

Women's participation in the Agriculture sector in Nepal

- A Case Study of Kanchanpur district

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The agriculture sector is one of the key sectors of growth and poverty reduction in Nepal. Women from workers are the backbone of the agricultural and rural economy of Nepal. four types of data can contribute to measuring the contribution of women in the agricultural labour force i.e Statistics on key economic and labour indicators, land utilization status, population employed in agriculture and contribution of various crops in total domestic agriculture production of the study area kanchanpur district of Mahakali zone .apart from the labour burden of rural women in the agriculture sector, they also contribute for unpaid and unaccounted household jobs related to food, water, fuel, etc. this paper re-affirms that women make an essential contribution to agriculture and household jobs across the total domestic agriculture production in Nepal. The context is very relevant based on sound data analysis available by the different reliable sources which depicts the real picture of farm workers particularly women in Nepal.

Keywords:

Agriculture, farm workers, poverty, profession, informal sector, rural economics, unaccounted, household jobs

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Mixed crop and livestock integrated farming is the characteristic feature of Nepal. e agriculture and widely prevalent in the country, irrespective of agro-ecological regions. In subsistence agriculture, both men and women involve significantly in sustainable agriculture production and management t. However, there exists a gender division of labour between men and women in farming as well as in household activities. Therefore, in gender relation there is defined role and responsibilities for men and women that has been socially accepted and practiced. In farming practice, men and women perform their task through mutual cooperation and interdependence to each other. Because of gender division of labour gender differentiation in participation persists in agriculture.

Gender analysis helps in understanding nature and extent of men and women's participation in various sector of agriculture such as crop, livestock, fisheries, and other related components. It also explains different roles and responsibilities of men and women such as who does what, where and when do they work, and for how long. Due to gender division in labour, differentiation in gender's work is obvious. The differentiation in allocation of labour, nature of labour, and extent of their use is influenced broadly by religion culture. social, economic, agro-ecological, and political situation of the country. However, a multiple factor.; are responsible for gender variation in participation in agriculture activities within each region and socio-culture parameters. Women's involvement is highest in the hills and mountains, in small and marginal households, and lower in the terai (plains) amongst high caste groups

Current status of labour market in Nepal

The main labour market challenges in Nepal stem from the slow pace of economic development almost three quarters of workers continue to earn a living in the agri. sector. Thus the vast majority of employment opportunities in the domestic labour market labour migration is the main option for thousands of youth Nepal is entering the labour market every year.

The current status of labour market in Nepal is shown by following table:

Key economic and labour market indicators

Table No.8

Particulars	F/Y 2005-06, 2012-13	2013-14
Real GDP (% change y-o-y)	4.0	5.2
Investment (% of GDP)	21.5	23.1
Consumer price (% change y-o-y)	10.0	9.1
	1998/99	2008
Employment (million)	9.4	11.7
Unemployment(million)	0.17	0.25
Labour force participation rate(%)	85.8	83.4
Male	90.2	87.5
Female	81.9	80.1
Urban	73.3	67.3
Rural	87.7	86.8
	1998/99	2008
Unemployment rate (%)	1.8	2.1
Male	2.0	2.2
Female	1.7	2.0
Urban	7.4	7.5
Rural	1.2	1.2
Share of employment in manufacturing(%)	5.8	1.6
Male	7.7	8.5
Female	3.9	4.9
Share of employment in agri. & forestry(%)	76.0	73.9
Male	66.8	62.1
Female	85.2	84.3
Share of paid employment in total employment (%)	16.0	16.9
Male	24.3	26.7
Female	7.7	8.3
Youth Unemployment rate (%)	2.4	3.5
Urban	7.6	13.0
Rural	1.6	2.1

