

Looking for the Employment Abroad

Effects of Labour Migration on Rural Economy, Agriculture and Social Cohesion

A Case Study from Eastern Nepal



Ritu Raj Bhandari

Thesis submitted in partial fulfilment of requirements for the Master of Philosophy

Degree in Mountain Ecology and Human Adaptations



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List of Abbreviations

ADB/N	Asian Development Bank Nepal
CBS	Central Bureau of Statistics
CEDA	Centre for Economic Development and Administration
CNAS	Centre for Nepal and Asian Studies
DDC	District Development Committee
FAO	Food and Agriculture Organization
GIS	Geographical Information System
HMG	His Majesty's Government of Nepal
INGO	International Non Government Organization
MOLD	Ministry of Local Development
MOLT	Ministry of Labour and Transport
NGO	Non Government Organization
NIDS	Nepal Institute of Development Studies
NLSS	Nepal Living Standard Survey
NPC	National Planning Commission
NRA	Nepal Research Association
NRB	Nepal Rastra Bank
NRs.	Nepalese Rupees (Nepalese Currency, 1 US \$ is equivalent to approximately 70 NRs.)
PCO	Public Call Office
SFCL	Small Farmer Cooperative Limited
SFDP	Small Farmer Development Programme
SFs	Small Farmers
SLC	School Leaving Certificate
SPA	Seven Party Alliance
SPO	Sub Project Office
UiB	University of Bergen
UNDP	United Nation Development Programme
VDC	Village Development Committee

Glossary

Aadhiya	Sharecropping
Aailani gajja	Open land having no ownership
Aanshabanda	Equal division of father's property among sons
Aawadi	Fertile low lying field
Baithak kotha	Drawing room
Bandaki or byajmarani	Tenancy
Bidesh lane dadal	Foreign employment man-power agent
Bigha	Local land measurement nit (1 bigha is equivalent to 0.67 hectares).
Bikas	Development
Bikashe gai	Improved varieties cow
Chamre bhat	Fried rice
Chiya malik	Owner of the tea estate
Danda khet	Un-irrigated upland field
Dando	Upland
Dashain	Nepalese largest festival falls in Sep-Oct
Dhanimani	Wealthy People
Dudha chisyan Kendra	Milk chilling centre
Gairi khet	Low lying field
Galla walla	Army recruit agent
Gauma kam chhaina	No jobs available in village
Ghaderi or vitta	Residential plot (a piece of land for construction of house
Ghar	House
Gharbari	Homestead area or home surrounding field
Ghat	Crematory
Ghumti labour	Rotation labourer
Gramin mahila sahuma	Rural women group
Gundruk ko achar	Pickle of fermented and dried vegetables
Gurkhas	Nickname of Nepalese who join foreign army
Hali	Servant specially for ploughing

Hatbazar	Local periodic market
ID Walla	Migrants to Hong Kong and Singapore having birth ID
Jana uddha	Civil war
Kachi sadak	Earthen Road
Kammi	Artisans
Khaja	Breakfast
Kirtan	Hymn: religious songs of praise
Kuniu	Paddy stack or rick
Majduri	Unskilled labour work
Manjihadam	Head of Satar community
Matwali	Mongolian Caste (Limbu, Rai, Gurung and Magar)
Mazadur	Labourer
Mystri	Carpenter
Nepal Punarbas Company	Nepal Resettlement Company
Pahade	Nepalese migrated from hills
Pani nachalne	Untouchable caste (Kami and Damai)
Pareko belama sahagaune	Help someone in need
Pariwar	Family
Parma	Labour exchange
Raksi	Local wine
Sahuma bachat	Group saving
Sanchalan	Mobilization
Sanshare pooja	Worship of forest god
School sanchalak samiti	School management committee
Sel roti	Tihar special bread
Thap plot	Additional plot
Thekka	Contract
Thulo jat	Twice Born (Bhahman and Chhetri)
Thulo manchhe	Elite/big people
Tihar	Nepalese second largest festival falls in Oct-Nov
Zamindar	Landlord

Chapter - I

Introduction

1.1 Background

Nepal is one of the world's least developed countries. About 85% of the population depend on subsistence agriculture in rural areas. Poverty, unemployment, declining natural resources, and more recently the political instability are major reasons why foreign labour migration is an increasingly important source of income (Kollmair et. al., 2006:151).

In Nepal, much of early migrations were the result of push factors like excessive tax burden, exploitative agrarian relations and political instability. The more formal and temporary migration began after people started to work in the British army following the *Sugauli Treaty* that was signed on December 2, 1815. This Treaty permitted Britain to recruit *Gurkhas* for military service (Pant, 2006:32). Both the First and the Second World Wars created a huge demand for young army personnel from Nepal. In recent times, the scope for out-migration for military services has declined and more and more people have migrated for other types of job. It was only after the 1990s that policy makers and academicians began to fully acknowledge the importance of remittances sent by Nepalese employed abroad for enhancing the livelihoods of the households, including those in the rural regions (Ibid).

Late 1980s marks the new era of overseas labour migration from Nepal. During these years the demand for labour in the emerging economics in South East Asia increased substantially. The infrastructure development programs extended in West Asia also offered incomes earned through oil trade (Bhandari, 2003:8). On the other hand, in Nepal, there was extremely low level of employment generation, but still the labour force increased noticeably. In this situation, Nepalese government decided to promote and regulate employment of its nationals to overseas countries (Subedi, 2003:262). The assumption is “a country like Nepal, who has been suffering from serious problems of unemployment could be an effective medium to avail the opportunity of employment for the benefit of the country and its people” (MOLT, 1999:4).

There is no doubt that non-farm income provides a major contribution to household incomes in Nepal, while remittances (transfer money from individual members of the household working away from home) constitute an important element in that component of household income. Remittances from abroad also make a contribution to the local village economy (Seddon, et al., 2002:34). However, rapid growth of population and unemployment as well as decrease in crop production have made people's way of earning livelihood more complex in the eastern Tarai of Nepal. People were searching new strategies for their living or they are on the threshold between agriculture and new ways of earning.

In early 1990s, when foreign employment especially in Saudi Arabia had just begun some entrepreneurs entered Prithvinagar VDC (Village Development Committee) in search of suitable land for tea cultivation. The most important and attractive object for the investors was land, which was reasonably cheap during that time compared to other surrounding places. Secondly, The VDC was connected with the district headquarter by satisfactory gravel road and at that time it had communication facilities as well. Lastly, the land was reasonably suitable for tea cultivation. According to the local tea farmers, tea needs temperature around 20-30 °c, regular rainfall/irrigation and good drainage system. These sorts of things are available in this village because of monsoon rainfall and its slanting topography.

Local people grabbed this opportunity; many households sold their low productive land and paid for their travel to foreign countries for employment. The VDC is thus an example where foreign employment in recent years has increased more than ever before. Youngsters are sending money to their home village and investing in new house, land or may be other income oriented business. In contrast, agriculture production is decreasing and people are leaving their traditional occupation due to the enormous supply of labour force to the capital and nearby city as well as abroad. The tendency of dependence of rest of the family members upon remitted money is rising. Furthermore, villagers believe that the increasing trend of labour migration has brought some implications on social unity and integrity. Families are splitting up and interaction among people in the community is eroding gradually.

1.2 The Research Theme

Although Nepal has a very long history of labour migration and foreign employment, recently it has become one of the major phenomena among Nepalese youngsters. Several hundred thousand Nepalese are working abroad as skilled, semi skilled and largely as unskilled labourers in India, Gulf States, East Asian countries, and even in Europe, USA and Australia. One hundred and seven states have been declared open by Government of Nepal to send Nepali workers institutionally for foreign employment, and Russia has been a new destination among them (MOLT, 2006:6). Largest numbers of Nepalese workers are going to Malaysia, Qatar, Saudi Arabia and UAE in that order. The number of Nepali workers going for foreign employment from 15th November 2005 to 15th March 2006 has increased by 32.23% as compared to the same period of the previous year (Ibid). However, Kollmair (2006:151) claims that real numbers are several times higher than official statistics show. He further writes that (Ibid:153) considering the estimations for India and the Gulf States, the percentage of the total population absent from Nepal would be between 6.5% and 14.7%, compared to the officially recorded 3.3%.

