency of meetings and planned work of GEFONT support groups increased			Regular meetings are held and depending on the need of each local GSG unit
	At least 4000 potential migrant workers will contact GEFONT Migration Information Center	2.850 (this includes migrants who sought counseling, training etc.)		
	At least 100 potential migrant workers received counseling			
	At least 120 potential migrant workers increased knowledge on basic law			
Joint programs with MTUC of Malaysia conducted	Several programs on advocacy, training and awareness campaigns were organized.			

	150 new women migrant workers from Nepal have been organized in GEFONT support groups	100	90
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Note: Shaded boxes are the main items found in the “Appendix to the Cooperation Agreement between GEFONT and LO-Norway 2015-2018”.

The objectives of this evaluation are: (1) “to assess the results of the support provided to GEFONT by LO-Norway to strengthen the capacity of the organisation to assist migrant workers; and, (2) to assess the modality of cooperation with GEFONT and provide recommendations on areas for improvement, in particular relation to monitoring and reporting the performance in cooperation”. The time period covered in this evaluation is from January 2015 to September 2016, approximately 19 months from the beginning of the agreement. This evaluation was carried out within 10 man-days and the draft report was submitted on 21st December 2016.

There are six dimensions that this project evaluation examined as listed below:

1. **Relevance:** An examination on whether the support of LO-Norway has in any way targeted the needs of the project and whether the project veered off from the objectives in the process.
2. **Efficiency:** To determine to what extent the principal actors of this cooperation (i.e. GEFONT and LO-Norway) are able to dispense the duties and responsibilities in the course of carrying out the program. “Efficiency was explored on whether principal parties involved have delineated their expectations to achieve a maximum outcome of the partnership. How efficient have these organisations been in the implementation of the project i.e. has the work been carried out, and the financial and human resources been used in an appropriate and cost-efficient manner?”
3. **Results:** “What are the results of the project so far? Were the objectives met, and that all of the expected results of the project will be met by the end of the project period? Have the objectives been unclear and/or unrealistic or is it due to other internal and/or external factors?”
4. **Sustainability:** “Will GEFONT be able to continue the project activities when LO-Norway support ends? Has the capacity of the organisation been permanently improved? If so, what are the indicators of this?”
5. **External impact:** Has GEFONT been able to improve its performance towards the governments, employers and the general public of Nepal and Malaysia as a result of the project? Has there been an impact of political influence in the society, improved trade union rights, better labour legislation, etc. that may be directly or indirectly linked to the project?
6. **Other findings:** In addition to the above, could there be other findings relevant such as the assessment of gender issues and the extent to which they have been adequately addressed in the project.

II. EVALUATION DESIGN

This section describes how the evaluation project has been carried out.

Sources of Data

The *primary data* was obtained from GEFONT Support Group (GSG) Coordinator, Core Committee and members, GEFONT Nepal union leaders, BWI consultant and Embassy of Nepal officials in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia. The *secondary data* was based on the reviewed documents, newspapers article, GEFONT reports etc. shared to the Independent Consultant.

Data Collection Methods

Data was obtained using personal interviews, Focus Group Discussions (FGDs) and observation. (Please refer to Appendix 1 for the sample guide questions. Personal interviews and FGDs were conducted with GSG Coordinator, committee members and ordinary members. Interviews with women members and committee members were conducted. In addition, interviews were conducted with union leaders/organisers from MTUC, AMMPO, BWI, Embassy officials from Nepal (Ambassador, Labour Attache, Protection Officer, Consul). Interviews and FGDs were conducted close to where migrant workers reside. This was done considering that the only available time they would have would be at night or on Sundays when some of them do not work. By doing the interview nearest to the place where they reside would also minimise unnecessary anxiety when they leave the hostel and take public transportation to the meeting place. Conducting the interview in nearby eating places close to the hostel also gave the Independent Consultant the opportunity to observe the quality of life as migrant workers and their daily struggle to survive in a deplorable condition.

Data from GEFONT Nepal was obtained via email and a quick meeting with the GEFONT legal officer in Kathmandu last in December 2016. In that email sent to GEFONT Nepal, a set of questions was sent via email to the team to get their responses on issues raised.

Sample and Research Location

This evaluation involved Nepali workers who were employed in the manufacturing and food industries in Malaysia. Fieldwork was conducted in Kuala Lumpur, Subang Jaya, Shah Alam, Klang, Ipoh, and Batu Pahat and Kulai in Johor (see Figure 1). There were about 15 women from Ipoh and Klang who participated in the two FGDs conducted. On the other hand, about 10 male members of GSG were personally interviewed, and four FGDs were carried out. GSG Malaysia Coordinator introduced the Independent Consultant to the GSG membership and followed the fieldwork in Subang Jaya, Klang, Kuala Lumpur and Ipoh.

III. BACKGROUND OF MIGRATION AND MIGRANT WORKERS IN MALAYSIA

Malaysia is both a country of destination for migrant workers from poor economies in South Asia and Southeast Asia; at the same time, an increasing number of Malaysian citizens work in more economically prosperous Singapore and in the Middle East (<http://www.thestar.com.my/news/nation/2016/08/24/more-malaysians-working-abroad-for-better-salaries/>).

The promotion of an export-led economy since the time of then Prime Minister Mahathir Mohamad until the present has made Malaysia a favourite country of destination of most migrant workers despite its fabled tales of rampant workers' rights violations, abuses and deaths. Table 2 provides a very good idea where most of the migrant workers come from and in which sector of the Malaysian economy they are visible. Despite the worsening worker conditions which are highlighted in daily newspapers, Malaysia remains a destination of workers from Bangladesh, Indonesia, Nepal, Philippines, Pakistan, Cambodia, Myanmar, India and others (see Table 2).

