

Migration Dristi



We talk to Dhurba Mijar, Co-founder and Executive Director of Migration Dristi, about helping migrant workers to secure employment without exploitation, recover recruitment fees they have paid, and escape forced labour.

Migration Dristi is a migrant worker-led organisation with headquarters in Nepal and dedicated colleagues in Bangladesh, Malaysia, Myanmar and Indonesia. It is dedicated to empowering and organising migrant workers, providing education, and developing responsible recruitment models to eliminate exploitation. Its goal is to ensure workers do not bear the financial burden of employment, endure exploitative recruitment practices, or experience any form of exploitation in destination countries.



Dhurba Mijar, Co-founder and Executive Director of Migration Dristi

What are the main issues facing the workers you support?

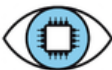
Workers that we support often face high recruitment fees, false promises, and different types of exploitation from local brokers before migrating from Nepal. In destination countries, many experience passport confiscation, excessive working hours, no rest days, and psychological or physical abuse. They also face non-renewal of work permits and poor consular support. These problems often push workers into an undocumented and vulnerable status.

Tell us about a workers' rights success story or achievement you are most proud of.

Migration Dristi has been working to strengthen ethical recruitment in the Malaysia corridor through continuous monitoring. Our monitoring work has supported over 20,000 migrants, mainly from Nepal, and also from India and Indonesia, to migrate without having to pay recruitment fees. We also made sure they didn't face other types of recruitment process-related exploitation.

We work with companies, monitoring networks, activists, media, and organisations to document forced labour cases and support remediation.

“ *In destination countries, many experience passport confiscation, excessive working hours, no rest days, and psychological or physical abuse.* ”



MONITORING PARTNER PROFILE: MIGRATION DRISTI

Our efforts have led to significant reimbursement of recruitment fees to migrant workers in Malaysia. As former migrant workers, the lived experiences of our team guide our worker-led approach, which is central to our impact.

What are the biggest challenges in your monitoring work right now?

We are seeing only limited government engagement, and risk of retaliation against migrant-led monitoring. The issues migrants are facing are large-scale, compared to our small capacity.

Informal sector workers, especially security guards and workers in small factories in Malaysia, remain overlooked and receive very little attention from supply chain actors and the government, even though they are indirectly working as part of the supply chain.

What are Migration Dristi's goals for the next 5 years?

We want to expand our worker-driven monitoring in Malaysia and other key corridors, and build a larger migrant-led monitoring network. We are working to strengthen ethical recruitment systems with more partners and companies.

Another goal is to increase case documentation and remediation for forced labour. We also want to improve the support systems we offer to undocumented and vulnerable workers, and advocate for policy reforms in Nepal and destination countries.

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Dhurba speaks at 'Advancing the Responsible Recruitment of Migrant Workers in Southeast Asia' conference, Kuala Lumpur, 2023.

How does the partnership with Electronics Watch support your work?

The partnership with Electronics Watch helps us expand stakeholder outreach, strengthen resources, build skills, and improve protection for migrant workers and monitors.



What changes would you like to see for workers' rights, at national and international levels?

Ethical recruitment must be promoted and enforced globally. Informal sectors, whether linked to supply chains or not, should receive stronger monitoring and protection, including security sector and small-scale industries where many Nepali migrants work.

What do you enjoy most about your work with Migration Dristi?

I enjoy being close to workers for monitoring, I remember my past when I was also a factory worker. It's a fascinating experience listening to their stories and seeing real changes in their lives. The most rewarding part is knowing that our work helps migrants feel safer and respected.

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Dhurba (far left) and colleagues conduct media reporting and on-site interaction on the impact of fee refunds on workers