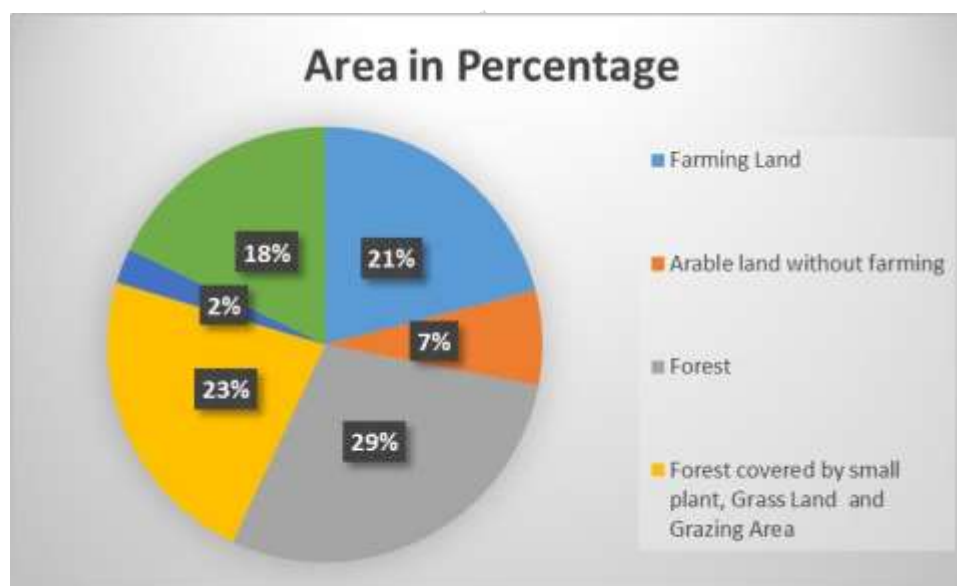
Economic Growth and contribution of agriculture sector in Nepal

Nepal last decade economic Growth in Nepal been relative low (in comparison to other low income countries) and highly dependent on service (figure I). At the same time volatility in agricultural outputs which still represent 33.7% of GDP (2013/14), translate into variability in aggregate growth rates. From the expenditure perspective, Nepal's economy is dominated by private consumption (fuelled by remittances). Which averages at around 90% of GDP (Nepal CBS Report 2013/14). According to the statistical report on Nepalese agriculture by Ministry of Agriculture, Govt. of Nepal B.S. 2066/67, some data are relevant for the study of research problem which are as shown following:

Table No.9
Land Utilization Status in Nepal (000 hact.)

Statement	Area in percentage
Farming Land	21.00
Arable land without farming	7.00
Forest	29.00
Forest covered by small plant, Grass Land and Grazing Area	22.60
Water covered Area	2.60
Other Area	17.80
Total	100.00

Source; A report by MoA/ N.B.S 2066/67



Continuing Dependence on Agriculture for Employment

Though the economy has shifted to being driven by the services sector (and from an expenditure point of view, consumption), agriculture continues to account for a significant share of output. The share of the primary sector in GDP stood at 35.3 percent in 2013/14, not much lower than the share in 2001/02 (37.9 per cent). The shares of the other sectors have moved in opposing directions: the share of industry has declined from 17.1 per cent in 2001/02 to 14.4 percent in 2013/14, while the share of services has increased from 45.1 per cent to 52.2 per cent during the same period. As seen in many other low-income countries, this could be argued to be a case of “premature deindustrialization”. Moreover, from an employment perspective, the vast majority of Nepalis remain dependent on agriculture for a living. The proportion of workers in the primary sector has fallen slowly from 76.0 per cent in 1998/99 to 73.9 per cent in 2008 (Figure 2). However, most of the decline is accounted for by changes in the share of male workers: in the case of women, the share has dropped only marginally from 85.2 percent to 84.3 per cent. In contrast, the share of employment in manufacturing has risen from just 5.8 percent in 1998/99 to 6.6 per cent in 2008, while the proportion of workers in the services sector reached 15.3 percent.