On the external front, despite the political unrest and violence a surplus has been recorded in the balance of payments due to the increasing remittances (NRB, 2006:44). During the last few years, remittances have been an important avenue of support for family members remaining at home (Pant, 2006:34). The Nepal Living Standard Survey in nominal terms, average household income has grown by more than 80% from 1995/96 to 2003/04 due to foreign employment and remittances (CBS et al., 2000). Now, the amount of remittances has been more than 1.20 billion US\$ per year and it constitutes 18% of the total GDP of Nepal (Nepal Samacharpatra, December 9th, 2005). Therefore, now it is believed that the national economy of the country is enormously dependent upon remittances sent by Nepalese young people from abroad and the amount could be more than one year budget of Nepalese government.

On the other hand, most of the rural Nepalese villages are facing the problem of rare youth participation in development and social welfare. Farmers are facing low agriculture production due to the massive export of labour force abroad. Women are taking over the men's work and gender roles have been changed and are changing day by day. People say that labour migration (especially foreign employment) has brought some impacts in their

village and households. Immigrants have brought wasteful behaviours and western culture with them. Consequently, gradually social unity and integrity is breaking down. Joint families are splitting, properties and land are being fragmented, interactions inside families and among households are decreasing and new houses are constructed in the village where farmers previously used to grow grains. This study tries to focus on these relevant and emerging issues of Nepalese rural villages and farmers. It further attempts to find out consequences of the lack of youngsters in rural Nepalese village through foreign employment, and where they are investing this large sum of remittances. How far has it affected the local society and contributed to the rural development?

International labour migration from Nepal has been quite diversified in spatial distribution as well as in the areas of work. Presently, the diverse forms of labour migration range from military recruitment to domestic works and semi-skilled works in various countries of Asia, Europe and North America. A general tendency is evident with agricultural labour migration normally taking place towards urban areas and to distant places. Despite long history of international labour migration in Nepal, the available information is very sketchy and incomplete. Because of open border with India and lack of population registration system, it is difficult to determine the magnitude of labour migration (Subedi, 2003:253). Most of the recent researches (Kollmair et. al. 2006, Thieme 2006, Pant 2006, MOLT 2006, Kansakar 2005, Bhattarai 2005, Theieme and Wyss 2005, Wyss 2004, Thieme and Muller 2004, Gurung 2003, Graner et al., 2003, Adhikari 2001, KC 2003, Subedi 2003, Seddon et al. 2002, Regmi and Tisdell 2002, Seddon 2004, Gill 2003,) are either based on remittances amount, regularity and frequency, migration causes, pattern, trend and volume. So, this study further attempts to focus on other aspects of labour migration such as changing pattern of rural agriculture and economy as well as social and cultural impacts on local society in community and household level.

According to Jokisch (2002:525) migration causes labour scarcity. In most cases this is the cause of series of problems. These include (I) inadequate attention to agriculture leading to environmental degradation (II) deleterious effects on the cultural and social organization that sustain agriculture (III) poverty of agriculture innovation or a stagnant agriculture base and (IV) an overburdening of those who remain (usually women) with labour, interfering with the performance of all necessary agricultural task. Aase (1996:85)

believes that whether manpower is an individual asset or a communal household's asset when sold outside the village is subject to much negotiation. It seems that migrants try to impose the reality of dualism of production on the pattern of consumption in village, claiming individual disposal of wage earning and communal disposal of harvest. He further writes that the outcome of such disputes is accelerated household fission, which again effects land division and causes an increased urge for migration. In another case it is observed that labour migration is an indication that the family splits apart as the young move away and dissociate themselves from familial and traditional bondage (Stark and Lucas, 1988: 465). This study has tried to answer the question of how far this observation is applicable and valid in eastern Nepali villages.

In some other cases researchers have different views regarding labour migration and its effects. Thieme and Wyss (2005:59) write that in spite of the risks and difficulties involved, international labour migration in Nepal often contributes to sustainable livelihoods. On the contrary, Regmi and Tisdell (2002:76) have some negative findings in Nepal. According to them, in Nepal remittances do not seem to result in long term-capital investment in rural areas and so may not promote long-term development of these areas. In a Chinese case study (Cai, 2003:481) remitting behaviour is best seen as an outcome of an implicit contractual arrangement between migrant and family. According to Jokisch (2002:523) migration has neither led to agricultural abandonment nor have remittances been dedicated to agricultural improvements.

Ellerman (2005:621) contends that most remittances are spent on consumption, healthcare, education, land, and the like, but that there is little expenditure or investment in direct productive uses. In South Asia, households invest their remittances in the purchase of production assets or the funding of some form of enterprise in agriculture, manufacturing or other sectors usually only after all other demands (pay of debts, basic needs, medical expenses, improve the residential accommodation, education of children and so on) are met (Seddon, 2004:415).

According to Ghimire (2005:14) in Nepal farming households with migrant member are facing labour shortage due to the absence of household members. In another case (Bhandari, 2003:144) foreign employment has brought some demographic and socio-economic impacts. It has changed the sex ratio and dependency of labour force. This

study has tried to apply the above mentioned outcomes from different cases in the rural village of eastern Nepal and tried to see how far these things are applicable in eastern Nepali village.

Males are neglecting agriculture in order to find employment in foreign countries. Majority of the active males seem to be outside the village. It is very hard to obtain youth's participation in the community welfare, religious ceremony and other construction works. Development and innovative activities have been curtailed due to the labour supply abroad. Similarly, many studies have also shown that the out-migration has negatively influenced agricultural output (Palmer 1985, Zuider 1998, Weldegerima 1999, Ghimire, 2005: 78).

This study also attempts to explore the impact on local agriculture and economic development but in addition it also focuses on questions of social cohesion. By the huge flow of remittance, it is seen that the areas of investment have been increased and widened. How far is it applicable in Prithvinagar VDC? Do remittances contribute to local development and increase in agriculture production? Likewise, to what extent has labour migration and remitted money affected the social unity and integrity of the household and of the local community? This study tries to approach these research questions.

1.3 Objectives of the Study

The main objective of this study is to examine the effect of labour migration on local economy and social cohesion in eastern Nepal. The specific objectives are:

1. To examine the fields of remittance investment in the study area.
2. To analyze the impacts on agriculture, with a special focus on how local people cope with the scarcity of labour supply.
3. To analyze migration's effect on social cohesion.
4. To identify the causes, trends, volume and direction of migration.

1.4 Organization of the Thesis

This thesis is arranged in to eight chapters. Among them, first three chapters discuss the background of labour migration, research theme, theoretical and methodological approach.

Theoretical discussion is made in chapter two. In the beginning several classical migration theories are reviewed. These theories have given the framework and guideline for this study and literature review. Afterwards, theories associated with migrants and remittances investment and migrants and labour supply are examined. The reviewed theories have given the guideline for conceptualizing the remittance investment in the study area. Likewise, some other theories related to migration and their effects on migrants and place of origin were discussed.

Methodological approach is discussed in chapter three. Basically this chapter focuses on the methods and materials used for the collection of qualitative information and data. For the production of information, sample household survey and interview methods were used. Categorization of observation was done according to local knowledge. Due attention is given to find out the metaphors, traditional myths, narratives and proverbs associated with migration during interviewing and informal talks in my fieldwork.

In the fourth chapter, general overview of the study area and migration is given. Here, infrastructure and socio-economic setting as well as past and present migration pattern of the study area are discussed. Migration and remittances are analyzed in the fifth chapter. Volume, causes and direction of migration are also discussed in the same chapter. Here, area of remittance investment is discussed and observed theoretically. Besides, remittances contribution to the local economy, development and transformation of different capital forms are also analyzed.