Figure 1

Map Showing the Locations of GSG Committees



Table 2**MIGRANT LABOUR BY SECTOR AND COUNTRY OF ORIGIN,
WEST MALAYSIA, 2014 (Human Resource Ministry, 2015)**

COUNTRY OF ORIGIN	DOMESTIC WORK	CONSTRUCTIONS	PLANTATION	AGRICULTURE	SERVICES	MANUFACTURING	TOTAL
BANGLADESH	126	111,262	17,948	15,856	38,943	112,795	296,930
CAMBODIA	4,511	280	315	354	530	3,439	9,429
CHINA	148	4,204	46	42	7,234	614	12,288
INDIA	950	6,136	20,077	23,628	49,872	4,525	105,188
INDONESIA	105,927	222,501	253,646	81,238	42,536	111,452	817,300
LAOS	46	3	2	4	10	19	84
MYANMAR	114	21,430	2,991	5,871	19,167	93,761	143,334
NEPAL	84	16,263	7,234	18,506	90,330	357,880	490,297
PAKISTAN	62	18,693	7,978	16,959	4,346	3,525	51,563
PHILIPPINES	40,220	3,993	5,800	4,683	4,754	4,261	63,711
SRI LANKA	4,058	179	355	215	1,123	3,207	9,137
THAILAND	335	535	588	2,346	8,313	350	12,467
VIETNAM	949	5,427	123	579	1,871	45,703	54,652
OTHERS	61	913	307	399	1,019	6,335	9,034
TOTAL	157,591	411,819	317,410	170,680	270,048	747,866	2,075,414

Note: Adapted using information from *eBook i-STATISTIK Pekerjaan dan Pemburuan Bil 1/2015(p. 25)*, Ministry of Human Resources Malaysia, 2015.

http://myhos.mohr.gov.my/ebook/istatistik1_2015/bil1_2015.ppsx (accessed October 28, 2016).

While official statistics by the Human Resource Ministry (2015) is available to the public, it remains to be seen whether this data can be taken as “be-all, end all” data considerably because in the Consultant’s personal interview with the current Ambassador of Nepal to Malaysia he mentioned that as of 2016, about 800,000 Nepalese are working in Malaysia. Nepal gets the highest number of workers in the manufacturing sector with 357,880, followed by Bangladesh 112,795 and Indonesia 111,452 in 2015.

While we note that migrant workers come from different countries, predominantly from the Asian continent, it does not mean that Malaysia single-handedly does this form of promotion/ marketing. Malaysia being a popular destination of migrants is facilitated by the presence of hundreds of recruitment agencies and allied business interests that commoditise the exportation of migrant labour in respective countries. Governments of migrant workers too have found an easy way of deploying their citizens abroad instead of generating employment for their own people. In fact, deployment of labour has become a permanent ‘temporary’ measure of governments by installing government agencies to facilitate the international movement of labour. For example, the Philippines has institutionalised deployment of Filipino domestic workers, engineers, doctors and nurses, computer experts, seafarers and others skilled and unskilled categories of workers to fight against poverty and lack of employment opportunities.

Although Malaysia has been receiving hundreds of thousands of migrant workers from all over, let it be known that it has yet to produce a comprehensive migration policy that would cater to the needs of migrant workers and at least reflect global competitiveness. Because of the lack of a comprehensive policy for migrants, issues pertaining to worker's rights and protection have always been muddled up. In addition, Malaysia seems to view migrant work as a security issue rather than a labour issue in that at least three government bodies (Department of Immigration, Department of Human Resources and the Royal Malaysian Police (PDRM)) are tasked to handle migrant matters and yet these bodies could not produce a workable and practical document.

The sheer ambiguity of the migration policy and the unorganised migrant workers add up to the weak status of migrant workers in Malaysia, in addition to lack of trade union personnel to push the migration agenda.

IV. NEPALI WORKERS IN MALAYSIA

Records show that there have been an increasing number of Nepali workers in Malaysia as a result of the weakening attractiveness of the Gulf States. As mentioned by one Nepali diplomat recently, about 800,000 Nepali workers, both men and women are employed in the manufacturing, construction, agriculture, services and domestic work² in Malaysia. Nepali workers are known to be hardworking, patient and can withstand the challenges of gravely depressing conditions. Similar to other foreign workers, they are known to have high survival skills and can learn to adopt quickly especially in language acquisition. Nepali workers are able to penetrate the different sectors of the labour market because of their adaptability and adoptability, versatility in language acquisition, and work ethics. In fact, Nepali workers can well be absorbed seamlessly into all sectors of the Malaysian labour force. The latest of that apparent positive impression of Malaysian employers towards Nepalese workers is the opening up of the domestic labour sector for Nepali women workers.

Before coming to Malaysia, they have at least paid between 80,000 and 120,000 Nepali Rupee (NR) to a number of agents and sub-agents to be able to leave Nepal. As high fees are involved, they either borrow money as well as asked friends or family members to fork out money to pay to the agent. Nepal sends its workers abroad as young as 18 and as old as 50 years old. At least the manufacturing sector has been a recipient of young, able-bodied male and female Nepali workers who can work round the clock, on the average 12 hours a day excluding overtime. Usually, there is no standard wage that Nepali workers receive. For all workers involved in this study, the promised wage they are told before departing Nepal was not followed. What has been stipulated in the work contract was never followed. These are the following: salary lower than what was stated on the contract, no annual leave, no sick leave, no free hostel accommodation, no free use of water and electricity, "mandatory" overtime, no provision of proper safety parapherna-

² For this study, there is no representation from Nepali women who are domestic workers, at least 84 of them are recorded in 2015. As of this writing there has been no agreement reached between Malaysia and Nepal as the future of domestic workers from Nepal is concerned.

lia at work, unexplained salary deductions etc. One stark reality about working conditions is that there has been a high number of deaths among Nepali, usually male workers. According to the Embassy of Nepal in Malaysia, an average of one death a day is recorded among Nepali workers (pers comm., Nepali Diplomat, Kuala Lumpur; <http://www.thestar.com.my/news/nation/2016/06/12/most-deaths-of-nepalese-workers-in-malaysia-due-to-cardiac-arrest-says-ambassador/>). Strangely, no investigation has ever been conducted by the Embassy of Nepal, the employer or any interested government body. Specific to the Nepali workers, deaths are attributed to lack of sufficient sleep/rest, poor diet and an extremely suffocating hostel condition. Malaysian doctors label it as SDS or Sudden Death Syndrome which is interestingly rather prevalent among male Nepali workers.