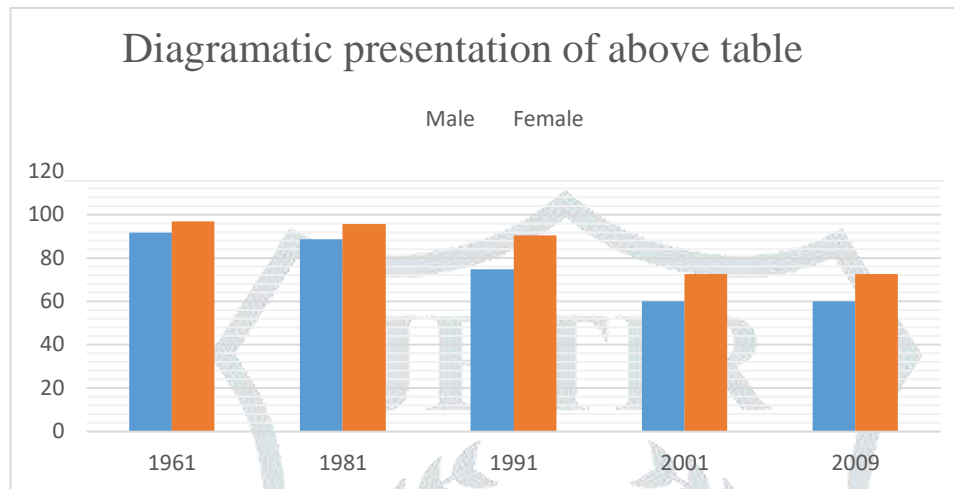
According to the 2008 Labour Force Survey, 2.14 million workers were employed in the non-agricultural informal sector, representing 69.7 per cent of workers outside agriculture (agriculture is almost entirely informal). This figure increases to 86.4 percent if all informal employment is included. Overall, there is an imbalance: output has shifted to the services sector, while the vast majority of people continue to rely on agriculture. For agrarian low income countries like Nepal, improvements in productivity in agriculture and the necessary transition of workers into the secondary and tertiary sectors

are critiquelements to promoting the creation of more decent work.

Population employed in Agriculture (Percentage)Table No. 10

Sex/ Year	1961	1981	1991	2001	2009
Male	91.7	88.7	74.9	60.2	60.2
Female	96.9	95.7	90.5	72.8	72.8
Total	93.8	91.1	81.2	65.7	65.7

Sources: A report on the CBS 2011



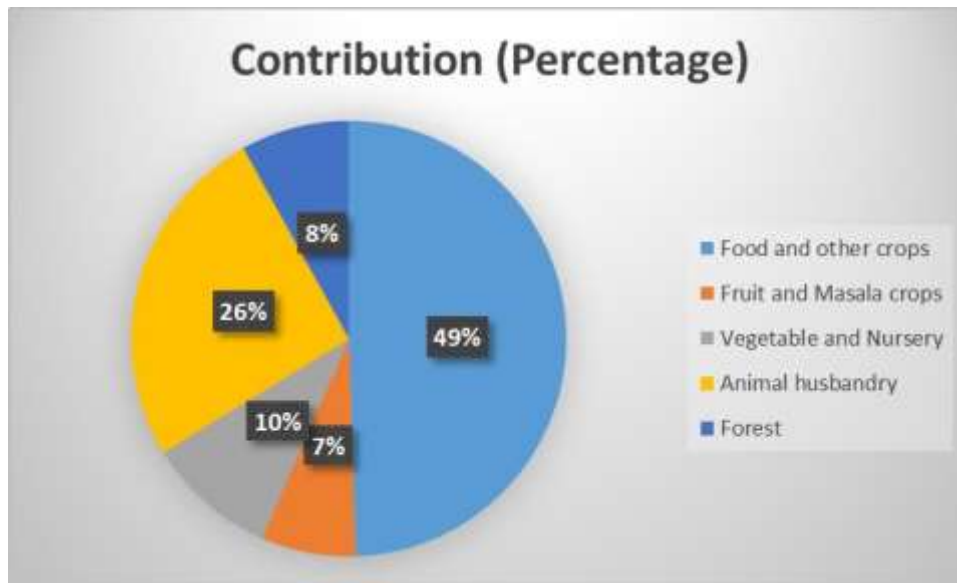
From the above report of CBS/N 2011, although the population of employment has been decreasing from 93.8 percent in 1961 to 65.7 percent in 2009 in agriculture sector, the difference of male and female participation in agricultural activities has been increasing from 5.2 percent to 12.6 percent. Even yet 65.7 percent population are employed in agriculture sector in which female employment in agriculture is more i.e 72.8% than male employment i.e 60.2%. Above statistics shows that the majority of people are still in agriculture sector. Agriculture is the main profession of Nepalese economy.

Contribution of various crops in total domestic agriculture production (in percentage) These are the various crops which are produced in Nepalese agriculture sector. Then contribution of such different crops in total agriculture production in Nepal is shown by following table.

