

Press Release

The Government of Switzerland through Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation (SDC) has agreed to provide a grant assistance equivalent to Swiss Francs 3.579 million (approximately Rs.20 crore) to the Government of Nepal for the implementation of the phase III of Sustainable Management of Agricultural Soils in the Mid-Hills of Nepal (Project). An Agreement to this effect was signed and exchanged between the Government of Nepal and Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation at the Ministry of Finance, today.

The Project contributes to improve food security and increase income of women and men farmers in *Bari* dominated farming systems of Nepal's mid hills. This is achieved through smallholders and disadvantaged groups adopting sustainable soil management practices linked with improved production technologies and then seizing new agricultural production opportunities. The Programme targets smallholder farmers and disadvantaged groups with particular focus on poor women and social minorities in its command districts with a particular focus on remote VDCs. The Project is implemented in Baglung, Bajhang, Baitadi, Dadeldhura, Dhading, Dolakha, Myagdi, Okhaldhunga, Ramechhap and Sindhupalchowk districts. The project is expected to be completed by 31 December 2010.

The Government of Switzerland has been extending grant assistance for Sustainable Management of Agricultural Soils in the mid-hills of Nepal since 1999.

Mr. Krishna Gyawali, Joint Secretary, Ministry of Finance and Ms. Genevieve Federspiel, Deputy Country Director, Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation signed the agreement on behalf of the Government of Nepal and the Government of Switzerland, respectively.

The Government of Nepal expresses its sincere appreciation to the Government of Switzerland for this assistance and for the keen interest and continued support demonstrated by the Swiss government for the socio-economic development of Nepal.

Ministry of Finance
Singh Durbar, Kathmandu
January 9, 2008