In this study, the Consultant has at least met three GSG members who were rendered persons with disabilities caused by accident at work. What triggers these accidents was the lack of proper safety equipments to protect workers from accidents, and perhaps because of stress and overwork that workers experienced. In one case, a 19 year-old worker cut his right wrist while he was trying to put the plastic material into the machine. His wrist was bleeding profusely so he was sent to the doctor; although, his right hand could have been “re-attached” if there was an immediate operation. What happened was, the employer even denied this worker the right to keep part of his body. It was learned that the severed right hand was thrown away by the factory management. What he had in his position now is just a picture of his severed hand. Even though the employer paid him RM13,500 several months after, he could not have received it had he remained quiet. He sought the help of GSG Malaysia to fight his case.

V. MAINSTREAMING UNION TO UNION COOPERATION

In a country like Malaysia where there is no comprehensive migration policy that protects the interest of migrant workers, a union to union mode of cooperation is a step in the right direction. This type of cooperation from both the country of origin and country of destination of workers can forge a partnership for the benefit of migrant workers is commendable indeed. There are areas that remain thorny when it comes to putting more substance into this type of cooperation, with Malaysia in context. These areas are the following: (1) the role of host country’s union to ensure that the Malaysian government adopts and implement coherent migration policy framework aligned to International Conventions of United Nations and International Labour Organisation; (2) the public perception towards migrant workers; and, (3) ability of migrant workers to challenge existing laws that stand in the way for better working conditions and the extent to which the Malaysian Trade Union Congress (MTUC) engages the current government to be able to provide a policy framework to exercise this assertion. For example, migrant workers in general do not have a right to join associations and under immigration laws pregnant women and unruly men are subject to deportation (Crisis, 2012, p. 170). We see about 30% of the national labour force are foreign workers who contribute to national development regardless of immigration documentation status (see Table 3).

Table 3

MIGRANTS FROM SELECTED SOURCE COUNTRIES (UN DESA 2015)

Country of Origin	2010	2015
	Total	Total
Bangladesh	343,000	358,432
India	126,986	132,699
Indonesia	1,024,344	1,070,433
Myanmar	241,430	252,292
Nepal	196,194	205,021
Pakistan	25,702	26,858
Philippines	20,798	21,732
Thailand	7,928	8,283
Total	1,986,382	2,075,750

Note: Adapted using information from *Trends in International Migrant Stock: Migrants by Destination and Origin*, United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs, 2015.

<http://www.un.org/en/development/desa/population/migration/data/estimates2/estimates15.shtml>; accessed on October 28, 2016.

MTUC is the largest federation of trade unions in Malaysia and enjoys relative political clout since it is recognised by the Government as the representative of workers. Historically, however, there have been junctures of internal struggles between leaders (see, for example, <http://aliran.com/archives/monthly/2003/1g.html>). That being said, could MTUC be willing to fight for the interest of migrant workers. What kind of initiative has been done thus far to say that it is serious with its work?

VI. FINDINGS OF THE EVALUATION

1. RELEVANCE

One of the concerns of any financial donor is the question whether the programme is relevant to the recipients/beneficiaries and to the government the programme purports to influence and make impact. Firstly, given the seriousness of migration issues and the prevalence of wanton disregard of migrant worker rights in Malaysia, the existence of LO Norway-GEFONT partnership cannot be more than sufficient. There is indeed a great need to assist Nepali workers in their struggle to improve their employment conditions given the extent of exploitation and abuses that they go through. This partnership is made more relevant because of the ability of LO Norway and GEFONT to forge union collaboration with MTUC in order to pursue its protection programme. MTUC is the main trade union representative recognised by the Government of Malaysia, and its ability to include migrant worker rights in the national agenda could eventually bring about positive changes in trade union organising.

It is clear that LO Norway-GEFONT Malaysia programme is able to dispense the kind of assistance it hopes to provide to the recipients of the program - from leadership to financial and legal assistance - through the efforts of both partners. This evaluation is about how GEFONT and LO-Norway are able to put their efforts together to produce a qualitative difference in the lives of Nepali migrant workers in Malaysia.

2. RESULTS OF THE PROJECT

The cooperation agreement has resulted in the formation of additional GEFONT Support Groups in four regions (Kuala Lumpur, Selangor, Perak and Johor) from 48 in 2014 to 65 GSGs in 2016. GSG Malaysia is able to create at least 17 more GSGs from the north (Ipoh) to the south (Kulai, in Johor). Three Women Committees were also formed although women leaders do not play a central role in the central leadership of GSG. It is reported that 2.173 Nepali workers have become members in 2016 and this means an addition of 1.573 since 2014 where it only had 600.

**Table 4
Organisational Strength of GSG Malaysia**

Total number of GSG members, including women	2.173
Total number of new members in 2016, including women	200
Total number of women members	200
Total number of new women members	161
Total number of new Committees (see Figure 1 for locations throughout west Malaysia)	17

Having said that, the reports from 2015 up to this time of writing however does not specifically mention from which sector of the migrant labour force do GSS members come from. At present, four labour union sectors have been identified that GEFONT can draw strength from: (1) electronics; (2) manufacturing; (3) transportation; (4) woodwork and furniture.