Chapter six is concerned about the effects of labour migration and social cohesion. Further discussion is made about the influence of labour migration on social unity and integrity and how local people have perceived migration. Further, changing social role of women at home due to the massive flow of male out-migration is also discussed. At the end of this chapter, the effects or migration outcomes are theoretically discussed.

Agriculture and redistribution of land entitlement due to the labour migration is discussed in chapter seven. Here, focus is given for labour shortage and its impact on local agriculture. Main concentration is given to see how people are managing the agriculture labour scarcity. Questions like why people are leaving their fields barren, why agriculture is no more supportive for local people to feed their family, are discussed in this chapter. Special efforts are given to analyze the agriculture and redistribution of land entitlement.

The eighth chapter is the conclusion of the thesis. Theories are evaluated and summarize the discussion and findings of the study. At the end of this chapter, a short discussion is made on "rather labour migration is a good thing, brining development to the village, or whether is just produces dependence on international labour market".

Chapter - II

Theoretical Approach

2.1 Some Theories about Migration

The study of population migration has been a rapidly developing branch of several academic disciplines. Internal urbanization as well as international migration has attracted attention from many disciplines, “asking what are the causes of migration and what are its effects” (Aase, 1996:4). Thus, geographers, economists, sociologists and demographers do various types of migration studies. There are a number of explicit theories of migration, some of which are mentioned below:

Two famous papers of Ravenstein (1885 and 1889) are regarded as a starting point of migration theories. He postulated “eight laws of migration” in the nineteenth century. Ravenstein first paper presented at the Royal Statistical Society was based upon the British Census of 1881, and his second paper drew upon data from twenty countries. Ravenstein’s laws were empirically formulated, like“every stream of migration is paralleled by a counter-current, and the postulated conclusions were explained by reference to metaphors of centripatality and centrifugality” (Aase, 1996:4).

Stouffer (1940) has applied another theory of migration called “intervening obstacles”. He says that the flow of migration between two places is inversely related to the number of opportunities for the migrants to satisfy their needs (employment, housing etc.) then intervening between them. Variations of Stouffer’s model are still widely applied in migration studies. Geographers often use it explicitly (Ibid).

Zipf (1946) put forwarded another idea of migration. According to him, migration is similar to exchange of goods between different regions and thus it is directly proportional to the product of the population of the two regions involved and inversely proportional to the distance between the regions. Bogue (1959) viewed migration as an adjustment to economic and social change. Migration redistributes the population of any territory by transferring people from one place to another.

Lee (1966) formulated another important approach in literature of migration which reveals that migration is a result of “push” and “pull” factors at both origin and destination and the cost of overcoming the obstacles lying between the individuals as well as possible alternatives. The process of migration is influenced by factors associated with the area of origin and destination, intervening obstacles and personal factors. This model is within the framework of push and pull factors and it summarizes the contribution on migration by Ravenstein, Zipf, Stouffer, and others.

Todaro (1969) has given a significant contribution of the large volume of migration literature. According to him migration mechanism can be explained by the differences in expected rather than actual earning between origin and destination. In other words, focus should not be on absolute income, but on expected income. If incomes in town or abroad are expected to be higher than in rural areas, villagers may respond by migrating (Aase, 1996: 5). Todaro further explains that migrants are rational actors who adapt to an uneven geographical distribution of cost and utility or prior to migration people do more rational economic calculation like probability of obtaining work/job. This, plus actual income level, constitutes expected income.

Theory of relative deprivation is another theory popularly used by many migration researchers. In Stark’s view (Bhandari, 2004:479), relative deprivation is a feeling that develops from social inequality. Stark and his followers believe that a relatively deprived individual in his or her community has an incentive to migrate. According to Aase (1998) any group of people compares their living conditions with some other “relevant comparative group of reference”. If their own living conditions are evaluated as worse than the group it feels natural to compare with, the group will have a feeling of deprivation, not in absolute terms but relatively compared with the selected group of reference.

Most of these above mentioned traditional migration theories talk about migration causes like how and why migration takes place. According to Aase (1996:7) they all revolve around a delimited set of basic metaphors, such as those of push pull, centripetality-centrifugality, gravity-weight, stimulus-response, equilibrium-disequilibrium and elasticity-rigidity. Hence, the question is which theory will be best fitted or suitable for this study because my aim is to find out the use of remittances and impacts of labour

migration on local economy and social cohesion. Aase further (Ibid) says that since theories of migration are cultural constructions, it makes no sense to declare them true or false. What should be questioned is *the kind of knowledge they offer*. So, cultural interpretation of events and phenomena must somehow be added to the analysis if our aim is to grasp the specificity of economic systems.

In the subsequent paragraphs, I would like to discuss some relevant theories of labour migration, remittance investment and its impact on agriculture, migrants and local society. These reviewed theories are the theoretical background to this study.

2.2 Dual Labour Market Theory

“Dual labour market theory” is another economic approach but one which, in contrast to neoclassical economics and economics of migration, does not focus on rational choice of migrants (individuals or larger unites) but puts labour demand of modern industrial societies in the centre of the analysis (Massey et. al., 1993:440). It divides the labour economy into two parts, called the “primary” and “secondary” sectors. The distinction may also be drawn between formal/informal sectors or sectors with high/low value-added.

According to Piore (1979, cited in Massey et. al., 1993:440), the pull-factors in receiving countries, primarily a permanent need for foreign workers, not push-factors in source countries (e.g. low wages) are accountable for international labour migration. Piore further explains this need of foreign workers with the *dual labour market*, the segmentation of the labour market in industrial societies into a capital-intensive primary sector and labour-intensive secondary sector.

Jobs for the secondary sector are characterized by low wages, poor working conditions, high instability and very limited chances of upward mobility (Wyss 2004:22). These jobs, at the bottom of an occupational hierarchy, are rejected by locals, thus a constant deficiency of work forces for this sector evolves. The reason why it is difficult to fill the jobs in this sector is twofold. First, Piore (1979) asserts that people do not primarily work for money, but to maintain or accumulate social status and prestige. Jobs at the bottom of hierarchy, with low status and few opportunities of upward mobility are not appropriate with this wish. Second, employers cannot simply raise the wage of these jobs in order to

make them more attractive, because people expect wage to reflect the hierarchies of prestige and status (Massey et. al., 1993:441).

Migrants, in contrast, are ready to take these low-level jobs because (1) as target earners, they have an instrumental relation to their job and do not attach an identity building function to it, and because (2) the low wages are still high compared to the earning level in their original location (Wyss, 2004:23). Labour migrants normally conceive their migration as temporary and their job simply as a means to earn money. They separate the social role of work from their job, which allows them to do jobs they would never do at home. In fact, these jobs even raise their social prestige in their own reference group, at home. These advantages of migrants decline when they stay longer and start to build communities. Their time horizon expands and their reference group by and by shifts from the sending country to the receiving country, and consequently, expectations of social status rise (Ibid.).

In this study, dual labour market theory has made the foundation to identify the causes of labour migration through analyzing the accountability of capital intensive primary and labour intensive secondary sectors in dual labour market. According to the above discussion primarily people do not work for money but to accumulate social status and prestige because jobs for the secondary sector are characterized by low wages, poor working conditions, high instability and very limited chances of upward mobility. On the other hand, people prefer low level jobs because low wages are still high compared to the earning level in their original location. They separate their social role and status from their job and ultimately these low paying jobs even raise their prestige in their own reference group at home. On the basis of these theoretical backgrounds I have tried to observe why even people with having high social status at origin tend to migrate for low paid job.

2.3 Theories of Remittances

According to the literature on remittances, a number of theories have emerged to explain the remittance investment areas and causes behind the migrants' decision to send funds (cash and goods) to their relations back home. At every point in time, the successful migrant in the foreign country saves. Subsequently, the migrant wants to know how (in

which assets) and where (in which country) to accumulate his wealth. The home country is the obvious place to invest, at least part of his assets, by purchasing property, land and financial assets, among others (Pant, 2006:23). According to Pant (Ibid), remittances can vary based on the number of household members that migrate and the poverty status of the receiving household, although it has been shown that poorer households obtain a larger proportion of their income from remittances than do non-poor ones. The related theories are mentioned below.