Table No.11

S.No.	Statement	Contribution(%)
1	Food and other crops	49.49
2	Fruit and Masala crops	7.04
3	Vegetable and Nursery	9.71
4	Animal husbandry	25.68
5	Forest	8.07
	Total	100.00

Sources; A Report of CBS/N 2011

Diagrammatic presentation of above table by a pie chart

From the above report of CBS/N 2011, it is depicted that the food and other crops provide about 50% of total agriculture production. After that animal husbandry provide 2nd highest contribution i.e. 25.68% of total agriculture production. Similarly, vegetable and nursery, forest and fruit and masala crops contribution to total agriculture production is 9.71%, 8.07% and 7.04% respectively.

Brief introduction of the study Area

The present study is limited on Kanchanpur district of Mahakali zone. For the fulfillment of the objectives of the study two VDCs were selected from Kanchanpur district. The brief introduction about study area is as follows:

Introduction of Kanchanpur District

Kanchanpur district is located among Kailali district in the east, Champawat and Udham Singh nagar district of India in west, Dadeldhura district in north and Lakhimpur and Khiri district of India in south. Its area is 1610 K.M. and it is situated 176 metre to 1528 metre from sea level. It has one municipality (Bhim Datta Municipality) and 19 VDCs. It is divided into 11 Areas and 3 constituency areas (source: District fact sheet of Kanchanpur 2064). Total population of this district is 4,51,248 in which 216,042 are male and 235,206 are female population. Population growth rate in this district is 1.77 per year. Gender Ratio is 91.85 male per 100 female in Kanchanpur district. There are 82,152 households and the average size of household is 5.35 in this district (CBS report 2011, Govt, of Nepal). There are 72.63 percent people engaged in agriculture sector and 27.37 percent people are in non-agriculture sector in Kanchanpur. The population distribution by ethnicity, there are 27.18 percent Chhetri, 15.41 percent Brahman, 23.33 percent Tharu, 10.56 Dalit and rest are others in this district. According to report of district agriculture development office Kanchanpur 2010/11, the main agricultural production of this district are paddy, wheat and maize in food crops, potato and sugarcane in cash crops, fruits and vegetables and animal husbandry (A report of District Agriculture development Office, Kanchanpur 2010/11). The total land area of Kanchanpur district is 1,61,741 hector in which 59,532 (37%) hector land is available for agri. 88,200 (55%) hector land for target and rest of 14,009 (8%) hector for River lake. There is only 144,122 hector land or 26% of total agri, land is irrigated yet. The total literacy rate of district is 65.56% and female and male literacy is 53.62% and 79.5% respectively. Religiously 97.27% people are Hindus in the district, 15% people are Buddhist, 0.57% people are Muslims, 0.84% people are Christians and 0.07% people are belong to other religion. The main castes of the district are Pant, Bhatt, Karki, Joshi, Chand, Rawal, Paneru, Rana, Thapa, Saud, Mahar, Koli,

B.K., K.S., Bisht, Rai, Limbu, Gurung, Sarki, Dholi etc. For the study purpose the researcher had selected two VDC from this district which lies in rural area.(Distnct Profile of Kanchanpur 2065 BS).

Introduction of Chandani VDC

Chandani VDC lies to the 15 KM west of headquarter of Kanchanpur district It is situated in the east of Khatima India boarder, in the north of Dodhara VDC, in the south of Sharada Barrage, in the west of Mahendra nagar Municipality. It is situated between the mahakali and Jogabudha river which lies outside of Nepalese territory. There is no access of road from district headquarter of Kanchanpur. So that people are highly dependent in Indian market Khatima and Banbasa for their daily consumption goods and medical treatment. According to VDC Profile of Chandani 2067, total population of Chandani VDC is 26072 in which 12659 are male and 13413 are female. The number of total household exist in this VDC is 3427 in which male headed household are 2918 or 85 % and female headed households are 204 or 6 % (VDC Profile of Chandani 2067 B.S.).

Introduction of Pipaladi VDC

Pipaladi VDC situated in the east of Daiji VDC, in the south of Jhalari VDC, in the north of Beldandi VDC and in the west of Dekhatbhuli VDC in the center area of Kanchanpur district. This VDC lies 10 Km east from the headquarter of Kanchanpur district. It has covered 412.78 squire km in area. According to CBS/N report 2011, total population of pipaladi VDC is 17673 in which 8197 are male and 9482 are female. The number of total household exist in this VDC is 3243 in which male headed household are 3337 or 92 % and female headed households are 297 or 8 % . (VDC Profile of Pipaladi 2070 B S)

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