In addition to the organisational expansion of GSG, the project has indirectly added a new activity known as SMS Helpline where the GSG Coordinator is the main link to all the individual cases affecting migrant workers which are submitted through the Migrant Workers Trade Unions SMS Helpline Desk³. This seems to be a popular project but it al-

³ SMS Helpline is organised by BWI, MTUC, UNI-ASETUC and GEFONT based in Kuala Lumpur and is accessible nationwide. Migrant workers can send text messages to the

so means moving away from the organising task of the GSG leadership. Unless, GSG is able to convert the help it extended eventually into GSG membership. This Helpline has been actively in placed in 2015. Below is a profile of cases submitted to the Helpline.

Table 5
Summary of Cases from SMS Helpline, 2015 and 2016

	2015	2016	Total
Cheated by Nepali agent & Manpower company	36	9	45
Cheated by agent & company in Malaysia	90	36	126
Death & wages/Abuse/accident	124	60	184
Number of cases settled	176	29	205
Case still in progress	14	26	40
Number of cases unresolved	60	24	84
Total number of cases	250	102	352
Total number of victims	5.168	2.094	7.262

Awareness of migrant rights is also central in this project. One can assume that once a migrant worker is a member of GSG, said worker knows exactly what are his/her rights and is familiar with the employment-related concerns such low salary, unsubstantiated/unexplained salary deductions, “mandatory” overtime, overworked, sub-human hostel condition, no sick leave, no annual leave, no access to occupational health and safety standards, prone to worksite accidents etc. Awareness of these issues does not necessarily mean active involvement in organising. GSG members at the workplace remain very apprehensive and scared to initiate a dialogue or a “session” with their bosses except in very extreme circumstances involving serious accidents or death. These “ruptures” are very short-lived and are easily neutralised by the employers or agents especially when intimidation and threat of repatriation is imminent.

Based on fieldwork observation and discussions with members and office bearers of GSG and the force behind this programme, it is safe to say that its objectives will be met. However, a lot of things can still be improved to make more impact to the migrant community concerned. In addition, there are many factors that would derail the achievement of the objectives. Firstly, how GEFONT in the immediate future could further enhance its collaboration with MTUC and to be able to iron out teething issues related to

Helpline and these messages are forwarded to respective coordinators. GSG Malaysia Coordinator provides counselling and case referral.

trade union membership. On a positive note, MTUC is at the frontline helping out GEFONT through GSG Malaysia in a lot of ways. It ranges from handling of case reports with the help of GSG, identifying a focal person in MTUC to collaborate with GEFONT, or in pursuing /raising the issue and lobbying in the policy of deduction of wages, levy etc. In matters related to trade union membership, both GEFONT and MTCU must address this issue. For instance, GSG requires each member to pay the life membership fee of RM50 and monthly fee of RM15⁴. If this fee structure is maintained at the same time paying another fee for MTUC, this might burden the GSG membership financially. Once GSG members are absorbed as MTUC members, MTUC will require these members to pay another round of membership fee to be fully recognised. Based on field interview with the rank and file of GSG, this will entail more expense and, apparently, they are not receptive to the idea. It is not certain at this point of writing whether there would be a shift/change in the engagement.

Secondly, collaboration with local MTUC units is pertinent. It has been observed that in areas where GSG maintains a strong relationship with the local MTUC leaders, potential for cordial unionist relationship is high. What this also implies is that organising is now localised including intervention of local MTUC in employment-related problems. This also means decentralising the resolution of local employment-related problems faced by Nepali workers and in this way, it will strengthen the relationship between local GSG unit and local MTUC chapters.

3. EFFICIENCY OF THE COOPERATION AGREEMENT

3.1 ORGANISATIONAL EFFICIENCY

Staff Recruitment and Role Allocation

BKK is the designated GSG Coordinator for Malaysia. He entered Malaysia in 2005 and worked in a manufacturing company until 2008. He went back to Nepal and when he decided to come back to Malaysia in 2010, he was identified as GEFONT's migrant worker organiser. In Malaysia, he is the focal person as GSG full-time organiser since 2014. BKK is a member of the Migrant Workers Committee and one of the political leaders in Nepal. GEFONT Nepal gave him the responsibility to coordinate the LO-Norway - GEFONT project in Malaysia. During the interview he shared that before he left Nepal, GEFONT assured him of the following: free accommodation, a Migrant Desk at MTUC, assistance in the processing of visa and a salary of USD400 per month. These concerns are somehow important to be able to carry out his responsibility as GSG Malaysia Coordinator and to maximise his time as a union organiser. Membership fees that he and the committee have collected are used to finance whatever expenses related to worker organising.

From 2016 BWI started giving him USD400 as part of his salary for handling the SMS Helpline which is now parked in BWI office.

⁴ Based on interview with GEFONT Nepal, membership fees collected in Malaysia remain in Malaysia and it is handled by the GSG Committee in Malaysia without accountability to GEFONT Nepal.

In matters related to his working visa in Malaysia, BKK shared that he had to do it by asking an agent to help him get through the yearly renewal. This issue of work permit and the position he holds in GSG vis-à-vis his collaboration with other interested parties comes out especially when union organising becomes a challenge.

With a breadth of a programme of this nature, it is sad to note that there is no existence of a TOR (Terms of Reference) for the GSG Malaysia Coordinator or even for the Program Coordinator who is based in Nepal. A TOR is an important piece of document to list down the expectations and responsibilities that go with the position.

Visit of GEFONT Nepal personnel to Malaysia

For the last two years, GEFONT Nepal has been coming over to Kuala Lumpur to conduct training and orientation and meet up with GSG members. This opportunity could have also been used to foster relationships with MTUC and discuss ways to strengthen the collaboration. At the same time, GEFONT leaders may also utilise these visits/meetings by sharing new organising strategies and leadership trainings for GSG members.