2.3.1 Theory of Implicit Family Loan

This theory is postulated by Poirine (1997) and it talks about migrant's remittance behaviours. He believes that the remitting behaviour of migrants is best explained in terms of an "implicit family loan" because evidence from South Pacific migrations seems to suggest that the implicit loan theory, in many cases explains better remittance behaviours, remittance flows, and remittance uses, than the "altruistic" "self-interest", or "co-insurance" theories (Ibid:606). The remittances of migrants for their educational training and migrating endeavour in the initial phase, followed by loans to the younger members of the family in a later phase. According to the loan repayment theory the family invests in the education of the migrant and usually finances the costs of migrating (travel and subsistence costs in the host country). This is the loan element of the theory. The repayment parts happen after the migrant settles in the foreign country and his income profile begins to rise over time and he comes in a position to begin repaying the loan (principal and interests) back to the family in the form of remittances (Pant, 2006:24). The theory further explains that decrease in remittances should not occur over time because as soon as the migrant repays the family's loan, the migrant then starts to lend to the younger members of the family in order to finance their education cost (Regmi and Tisdell, 2002:78).

2.3.2 Theory of Implicit Familial Contractual Arrangement

In this theory Stark (1991, cited in Regmi and Tisdell, 2002:77) believes that the remitting behaviour of a migrant can be explained in terms of an implicit familial contractual arrangement" between a migrant and their family involving many aspects, such as education of the migrants, migration itself, coinsurance, and inheritance. The

family bears the cost of education and of migration, insures the risk of migration and passes on an inheritance to the migrants as part of its obligation in the implicit familial contract. Migrants on the other hand, remit a certain portion of their savings to the family as part of their obligation (Ibid).

2.4 Migration and Farming System

A farming system is a complex arrangement of soil, water, crop, livestock, labour and other resources and characteristics within an environmental setting that the farm family manage in accordance with its preferences, capabilities and available technologies (Chapagain, 2003:6). Agriculture can be studied in a number of ways, and even the simplest farm comprises a large number of components and types of relations among them. One sensible response to this complexity is to dissect agriculture into component parts and types of relations in order to study each separately (Turner and Brush, 1987:12). According to their definition

A farming system is any level of units(s) engaged in agriculture production as it is wedded in a social, political, economic, and environmental context.....

A farming system approach describes the unit(s) in its context and/or explores some characteristics of the units (s) in terms of all or parts of the context (Turner and Brush, 1987:8).

A single farming system is complex and comprises several subsystems. Ruthenberg (Turner and Brush, 1987:13) describes these as a “hierarchy of system” and identifies three important sub-systems: mechanical, biological and human. Any of these sub-systems can be studied independently. From the literature on agricultural research in general, three major sub-systems can be identified: human, environmental and genetic. The human subsystem focuses on the social components of agriculture such as labour intensity, land tenure systems, landuse, communication and diffusion of innovation. Environmental subsystem focuses on the environmental components of agriculture such as climates, soil, water and land types. Similarly, genetic sub system focuses on the genetic components such as genotypes and phenotypes of crops and animals. Turner and Brush (Ibid) say that the primary concern of these systems has been to mobilize land, labour and other resources for production. Furthermore they said that land and labour are universal resources in farming systems. In this study since my focus is to identify the

effects of labour shortage in agriculture, I have major concerned with the human aspects of farming system i.e. labour intensity and availability in local agriculture. This human aspect of mobilizing resources can be examined within four different fields. These are:

I) Custom and Rules

All farming societies have customs that organize and regulate the use of land and labour for crop production (Turner and Brush, 1987:15). It may exist on both formal and informal levels. The systems of rules determine the land tenure. “Control” and “Access” are the two aspects of land and tenure rules. Control implies permanent ownership to use land and access refers to the temporary access. Control guarantees the access to land, while temporary access may be attained by payment of rent or shares of the production to the landowner. According to Turner and Brush (1987:16) the distinction between control and access is usually indicative of stratification and inequality in the distribution of land.

I have tried to find out both formal and informal customs which have important roles to regulate and organize the land and labour in local agriculture. During fieldwork I have noticed that people exchange labour in peak agriculture system. They have their own customs and traditions for labour exchange called *parma*. How people have managed the changing land tenure system is also discussed through control and access of land and tenure rules in the study area.

II) Institutions

There are several formal and informal institutions such as households, kinship group (clan), community etc. Institutions were developed and designed to regulate the customs and rules for mobilizing land and labour. In most traditional agriculture societies, the household is a primary unit of production and consumption. The size of the household determines the amount of labour available and necessary for production. Landholding rights are generally reserved into the household rather than individual. So, the decisions on landuse, labour intensity and availability are usually taken by the household rather than by more general institutions, such as the community.

III Population

Population size, density, structure and changes are the other important aspects to understand farming system. In subsistence agriculture system, agriculture production is for the household consumption. Land and labour are strongly related to local demographic conditions. On the other hand, in commercial or market agriculture systems, local demography may not directly affect the production targets. But it can play the role of crop selection, scheduling and so on. Hence, the relationship between population change and agriculture is very important in farming system studies. In this study local farmers are facing the problem of labour scarcity due to the massive flow of local youths abroad and to other parts of Nepal for employment. I have focused on labour sectors and tried to see how migration of local youths has affected the local agriculture production and farming system.

IV) Technology

The technology refers to the knowledge and application of new innovative invention in the farming systems (Turner and Brush, 1987:21). It refers to the level and type of inputs such as chemical fertilizers, pesticides, irrigation, seed varieties, and tractors, etc. (Chapagain, 2003:7). All farming systems are dynamic in that they require constant monitoring of the environment and technology, and adjustment to meet goals. The new innovative inventions and technologies in agriculture improve the farming system and thus, changes in farming systems can occur. In that sense all farming systems are equally modern, and innovation and invention are inherent parts of all farming systems (Turner and Brush, 1987:20). Technology can be used for site selection, clearing, burning, tillage, slope modification, managing moisture through modern irrigation. They further write that technology can also control loss from the system and provide for post-harvest storage and processing (Ibid). In this study I have discussed the question to what extent technology is applied in rural agriculture of eastern Nepal to deal with labour scarcity and increase production.

Changes in one of these above mentioned components effects to rest of the components of subsistence agriculture. As a result whole farming system can be changed. Therefore, I have applied farming system approach to identify the effects of labour migration in local agriculture through discussing sub-system of human aspect that is, customs and rules, institutions, population and technology in the local context.

2.5 Theory of Private Gain and Social Loss

Many recent empirical data on rural areas of male out-migration point to declining agricultural output, at least of subsistence crops and worsening income distribution. Palmer (1985:3-4) has argued that the out migration of male labour from rural areas results into 'Private Gain' and 'Social Losses'. Social loss is described as the loss of national production and greater inequality of income distribution and private gain is described as the net gains received by a migrant. The agricultural change could be seen in the subsistence farming system if the resources sent by migrants are not properly invested in agriculture. This is my major focus to see how labour migration has affected the local agriculture and how local people have maintained the labour/land ratio in the study area. Palmer argues that the out migration of males from the rural areas reduces the ratio between household labour and land ratio if the remittances are not earmarked for hiring substitute labour. Thus, the proper prioritization of remittances in agriculture input becomes a matter for concern. The input on farming system could be observed accordingly to how the households manage and spend the remittances.

Palmer (Ibid) further argues that the use of remittances to maintain agricultural output is irregular and inconsistent. The household consumption and off farm expenses, especially school fees, appear more significant than support of agriculture output levels. It is clear that in the absence of a new government policy there is no noticeable investment in higher agriculture output. Available evidence on the proportion of remittances used for non-productive purpose also suggests that very few take this opportunity for improved agriculture. The remittance flows in the rural areas increase the expenditure on daily household needs. So, much of remittances go into family support and household requirements. The family pays less attention towards agricultural activity and that tends towards the declining of agriculture.

