

Analysis of Food Security in Nepal: The Case of Karnali Province

Sushma Singh and Tek Jung Mahat***

** Mendel University in Brno, Czech Republic , surfsushma@gmail.com*

*** Masaryk University, Brno, Czech Republic*

Nepal, a developing mountainous country across the Himalayas, re-established the democratic process in 1990 and became the Federal Democratic Republic in 2008. Nepal faces challenges of dealing with various aspects of development - social-economic, environmental and cross-cutting issues such as climate change and food security more effectively and regionally.

This thesis assesses food security status in one of the most food-deprived regions in the country - Karnali and framed it in the context of new politico-administrative changes in Nepal and in the face of emerging challenges, such as climate change, globalization, and migration. This research has benefitted from earlier works of several government line ministries, UN agencies, private initiatives, and civil society organizations. Using the available data and information, I have developed an idea about poverty and food security status in the newly formed province 6, named as Karnali province.

The findings indicate that Nepal has witnessed significant progress in reducing poverty and improving food security over last three decades, and in many areas, relative to its neighboring countries, such as India, Bangladesh, Pakistan, and developing countries average. However, at the level of Karnali Province, the picture is just the opposite. Despite very less population density, the region has extremely limited per capita agricultural land available, the significant population has out-migrated in recent decades and land productivity is reduced due to abandoned cultivable lands, unplanned development, limited agriculture, deforestation and lack of innovation. Lack of transportation and market infrastructures has left the agriculture in this province far behind and the climate change as the emerging challenge has further threatened food security in the region.

As the implementation of federalization process accelerates, it is recommended that the Provincial governments define the boundaries, start actual data collection about agriculture and food security and promote locale-specific farming systems combining horticulture and animal husbandry.

Keywords: *adaptation; climate change; food production; food security*