Publication

For the last two years’ budget, there was a mention of publication of an “informative” booklet intended to migrant workers bound for Malaysia or are already in Malaysia. If this were to continue, a practical calculation must be done. With 5000 copies produced in 2015 (see Table 6), it is assumed that there are still a lot more copies left. It is hoped that this particular booklet is a useful document. Could GEFONT Nepal update this booklet and provide more substantive information specific to Malaysia? As it is, it is a general booklet for Nepali migrants regardless of country of destination.

**Table 6
Value of publication material**

	2015	2016	
Number of copies	5000	10.000	
Total amount spent in Nepali Rupees	165.000	330.000	
Number of potential recipients of booklets as reported			
Value per booklet (in NRs)	33	33	

The booklet contains a general information about GEFONT and what it can do to Nepali migrant workers. If this publication were to be effective, it must be specific to Nepali workers in Malaysia and it must contain guidelines and survival tips while in Malaysia, an initiative that no migrant community has started yet.

3.2. FINANCIAL EFFICIENCY

Missing/Incomplete information/Disproportionate allocation of funds

The Project Management Committee (PMC) in Nepal prepares the annual budget. The role of the GSG Malaysia Coordinator is to send an estimated budget for activities done in Malaysia. BKK shares that monies are not sent to him via any banking transaction but brought in physically when payments/reimbursements are needed. The Accounts Section of GEFONT Nepal does all the paying.

In 2015, there was a pattern of over-spending in at least seven (7) items out of 15 items from the original budget that was approved by LO-Norway. In 2016, three (3) items on “evaluation workshop”, “interaction with local trade unions in Malaysia”, and “national level interaction on migrant worker issues” have shown an overspending.

In addition, in 2015, only about 50% of the expenditure is spent in Malaysia, while the other 50% are spent in Nepal. To illustrate, “Organising migrant workers in Nepal”, “Celebration of International Migrants Day in Nepal”, “Establishment of information and counselling centre”, Salary of programme coordinator”, “Raise issue in ILC”, “Accountant fee”, and “Administration, stationeries & communication” were items that about 50% of the budget in 2015 went to Nepal. In Malaysia, items on “Planning meeting”, “Organising migrant workers in Malaysia”, “National level interaction on migrant worker issues”, “Para-legal training”, and “Legal support direct to victims” spent the other 50% of the 2015 budget.

International Migration Day (18th December) was both celebrated in Nepal and Malaysia and GEFONT has a combined expenditure of NRs 418,576 for a one-day event.

In the half-year report of 2016, it stated that, legal support to victims: “legal counselling and legal support provided to 310 workers in Nepal and 650 in Malaysia coordination with Local Trade Union.” (p. 3 of submitted half-year report for 2016, January-July). However, in the Financial Report in the same period there was no mention of expenses incurred for this item on Legal support to victims. This is interesting to note because in 2015, NRs 200,000 was spent for the six victims who sought help from GEFONT”.

Monitoring and evaluation of identified/supported activity

GEFONT has spent NRs 137,000 for 2015 and NRs 60,000 in the first half of 2016 specifically for the “establishment of information and counselling centre”. In the Annual Report, there is a sketchy explanation of the activity. In the 2015 report, “In order to provide information and counsel GEFONT established information and counselling centre where the returnee leaders are involved. Also, in 2016, a mere mention of “mobilisation of volunteers in order to create awareness on safe migration”. It is to the interest of both LO-Norway and GEFONT to come up with an operational structure on how to monitor and evaluate this activity in as much as money has already been spent for this purpose. For example, how many cases have been documented and how do they document it? Is there a standard form/template where counsellors are required to key in the case details?

Another case in point is the Leadership Development Training that was conducted in 2016. As per report submitted to LO-Norway, 20 participants came for this training, although what was initially proposed was 35 participants. GEFONT spent NRs 98,152.00 or about NRs 4,907.6 per participant.

4. SUSTAINABILITY

To answer the question of sustainability right off, the same question was asked to the membership including its leadership in GSG Malaysia whether they will be able to stand on their own feet once the programme support is withdrawn. It is interesting that they confidently share that with or without support, GSG will continue. In my opinion, it would be difficult if financial support is withdrawn as GSG will be entirely dependent on their own source of funding and that is usually by asking migrant workers to contribute every now and then for any logistics and financial needs. In the long run, GSG will become a liability; unless otherwise new ways of funding is put in place. But then again, however, it would be too much of a responsibility for the GSG leadership to carry that burden.

5. EXTERNAL IMPACT

5.1 Sociopolitical dynamics in Malaysia

MTUC is the direct link of GSG in Malaysia and the success of the cooperation hinges on the extent to which GEFONT is able to forge an active collaboration and partnership with MTUC. As observed, it is a challenge when new staff is recruited to the organisation to look into migrant issues. And when this happens, one would expect to go through the whole process of understanding migration issues all over again, and this seems to slow down the collaboration process. Considering that Nepali workers in Malaysia are facing enormous work-related challenges, GSG Coordinator and leaders are always on their toes trying their best to address these challenges.

5.2 Inter-foreign worker and within-Nepalese community surveillance control

Surveillance is a real issue among workers especially within the Nepali community and across transnational workers. Surveillance is an old control mechanism to maintain a docile group of workers. In one fieldwork that conducted, for example, I followed the Nepali workers to the hostel for the scheduled interview. BKK and I waited until the workers have come home, taken their dinner and at least have prepared the hostel for our visit. On our way to the second floor of the hostel, some Bangladeshi workers from the same company saw our team and while we started the interview the hostel manager, a local staff of Indian ethnic background came up and was talking in Tamil to the Nepalese. I did not understand so we continued the task. Sensing that we were not leaving the place, the hostel manager went up again and there was tension in the room. We had to abandon the interview in that community although the Nepali workers suggested that we had to continue and found another place nearby. I was waiting for calls from the company or at least for BKK the day after. The consensus from the group of workers that I interviewed is that it was the Bangladeshi workers who informed the hostel manager that two ladies went up the hostel. Or, it could also be some Nepali workers who were “planted” by the management to spy on potential Nepali leaders.