2.6 Theory of Household Fissions

Household fission is split of extended household. It occurs when a male member goes outside home for employment and starts to save substantial amount and does not share his all income with his other brothers living at home (see figure 2.1 below for early stage of household fission). According to Aase (1996:86) "household fission is a process

involving successive steps from marriage to division of the land.” The speed of the fission process depends upon the relationship among the women. If the wives of the brothers make friends to each other, fission is delayed; otherwise they will insist on their husband to make a separate house for them.

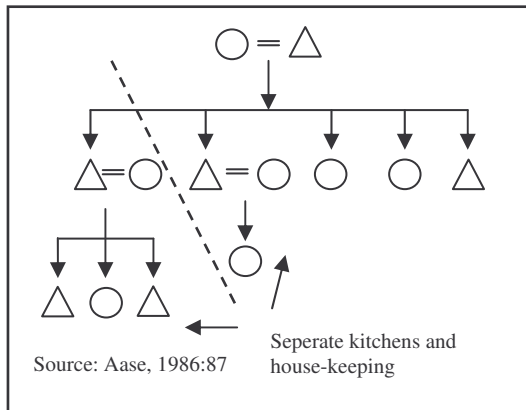


Figure 2.1: Early stage of household fission

At the beginning, whole family takes a collective decision to send a male member outside home. In nuclear family, only adult man goes outside and the land is rented on sharecropping. In extended households having several adult men, other arrangements are required. How arrangements are made? It is a very important question for this study and I have tried to see how households take a decision to send their young male. Aase

(2996:90) describes an example from Gujar Pind Village, Pakistan. According to him, one of the brothers takes employment in a Pakistani city and saves money for future migration aboard. His missing labour in the farm is fulfilled by other male members at home. Later, when he succeeds to migrate in Gulf State, his brothers living at home in Gujar Pind cultivate the jointly held land and look after his wife and children.

Once he secures a high paying job, he starts to save money. After saving substantial amount of money aboard, the migrant compensates for his lost labour by sending money and gifts to the household. As a result, the household becomes wealthy judged by local standards and starts enjoying expensive foreign made household amenities like Japanese tape-recorder, television set, motorbike etc. And gradually they convert the old sun-dried clay house into a new brick house.

After some time, the migrant does not send all his salary to his home. He saves larger portion in his private bank account and sends nominal portion of his salary which is still good enough to make his family in Pakistan happy. So, the migrant succeeds to keep good relationship with his remaining members of the household. But, his brothers and father have no access and claims to his saving amount. On the other hand, his remaining

brothers look after his family and work hard in the field hoping that ultimately their migrated brother will share his wealth with them.

Aase (1996:91) writes that some migrants do share their earnings, but mostly they keep their bank account outside the reach of the other members of his family. He further writes that “in either case the migrant himself has the last word in disposing of it. If agreement is not reached as to continue the arrangement, the migrant holds the ultimate sanction. He may at any time claim his share of the land and join the ranks of absentee landowners, leasing his land to others. If this happens then his brothers lose his support.” Afterwards brothers living at home fear that the day will come when migrant brother returns and claims his share of the farm. So, ultimately brothers living in a single house start to live separately and household fission occur.

Theory of household fission seems applicable and relevant to identify the social cohesion in this study. It provides the theoretical background to know how household arrangements are made to send young male members abroad. How do migrants compensate for their lost labour? Where are remittances invested? How does the migrant balance and hide his saving? And, most importantly how brothers living happily in an extended family lose each other’s support and family divides its land?

By the above mentioned brief theoretical background on migration and labour market segmentation, I have tried to see the present labour migration situation, its causes, trend, volume and direction in my study area. Major concentration of this study is to examine the field of remittance investment and to analyze the impacts on agriculture, with a special focus on how local people manage the scarcity of labour. Further, focus has been given to see the social unity and integrity as social cohesion in chapter six. I shall try to see to what extent theories related to remittances as well as theory related to social cohesion are applicable in Prithvinagar VDC. Similarly, through farming system approach, I will try to analyze how decreasing labour availability has changed the local farming system.

Chapter - III

Methods and Materials

3.1 Introduction

Basically this research talks about the effects of labour migration on local economy, agriculture and social unity and integrity. Focus is given to the qualitative techniques to find out the information that is always set in a specific context. So far quantitative data is concerned, household survey was carried out and the data are analyzed in order to understand the socio-economic background of the study area, migration and remittance investment.

3.2 Selection of the Study Area

When we talk about the research topic and issues in geography, it has really a wide scope both in human and natural sciences. However, from the very beginning of my M. Phil. study here at University of Bergen, I was very much interested to conduct my research in Nepal about labour migration because, though international labour migration has very long history in Nepal, since early 1990s it has been a preferred and popular livelihood options among Nepalese youngsters. Most of the recent researches (Adhikari 2001, Theieme and Wyss 2005, Wyss 2004, Subedi 2002, Seddon, Adhikari and Gurung 2002, Regmi and Tisdell 2002, Seddon 2004, Gill 2003, Seddon et.al. 2001, Gurung 2002, Adhikari and Gurung 2004, Ghimire 2005) are either concentrated in the Central, Western and Far-Western regions of the country, or conducted nationwide. So, I chose Prithvinagar VDC (village development committee) from the very eastern part of Nepal.

It lies in the south-eastern end of Jhapa district and a few kilometres away from Indo-Nepal border (see map 4.1). The other reasons for this choice are three-fold, including the village's suitability for migration research, the possibility to use synergies from previous researches, as well as practical reasons. Firstly, the selected area is my home VDC where I was born and grew up. I am closely related to the study area and to large extent aware of the local problems. Secondly, the VDC has very large size of young adult population and it was chosen for the outstanding importance of labour migration as livelihood

strategy of its inhabitants and its effects on local economy, agriculture and everyday life of local settlers. This aspect has not been included in this VDC by any other researchers.

Thirdly, Prithvinagar is a planned re-settlement VDC launched by HMG/Nepal in 1970/71(Kansarkar, 1979:185). At that time new fertile land had supported the re-settlers. According to the VDC profile (2006), the population has increased more than threefold but agricultural production has been reduced drastically. Still, there is not any irrigation facility. Unemployment is also increasing as an emerging problem along with the increasing population. Therefore, the young generations are being compelled to migrate to Kathmandu and major Indian cities and other regions of the world (West Asia, East & Southeast Asia, Europe and North America) as unskilled and semi-skilled labourers by pledging or selling their land to *dhanimani* (wealthy people) or *chiya malik* (owner of the tea estate) in high interest (even up to 36% per year) and low price. Therefore, the land distributed by *Nepal Punarbas Company* (Nepal Resettlement Company) has become unequally distributed and fragmented. The issue has been vital and its impact on local households, their rural economy and agriculture is far-reaching.

Last but not the least, another important cause for the selection of the study area was peace and security, which is very important for a good quality research. The whole country was largely trapped with Maoist insurgent activities and the security situation was deteriorating especially after 11th November/2002, when emergency was declared in the country. While I was writing term paper for my fieldwork, there were rumours and news in several Nepalese Magazines that Maoist and all leading mainstream political parties were going to declare a massive strike and procession against King's autocracy from the 1st of April 2006, until King accepted people's sovereignty. But, fortunately, my study area was less affected from Maoist *jana yuddha* (civil war) and any other political activities. Security situation was relatively satisfactory there.

3.3 Getting Inside the Field and Difficulties

When I was about to move to Nepal for my fieldwork, as already mentioned, there were a number of rumours and news in most of the leading Nepalese magazines and newspapers that very soon (probably from 1st March, 2006) Maoist and SPA¹ were going to launch

¹ SPA (Seven Parties Alliance) refers to the mainstream political parties of Nepal

nationwide strike and procession against King, his monarchy and autocracy. Since I had ticket for 27th March to Nepal, obviously, from the very beginning of my field study I had lots of pressure and worries like whether I could be able to complete my work in peaceful and friendly environment or not? How long the so called massive nationwide strike would last and what would happen in days to come? I travelled to Nepal with really huge challenge and uncertainties.