5.3 Casting the “Caste” Shadow

Although not an important issue in some migrant societies, caste is an important social feature that affects human relationships in the context of South Asian cultures. It becomes more complex when we examine the role of class to understand the extent to which certain collaboration efforts can prosper given the caste positions of leaders and stakeholders in the agreement. In countries like Malaysia, this “caste” (and even ethnicity/nationality) factor must be also taken into consideration for the engagement to produce its desired effect.

5.4 Mainstreaming migrant workers issues in the MTUC agenda

One of the most critical scenarios in this cooperation agreement is the assistance it receives from MTUC. This will be better exemplified if MTUC could also mainstream migrant workers’ issues in Malaysia and to be fully convinced that both local workers and foreign migrant workers deserve to exercise the right to unionise and to consolidate each other’s support to advance the interest of the workers regardless of nationality or citizenship.

6. STRENGTHS AND WEAKNESSES OF THE PROGRAMME

6.1 Ability to mobilise migrant workers to join big workers' actions

One aspect that draws positive impression is the fact that MTUC and BWI, for example, rely on GEFONT to serve as audience/ participants in their program for migrant workers. For instance, during the May Day rallies, MTUC mobilises the GSG membership; the Embassy of Nepal enlists the support of GSG members to get involved in the Diplomatic mission's program.

When I paid a visit to the Ambassador, however, purposely for this project evaluation, he was surprised to know that GEFONT is in Malaysia, although I would surmise that it is more part of the conversation and nothing more. I am not sure if he feigned ignorance but mentioned that GEFONT is always allied to a political party in Nepal and therefore assistance extended to Nepali worker may be linked to workers' political participation. I asked him about GEFONT in Malaysia and whether he, as an Ambassador, engages GEFONT in any of his migration program⁵.

6.2 Ability to forge mutual support with other Nepali-based associations in the community

Aside from GSG, there are two other Nepali groups that are actively organising workers and one of which is a political party from Nepal. GSG is able to establish working relationships with other Nepali worker associations in Malaysia and exchange/lend its support when need arises.

6.3 Multiple principals

BKK has many "principals" to report to. Even without an available piece of document to show to pressure BKK to report to MTUC, BWI and GEFONT Nepal, yet, he has to be available at all times to these people. In MTUC, BKK needs to touch base with various staff from Mr. Gopal to Mr. Soma to Ms. Florida (now ex- employee) and now Mr. Naghulan. He also gets instruction from these people in a manner that affects his time management and negotiation with other stakeholders.

6.4 Operational guideline

The absence of an operational guideline to make this MOU work may be one of the reasons why there is a slow and almost a stalled development in the cooperation. GEFONT Nepal has confirmed that there exists no other documents that unambiguously state the role and function of people involved in this cooperation.

6.5 GSG engagement with MTUC or others

⁵ I met the same Ambassador in another occasion prior to this project consultancy. I admired him for being there and strongly presented cases of abuse and exploitation of Nepalis in the hands of Malaysian employers. In that meeting, he was the only head of mission present despite the fact that the same invitation was extended to other heads of missions in Kuala Lumpur.

Does the GSG Malaysia leadership have the ability to push the status and improve the level of engagement with MTUC or even the NGOs that are actively working with migrant issues? While GEFONT through GSG visibility is important and its presence is felt across the different areas, it is equally important to know whether GSG is able to translate that visibility in its organising plans.

As made aware to the Independent Consultant, GEFONT is free to engage with other interest groups that support protection of Nepali migrant workers in Malaysia.

6.6 Absence of gender-based training program for women

Over 33% women have been elected in National Executive Committee of GEFONT during its 5th National Congress as well as a five (5) percent increment of female membership every four years.

The 2015 GEFONT Annual Report mentioned that women committees have conducted their own training programme among others. Based on fieldwork interview, there has not been any training or orientation program specific to Nepali women workers. In Ipoh, for example, Mina is a very strong woman worker and is more or less familiar with the sociocultural dynamics both inside and outside the workplace as she has been living in Malaysia for several years. And yet, despite her potential as a leader, she has not been sent for any leadership training. GEFONT Nepal also confirmed that although women migrant members attended some meetings in GSGs, yet there has not been any Gender Sensitivity Awareness program specific to women migrants in Malaysia. Nor Nepali women migrants are given critical positions in the central leadership of GSG Malaysia.

6.7 Lack of new organising strategies

Despite the potential of being able to organise the workers even in difficult working conditions, organising was rather limited to meetings and discussing the problems rather than make concrete steps to stop the deplorable working conditions. In the area of organising, potential avenues are open especially when they are hauled up in one hostel or located close to each other. This advantage has not been seen to facilitate their organising work. In addition, migrant workers could have used the advantage of building close ranks with other migrant workers since they have access to smartphone gadgets that could really facilitate organising strategies.

VII. CONCLUSION

There is no doubt that GEFONT-LO Norway cooperation agreement that aims to improve the employment conditions of Nepali workers in Malaysia is producing a positive result considering the fact that politically, it is very difficult for migrant workers to operate in such a very unfriendly atmosphere. GSG Malaysia is able to increase its membership and foster working relationship with the union stakeholders as well as other civil society groups. GEFONT's visibility is observable and in a lot of ways, the cooperation program has vastly assisted Nepali migrant workers who were in dire need of support during crucial situations. The financial assistance extended in times of repatriation and legal needs is more than enough to say that the cooperation program is well doing its level best. Having said that there is still a lot of areas where this cooperation program can push forward. While on one hand we rely on the passion, dedication and commitment of

GEFONT NEPAL leadership and GSG membership to carry out the tasks ahead of us, it is equally important to take stock of the ways to directly and indirectly create new strategies to improve our political work so as to intensify the level of awareness of Nepali workers' right to unionise.

One of the critical concerns that GEFONT and LO-Norway must also note is that providing funding for the programme to succeed is only one part of the equation. The other part is to also extend assistance by constant dialogue and monitoring of the system on which the programme hinges.

GSG Coordinator in Malaysia has been around for a few years. MTUC officials in Malaysia however have changed hats many times over. It is pertinent for GEFONT to continue the rule of engagement for the benefit of all stakeholders.

VI. RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Require GEFONT to establish an effective working strategy on how to promote the protection of workers' rights for the remaining period of the programme.
 - a. Work out a tripartite guideline for LO-Norway, GEFONT Nepal and GSG Malaysia to operationalise what has been agreed in the MOU.
 - b. Identify specific program/activity for women migrants in Malaysia in places where there is a women's committee.
2. Review GEFONT's fringe benefits to be given to field coordinator/organiser and program coordinator and determine remuneration based on the tasks allocated. Consideration must be given to GSG Coordinator's monstrous organising tasks in Malaysia.
3. Mainstreaming of Gender Program for women workers

Gender equality must be mainstreamed in the programme cooperation. Of the 17 GSGs in Malaysia, three are considered women GSGs (Ipoh, Johor and Klang). These women workers are found in companies producing plastic bags, biscuits and rubber pipes. While organisationally there exists a women's wing, there has not been any activity or programme specific to the issue of protection of women workers at the workplace. There is also no programme that addresses the interests of women e.g. in leadership roles and responsibilities to the effect that they will potentially take on higher responsibilities in the near future.

4. Adopt new web applications that are available in Nepal to aid in organising. Perhaps GEFONT needs to look at the role of new technology as part of organising strategy.
5. A separate financial report for Malaysia and another for Nepal must be in place for easy evaluation.

6. Submission of annual proposal must include objectives being clearly stated for each activity.
7. Internally, GSG needs to improve its organisational capability by mapping out the programme for the whole year and a timeline must be produced during the Planning and Evaluation Workshop at the beginning of the year.
8. Organising Tasks of GSG – considering the mammoth task of GSG coordinator and the limited funding that the task of organising the different areas/regions where Nepali workers reside, it would be to the advantage of GEFONT to focus on one area/region, rather than “spreading its wings” all over and is left with a weak support group that is only visible outside the workplace.
9. GEFONT Nepal must take an active role in the negotiation for issues pertinent to the promotion and protection of the rights of Nepali workers by engaging MTUC more. GSG Coordinator needs constant assurance from GEFONT Nepal so that he will continue to do his task by maintaining a strategic cooperation with stakeholders.
10. Considering that in a lot of ways GEFONT Nepal relies heavily on the progressive work of GSG Malaysia in order to achieve the objectives of the project, GEFONT for that matter must invest in the welfare of GSG Malaysia Coordinator and his staff. He is a very capable leader and is able to command support from the ground. What I was observing was a leader who enjoys considerable influence within the Nepali community of workers, the Nepali embassy officials and civil society organisations. Having said that, it is also important to note that the GSG leadership must also be given tools to improve his organising skills in light of the socio-political conditions in Malaysia.
11. Where there is local MTUC chapter, it is practical for local GSGs to build closer relationship at the local level. This means that GSG Batu Pahat, for instance, can rely on the assistance of MTUC Batu Pahat rather than channel issues to the national MTUC office. In this way, it is easier and less costly to manage, arrange and settle the cases submitted for assistance with MTUC.
12. Reconsider reducing the salaries of project coordinator and counsellors and provide a clearer job description. For counsellors, they must work primarily for migrants coming from Malaysia or going to Malaysia rather than an all-around job scope without assessing their efficacy and practicality.
13. It is strongly recommended that MTUC and GEFONT will consider the possibility of reducing their life membership fee and monthly fees scheme to be acceptable to both parties in order to resolve the issue of GSG membership in MTUC. In this way, MTUC may greatly make inroads to help establish labour unions despite a low percentage of local workers at the workplace.

VII. REFERENCES

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ATTACHMENT a: Table of documents reviewed

Item	Title/Description of materials
1	Proposal on “Promotion and Protection of the Rights of Nepalese Migrant Workers” for the period 2015-2018 dated 10 March 2014, by GEFONT
2	Project Cooperation 2015- Nepalese migrants in Malaysia, dated 15 th April 2015
3	Cooperation Agreement between General Federation of Nepalese Trade Unions (GEFONT) and The Norwegian Confederation of Trade Unions (LO-Norway), 2015-2018, Signed on 01 October 2015
4	Appendix to the Cooperation Agreement between GEFONT and LO-Norway 2015-2018, Signed on 01 October 2015
5	Report on Protection of Nepali Migrant Workers, January – December 2015
6	Fund Accountability Statement, for the period 1 st January 2015- 31 st December 2015 (with attached Schedule 1-6)
7	Income and Expenditure Statement, January 2015 –December 2015
8	Supplementary Agreement to the Cooperation Agreement and Appendix between General Federation of Nepalese Trade Unions (GEFONT) and LO-Norway, 2015-2018, Signed on 10 July 2016
9	Independent Auditor’s Report by Suvod Associates Dated 13 th February 2016, with attached document re Submission of Management Letter
10	Comment about the updated Proposal 2016 from GEFONT on Migration, dated 2 September 2015.
11	Revised Proposal on Promotion and Protection of Nepalese Migrant Workers in Malaysia, for the period January 2016-December 2016
12	Targets for 2016
13	Half-year Report on the Promotion and Protection of Nepalese Migrant Workers in Malaysia, for the period January 2016- June 2016
14	Income and Expenditure Statement from January 2016- June 2016
	Various documents from GSG Coordinator
15	Training conducted by BWI, MTUC in cooperation with GSG Malaysia for year 2015