Five days after my arrival at Kathmandu, the general strike started. As days were passing, people started to gather round with their respective parties' flags, banners, posters and placards. The mass was increasing dramatically and the procession took its pace after 2-3 days. All the shops and banks remained closed. After a few days even bureaucrats and most of the organizations supported the strike. The civil society had already set out against king. Government imposed daylong curfew many times against demonstration. The security situation was deteriorating day by day and numbers of public casualties were increasing. Therefore, before the procession took its full form, I thought, I must leave the capital. Meanwhile, I got a phone call from my mother. She was deeply concerned about my security and I flew to my home where I had to conduct my fieldwork.

After nineteen days, when King agreed to return all his power to the people and accepted the people's sovereignty, the protest ended with people's victory against autocracy. Even in my village, people gathered and marched for celebration. As a local youth, I took part in the victory rally. However, for most of the local people I was not familiar because since last 12 years I was living in Kathmandu for my study. So, in rally, many people were watching me curiously. Meanwhile, a boy came near to me and said can I have your good name please? It was right time for me to get inside among the local people and villagers.

According to Aase (1997:1) the goal for any field researcher is to be able to go behind the scene and get access to study processes that are hidden to the casual observer. After having some conversation, "I said I am here for my fieldwork and going to write a book about labour migration and its effects". Luckily, the boy was a returned migrant from Dubai (UAE) and my fieldwork informally started with a small talk to him. Gradually, the political situation became normal in the village.

However, still people had lots of suspicions against me and my work. People perceived me in many ways according to their position and knowledge in the village. Somebody said I am a government employee, some others said I am a NGO/INGO worker and some even guessed me as a spy of Nepalese Army. At the same time I heard a gossip in the village that Maoists were going to enumerate the local youths to recruit in their army. As a result, people's guess became stronger and during sample survey even some people guessed me as a Maoist cadre and try to avoid me. So, initially, I had to identify myself, many times changed my roles according to the situation and tried to convince my respondents that the purpose of my visit was academic and nothing else. For some respondents it was difficult to convince but for many I was successful. In general, largest proportion appreciated my work and promised to help me.

After a week of my fieldwork, one local Maoist leader came to me and asked whether I have permission from their party to conduct my research. He said I must have their permission because according to him the area was under their hold. On most of the visits, when I reached to the respondents' households some of them assumed me as an agent from courier or from "Western Union Money Transfer"² and asked me whether I have brought their money, letter or parcel from abroad or not. Therefore, during my entire fieldwork many times my role changed from researcher to local boy, guest to friend and Maoist cadre to a postman or an agent for "Western Union Money Transfer". My role was a kind of negotiation between me and my respondents and according to the situation I tried to play my best-fit roles to get inside the field and to understand the real side of informants' life world.

² "Western Union" is the world's premier international consumer money transfer system with more than 245,000 locations in over 200 countries reliable way to send money, person-to-person, country-to-country within minutes. In this system, normally the sender pays in the currency of the host country and the recipient will receive pay out in their country of residence. The sender brings the money to any Western Union agent, fills out a short form, pays the service fee, and receives a receipt with password. The sender then informs the receiver of the transfer.

The receiver goes to any Western Union agent, provides identification and immediately gets paid out in cash after approving his identity and password. Western Union has many branches in most of the urban areas of Nepal and it has been a trusted name for all Nepalese to send money to their home.

The researcher's work itself is problematic as it progresses in different phases. In the case of the present study, various problems were faced. I would like to explain one genuine example here. I had given identification to my selected samples by the name of their household heads. When I began my field visit for the sample survey it became very difficult to find out my sample households. Since my study area was a planned VDC, settlements were compact and most of the roads and houses were constructed almost in a similar way. It thus became very difficult for me to find out the particular respondent's household. Villagers were not familiar with the proper name of the household's head. They usually called their neighbours by their relation, nickname or house number. I had to return without any visit quite a few times. However, in the next attempt I took help from my local friend and entered the village again for my research.

Delicate topics such as income, remittances investment, loan, and family matters were touched in the interviews. Sometimes, people were not keen to deliver details when the questions regarding their income and debt were raised. With a good introduction of my work, and myself assuring that I would not pass on the data to the public agencies or to their neighbours then it was possible to mitigate this problem to a great extent. Their willingness to give clear statements also depended on who else was present with the respondent at the time of interview. It happened several times that I could not advance very far into the subject or even been rejected at the beginning. This was the case in those households whose members were recently denied visa or expelled soon after having left their homes. In these cases, some respondents denied for interview. During fieldwork I realized that this was caused because people were either ashamed or took this incident as a failure and connected the event with their social prestige. However, complete non-response was not found after convincing that the research has just academic interests and individual privacy will be maintained strictly.

Another problem I faced is regarding the differences in defining "household" and "family". I wanted to obtain data about all individuals living together including those non-residents who contributes to a pooled income, the migrant. Asking people about the number of household members, it became clear that they use another definition. They mentioned those of the close patrilineal family including daughters married out as well as married sons living in their own houses. In some cases, even son-in-laws and their children were mentioned as a family member. This forced me to ask again, especially

when I noticed “suspicious” things, such as little children playing around the house, when no children of that age had been listed, or when daughters older than around 18 were mentioned, where the chance is that they were already married and hence not living in their parents’ house anymore. Fortunately, I came to know this fact very early after having 2-3 household interviews. Otherwise, my quantitative data regarding household members could have suffered from low reliability.

Some people were very reluctant to give their information particularly about remittances investment whereas some did not want to disclose any information at all to other persons. During my fieldwork I came to know that some people invest their money for prospective migrants in very high interest. But during interview, they refused such investment and told that they do not have money for investment. During the field visit I even felt several sad experiences. Some respondents became nostalgic and grieved by the memory of their emigrated member who lost all his property and life for the sake of foreign employment.

3.4 Power Relations and Changing Roles

According to Linton (1936:114) a role represents the dynamic aspect of a status or when someone puts the rights and duties which constitute the status into effect, he is performing a role. Doing a fieldwork means being in a place that involves the negotiation of complex power relations between researcher and researched (Staehli and Lawson, 1994, Scott et al, 2006). England (1994) sees the fieldwork as a dialogical process in which power relations between researcher and researched structure the research situation. In terms of gaining access to real side of particular sites and communities, it is important not only to whom the researcher interacted but also it is most important what role(s) he/she takes during the fieldwork (Poudel, 2006:15). Power relation between researcher and researched is determined by researcher status and his possible different roles during fieldwork which ultimately determines the interaction between research and researcher. Now, I had a big challenge to set up my role to get access to the back-stage information.

Many times I had to introduce myself as a local boy or son of local high school teacher. As a good high school teacher, my father is well known among youngsters. Some other people know him as a successful small tea and dairy farmer. If respondents did not recognize me or tried to avoid me or suspect me as a Maoist cadre, then I tried to

introduce myself as a son of local high school teacher or son of local small tea/dairy farmer. If they knew me then I introduced myself as a student of Bergen University. Among friends and neighbours I worked as a local boy, a student, a friend and a guest.

Status building is the first and the most important task of fieldwork. Without entering into the local set of statuses no good and reliable fieldwork can be done. With changing status, the role expectations on behalf of the information change and the real process of data collection can start (Chapagain, 2003:19). According to Linton (1936:113), a social person of any individual means the sum total of all the statuses which he occupies. It represents his position with relation to the total society. Actual behaviours of a person choose to play out of his/her status is role.

Depending upon the situation, I introduced myself and changed my roles. After having good introduction most of the villagers treated me as a guest, good and successful local boy, student, researcher and son of local teacher and farmer. Obviously, it consumed my valuable time but it made the relationship stronger with my respondents. The renewed relationship made the respondents more open, established symmetrical power relationship between me and my respondents which helped me to acquire more information for my research. I tried to play as many roles as possible to obtain the real side of informants' life world.

3.5 Data Collection

The quantitative data in this study are collected through a sample survey conducted in Prithvinagar VDC, complemented with key informant interviews with relevant actors and experts in May and June, 2006. So far the interviews with experts are concerned I got some opportunities to meet with Nepalese migration experts in Kathmandu and during visit I had some related discussions on how labour migration is affecting the rural Nepalese society and local economy with special attention to the area of remittances investment.

My first task was to conduct a sample survey in order to obtain an overview of quantitative data about labour migration, remittances investment, agriculture and other socio-economic aspects in the village. One of my local friends helped me during

fieldwork. I had then in-depth semi structured interviews with members of selected households of Prithvinagar VDC. During my fieldwork, other necessary help was taken from local people and being a local boy myself, I did not use any interpreter. Besides, other secondary data were collected from District Development Committee (DDC), Village Development Committee (VDC), National Planning Commission (NPC), different ministries, relevant articles, journals and published and unpublished reports.

3.6 Sample Survey

How “household” is to be defined, whether or not the household is a useful analytical concept or it is all only a question of terms, is controversial. The household is a basic unit of analysis in many microeconomic and government models. For statistical purpose in the United Kingdom, a household is defined as “one person or a group of people who have the accommodation as their only or main residence and for a group, either share at least one meal a day or share the living accommodation, that is, a living room or sitting room (Rowland and Gatward, 2003:8.)

Households may be defined as “identifiable groupings based on some form of kinship relations within which people live” (Agergaard, 1999:101). According to Goss and Lindquist (1995:328) households are said to be “the primary organizational unit for social reproduction of labour allocation, income-pooling and collective decision making”. In the case of labour migration, for instance, the assumption of discrete households (co-residence) is inappropriate. Although labour migrants are living elsewhere over a shorter or longer period of time, they keep their primary loyalty to a particular household and contribute to its income (Wyss, 2004:58). In this study, in some cases for instance married sons who have left the parents’ house, contribute to a pooled income and are consequently considered as family members. Likewise, in a few other cases, son-in-law who sends his money to his father-in-law’s house is considered as a family member because in his absence his wife is living in her natal house. So, during my fieldwork I applied Lindquist (Ibid) definition to define a *ghar* (household refers to *ghar* in Nepali term). This seems to me the best approximation to define the unit for obtaining household data. The information of total *ghar* of the study area was obtained from the Village Development Committee Office. Since the VDC is a planned resettlement and government had distributed equal land to all the household, samples were homogeneous

in terms of landholding. Therefore, of the total 2795 households of VDC, only 50 sample households were selected for the household survey. These all samples were collected through simple random sampling procedure from entire nine wards. Sampling was done through sample table.

For the household survey, a standardized questionnaire was prepared. Initially, it was in English but after a couple of household visits, I changed it in Nepali because one of the respondents was interested to see the questionnaire. I recorded the demographic composition of the households as well as socio-economic data such as respective levels of education, total annual income and current occupations. Additionally, the causes of migration and its history of every household's members was registered, including past and present migration, each with an indication of the destination. To get the information about remittance investment, informants were asked about the area of remittances expenditure, investment, its disposition as well as household's assets. Finally questions were asked about past agriculture history and present agriculture and land holding pattern.

Social situation refers to the context in which the interaction takes place, including the time (of the day, of the week, in terms of seasonal cycle, etc.) and location in which the interview transpires (Briggs, 1996:41). Moving from house to house, I tried to meet the villagers at their homes, unannounced. If not possible to meet at first visit, I tried to meet them next time in a suitable location (local tea shop, tavern or their own house again). Mostly, I tried to meet them in the morning or evening because it was the beginning of monsoon and people were either busy for rice seedling or preparing fields for rice planting. Some people were even busy in storing food, fodder and fuel for rainy season. So, either morning or evening was the best suitable time for me to meet my respondents and to avoid the scorching sun. During visit, normally, people called the household head, the oldest and senior active male to answer my questions. If he was out or presently abroad, which was often the case, I talked to the wife of the household head or the migrant. If nobody was capable of answering the questions, I tried to meet them another time.

Most of the time, people brought out chairs or sitting mats and the interview was held in front of the house in a cosy and friendly environment. Sometimes people even offered tea and took me to their living room for interview after having good introduction and

mentioning my work and sometimes after telling my father's name. As a result during survey I got some opportunities to see the household's amenities with my own eyes.

Occasionally, the respondent had to stop for some domestic work. For example, a mother had to hold back a child who was running away or a man had to welcome a guest who had just arrived. It also frequently occurred that the respondents continued to do their domestic work during the interview, for example washing the dishes or dressing the children or milking their cow and working in cow-shed. Many times I had to stop my interview because visitors or neighbours were around when I started my interview. Mostly they were only watching and listening but sometimes giving their commentary. Of course this had influence on the statements of the respondents, because a returned migrant may not dare to say how much he earned when his neighbour is around or a women might not speak freely about how she experienced the migration of her husband or how much money her husband sent when her father-in-law or neighbour was listening.

3.7 Selection of Informants for Qualitative Interviews

Due to the fact that certain people know certain things better than others, the knowledge and views of different actors and stakeholders had to be included. So, representatives of different groups of people were interviewed. These groups were the following:

- Migrants (returnees and prospective migrants) and their family members
- Non-migrant families and returnees not planning to migrate again
- Key informants of village matters (former VDC and ward chairperson, manager of local cooperative, head teacher of the local high school, local senior people, shopkeepers, leader and social workers)
- Labour migration researchers

The first group is of course the migrants themselves and their family members. They can provide information such as how the decision was made for migration and who finally decided that a family member can leave home. The youngsters (both returnees and prospective) can provide the most comprehensive and accurate information about the causes and narrative of migration because returnees have past experience and prospective knowledge about present migration situation. Why they went outside home for work? How did they manage to go? How much money does it cost to go aboard? How much did

they earn and how much did they send to their home? Where they have invested their money? These sorts of informations can be traced out from returnees. Likewise, remaining family members can explain about the scarcity of labour due to the absence of their family members and how they are managing their agriculture. Individuals who are currently planning their own migration also know a lot about the financing of migration. Their expectation can also explain migrant's own story like why they are ready to migrate. Family, especially mothers and wives are most important sources of information when it comes to the issues of remittances, its disposition, use and investment.

The second group is non-migrant families and returnees who have decided not to migrate again. They can explain their idea about the effects of labour migration in village, community and even their own household. They can further explain some important issues for example how they are maintaining their relationship with their neighbours since they don't have any foreign income and stuffs.

Key informants belong to another important group having detailed knowledge of the village. Among them, the manager of the local "Small Farmer Cooperative Limited" (SFCL) is very notable. I asked him some questions like how local people get money for their migration, what kind of effects he found in agriculture and where people are investing their remittances because this is one and only organization of the village which provides loan to local people with reasonable interest and easy procedure. Besides, it has been providing high quality seeds, fertilizers, pesticides and insecticides for local farmers since two decades. It further provides good ideas and safe investment environment for local dwellers. Realizing this fact, the interview with SFCL manager was very important.

I took another interview with the head teacher of the local high school (Shree Himali Higher Secondary School). He explained many interesting things about local youths associated with education. According to him, nowadays local high school is facing school dropout and even parents are not so much worried with the results of their children. And these all things are happening due to the lack of employment after having good education and attraction of foreign employment. Although school was closed for summer vacation he granted me an interview in his own home.

My other interviews were with former VDC and ward chairpersons. Although they were not in-charge at that time, they provided some valuable information regarding labour migration and its effects on local agriculture, economy and social unity. I asked them especially about the effects of labour migration on local society and how local people are managing labour scarcity. I took some more interviews with local leaders, social workers, shopkeepers and senior people to know how labour migration is affecting local agriculture, economy and society.

The last group belongs to the migration experts and I took two interviews with them in Kathmandu. Actually it was an informal talk and during the chat I tried to know the present labour migration situation and its contribution to the nation. Furthermore, I had some discussions with experts about emerging socio-economic issues brought especially by labour migration in rural areas.