16	Statistics showing the number of cases handled by GSG Malaysia
17	Training conducted by BWI, MTUC in cooperation with GSG Malaysia for year 2016
18	Statistics showing the number of cases handled by GSG Malaysia (January-July 2016)

ATTACHMENT b: FIELDWORK TIMELINE

No.	Activity	Place and Date	Method of data collection
Day 1	Pre-fieldwork meeting with GSG Coordinator	Kota Raya, Kuala Lumpur	Personal interview
Day 2	Meeting with GSG Core Group and 2 GSG Committees	Section 25, Shah Alam, Selangor	FGD
Day 3	Meeting with GSG Committee	Klang, Selangor	FGD, non -participant observation
Day 4	Meeting with GSG	Ipoh, Perak	FGD
Day 5	Meeting with GSG	Kulai, Johor	FGD
Day 6	Meeting with GSG	Batu Pahat, Johor	FGD
Day 7	Meeting with Embassy of Nepal officials	Kuala Lumpur	Personal interview
	Establish contact with GEFONT Nepal (Secretary General, Programme Coordinator)		Via email/phone call
Day 8	Meeting with MTUC officials, other union organizers and consultants/migration experts in Malaysia	Subang Jaya, Kuala Lumpur	Nonparticipant observation, personal interview
Day 9	Reflection and Feedback from GSG Malaysia Coordinator		
Day 10	Write report		

ATTACHMENT c: SAMPLE GUIDE QUESTIONS

FOR COMMITTEE MEMBERS/CORE OFFICERS: A set of semi-structured questionnaire is prepared that explores on: personal details, their journey to Malaysia, what motivates them to join GSG, whether they knew if there is GEFONT in Malaysia, how was the first contact made, frequency of meetings, problems/challenges they face as a group; what is so special about GSG. Inside the workplace, whether the management knew that they are members of GSG, whether the local union is organized in the workplace and their views about their conditions as migrants.

FOR THE GSG COORDINATOR: Questions revolve around his personal struggle as coordinator, issues on who pays for his visa, accommodation, insurance etc; identify his role as coordinator, expectations of GEFONT, his access to MTUC leadership and the social relationship issues with the MTUC hierarchy; his collaboration work with other groups, his vision for GSG.

FOR GEFONT NEPAL:

1. Coordinator of GEFONT Malaysia

Is there any TOR or Job description in written form duly signed by the Coordinator?

What are the responsibilities of the Coordinator to GEFONT Nepal and MTUC? Are these responsibilities clear to the Coordinator?

Who is responsible to provide assistance to Coordinator on the following: accommodation, medical/health insurance, processing of visa, travelling expenses on case missions (follow up cases/intervention work) etc.

Where does the Coordinator report to in Malaysia? What is the Coordinator's link with MTUC? How does Coordinator behave with the other partner labour unions? Has there been any agreement or at least a guideline for Coordinator to refer to every now and then?

How much is the salary of Coordinator?

2. MTUC

Aside from the MOU, is there any other piece of information that details out the responsibilities and expectations of MTUC, GSG Malaysia and GEFONT Nepal in this agreement? Has there been a frequent communication/correspondence between MTUC and GEFONT Nepal? How frequent is the sharing of information/data/reports?

Does GEFONT Nepal know the expectations of MTUC on GSG Malaysia?

Does MTUC oblige GSG Malaysia to report regularly?

When does MTUC extend its assistance to GSG? Is this responsibility to assist known to all parties?

3. GSG Malaysia

Do you think the existing organisational structure of GSG is sufficient to carry out activities designed for this programme? Why?

4. Financial matters

Who prepares the budget for activities (training, interaction etc.) organized in Malaysia?

Who pays for all the arrangements? Are payments directly sent by GEFONT to the payee? Or via the Coordinator? Is there any justification/explanation in the allocation of funds for each activity in Malaysia?

5. Malaysia-bound Nepali Workers

How do you keep track of workers going to Malaysia? Of the workers you have known to work in Malaysia, do you provide them some pre-departure orientation on the rights of migrant workers in Malaysia? Are all Malaysia-bound workers to go through an orientation from GEFONT?

6. Migrant Returnees

How does GEFONT Nepal trace these returnees from Malaysia and what kind of engagement do you have with them as part of the programme?

In the case of migrant returnees who have become disabled (loss of hand, finger, paralysed, blind etc.) in Malaysia, what is the position of GEFONT and is there any follow up? If so, in what form?

Would MTUC continue their assistance when the worker is back in Nepal but where their legal cases or employment grievances filed against the employer have not yet been resolved?

7. Women's Committee

Is there a specific training programme for women migrants? How gender-sensitive are these programmes?

What is the gender policy of GEFONT, for example, in representation at conferences etc.?

8. GEFONT Nepal

What is the strategic plan of GEFONT in Malaysia as far as promotion and protection of migrant rights are concerned?

Any comment on whether there is local trade union in the sector of employment where GSG members are found? How does GEFONT convince MTUC that a local union must be in place before GEFONT Malaysia takes its position in asserting the rights of Nepali workers?

Kindly identify the strengths in your mutual cooperation with MTUC and how best you can improve these strengths?

Identify the weaknesses in your engagement with MTUC. What could be the causes of these weaknesses?

How do you trace the number of reported cases that GSG Malaysia has helped? Do you keep a good documentation of all the cases, including legal cases? Could you provide a breakdown of cases from January 2015-October 2016)?

Has GEFONT Nepal through its Project Coordinator initiated a direct link with the Embassy of Nepal in Malaysia regardless of who holds the government in the home country?

9. Coordination between the Project Coordinator and the GSG Malaysia Coordinator

What is the role of the Project Coordinator as far as mentoring, monitoring and coordination issues are concerned?