The informants of the first two groups, that is, the migrants and their family members as well as non-migrant families and returnees not planning to migrate again, were selected on the basis of the information collected from the questionnaires of the general household survey. During household survey, I marked in my questionnaire, so that I could see easily which household's individuals were currently planning a migration, living abroad or have returned from a foreign job, each with the indication of destination. This allowed me to select those households from which I needed to get more independent information. In order to have a balanced selection, I selected small as well as large households and households where many members had migrated. Of those households with more than one migrant, I selected households where several members migrated to the same country. I also selected households where several migrants went to different countries.

The representatives of the groups and the experts of the village and the migrants were identified by asking other interviewees as well as other persons of the village, who they think to be most suitable and willing to answer specific questions. So, the selection was optimal. When the designated informant was not at home or office or even out of the village after several tries to meet him/her, he or she was substituted by an equally qualified informant.

3.7.1 Interviews

Interviewing is one of the major methods of data collection in qualitative research. It may be defined as a two-way systematic conversation between an interviewer and an informant, initiated for obtaining information that is relevant to a specific study (Krishnaswami, 2000:222). Furthermore, it can be defined as a face to face verbal interchange in which one person, the interviewer, attempts to elicit information or expressions of opinion or belief from another person or persons, (Dunn, 2000: 51). According to Hay (2000:51-52), an interview is a spoken exchange of information and it is an excellent method of gaining access to information about events, opinions and experiences. According to Kvale (1996) a qualitative research interview seeks to cover both a factual and a meaning level, though it is usually more difficult to interview on a meaning level.

According to Dunn (2000:60-61) there are three major forms of interviewing called structured (question focused), semi-structured (content focused) and unstructured (informant focused). The selection of the interview procedure depends upon what type of data that a specific study needs and how it is possible to answer our research questions. It was difficult and not appropriate to conduct structured interview in my study area because King's autocracy was about to end due to the great mass movement and Maoist had just declared ceasefire for three months. People were still suspicious of outsiders and still hesitating to share their feelings. Hence, I used unstructured and semi structured interview method.

The group-specific guides mentioned in following paragraphs were prepared in the study area based on the problems I faced during household survey. After having first household survey, observations in the village and talks with local people I was very much aware that the prepared questions would not suit for the interview in this new context because people of Prithvinagar have better infrastructure facilities than the other people of eastern Nepal. Since it is a planned settlement, most of the people have equal landholding pattern and originally migrated either from eastern hilly districts of Nepal or north-east Indian States. So, the interview guide had to be reformulated and adapted to the circumstances in Prithvinagar.

Usually I took appointment with my key informants, but depending upon the situation I even went without any prior notice to selected persons and asked for an interview. During household survey I realized that in announced interview lots of people could be gathered and sometimes the interviewee feels uneasy to share his personal opinions and views. But, I was very lucky because usually, the informants I had hoped for interview were at home and interrupted their works for the interview. In other cases, if the desired person for interview was out or was busy, I returned another day or switched to another informant when possible.

Most of my interviews lasted not more than 45 minutes because it was very hot season, after half an hour most of the informants got twitchy and it was difficult to hold their attention. Realizing this fact, I had limited questions. I took notes during interviews. I did not use any audio and video tape.

3.8 Categorization and Metaphors

Human mind has a matrix of millions of cognitive categories. Category is how we visualize different object or how we conceptualize different things in our mind in different context and circumstances. How people construct their categories about an object or event varies in different cultures. It is a function of object, senses, mental capacity and culture. Aase (1997) says that we categorize whatever we see, feel, observe, smell and taste in our surroundings. If the information does not match any category we have, then it does not make any sense or meaning. The exact observation of anything is similar in the world but during the process of cognition we categorize things based on our culture and experience.

According to Aase (1997:1) by localising observation in categories we create order in the world. How people categorize things depends on culture and varies according to age, gender, generation, occupation, education background, social experiences, culture, regions etc. Even people belonging to the same culture do not necessarily perceive things in the same way and produce the same meanings. People within a single culture might have different categories and can create different meanings about the same objects. Thus, to understand the local knowledge and perceptions, it is important to know how they make sense of the world and how they live by it.

Table 3.1: Migrants' Categories

Etic Categories	Emic Categories	Characteristics
Wage Labourers of Middle East	Arab <i>Lahure</i> ³	Through Legal Man Power agencies, 2-4 years work contract, mostly unskilled, male, promoted by government, need passport and visa, high investment but low payment, risky and mostly for so called three Ds work like dirty, difficult and degraded (Seddon, 2001:143)
Indian Army	Indian <i>Lahure</i>	Strong formal procedure and physical test, once a month, free but good salary, prestigious, 15-20 years service period, 10 years education, fixed quotas, passed by word of mouth, greater chance from former Indian Army family (Thieme and Wyss, 2005: 76-77).
British Army	British <i>Lahure</i>	Strong formal procedure and physical test, once in a year, free but has very handsome salary, prestigious, 15-20 years service period, 10 years education, fixed quotas, passport, privilege for certain caste like Gurung, Rai and Limbu, announces in news papers and passed by word of mouth, greater chance from former British Army family (Ibid).
Rural to urban Migration	Kathmandu <i>Lahure</i>	Mostly University students and Job holders, Usually towards nearby city or Kathmandu, And Internally displaced people by present Maoist insurgency or political conflict.
Other Migrants to India	<i>Gurkha</i> or <i>Bahadur</i>	Historical movements, uneducated and unskilled, low investment and risk due to open border, seasonally migrate for agriculture wage labourers in Punjab and Hariyana, well known as <i>durban</i> , <i>kulli</i> and watchman in major Indian cities and got the nickname as <i>Gurkha</i> and <i>Bahadur</i> .
Migrants to Hong Kong and Singapore	ID Walla (ID Holders)	Have rights to settle and work, descendants of servicemen of the British Army, safe, easy and reasonable (do not need to rely on an agency or a broker or take a dangerous journey, high investment (for airplane ticket) and earning, possibility of family reunification, usually unskilled, 10 years education and mostly from certain caste ethnic groups (Thieme and Wyss, 2005: 78).

The categorization of observation should be done according to the local knowledge. In order to understand the phenomena around us, we have to see through the local perspective. For that reason, during household survey and later during the interpretation of interviews I have tried to categorize and classify the migrants according to their characteristics (see table 3.1 for categorization). Etic categories (academic) are those where words are used by researcher whereas emic categories (vernacular and indigenous) represent the words used by informants.

My first task was to know how different categories are constructed and developed. Afterwards, my focus of observation was on getting the information like how people categorized migration and migrants, remittance investment, emerging social impacts and issues. What is the context of development of such different categories? According to Kitchin & Tate (1999:239) categorizing qualitative data is not so simple. Because it consists of non-numeric information there can be few logical relationships between the

³ It was about 200 years ago that Nepalese started to seek work abroad and send remittances back to their families in Nepal. In the early nineteenth century, the first Nepalese men migrated to Lahore (in today's Pakistan) joined the army of the Sikh ruler, Ranjit Singh. Here, both they and later migrant workers earned the nickname "*Lahure*" (Seddon et al., 2001, cited in Thieme and Wyss, 2005:60).

data. To place the data in to meaningful categories, during fieldwork, I kept my annotated notes carefully.

When we talk about scientific research methods in social science, metaphor is not only viewed as characteristic of language reflected in our everyday speaks by a wide variety of expressions. Our concepts structure what we perceive, how we get around in the world, and how we relate to other people. Our conceptual system thus plays a central role in defining our everyday realities. If we are right in suggesting that our conceptual system is largely metaphorical, then the way we think, what we experience, and what we do everyday is very much a matter of metaphor (Lakoff and Johnson, 1980: 3). Furthermore, according to Aase (1999:60) in adapting to a new context of modern society, local people search their culture and their history for meaning that can be transferred, so to speak, to new arrangements. Therefore, I have paid keen attention and tried to find out the metaphors, traditional myths, narratives and proverbs associated with migration during interviewing and informal talks in my fieldwork.

3.9 Reliability and Validly of the Research

Our research work should be reliable, credible, and plausible. According to Bradshaw and Stratford (2003:47) to earn trustworthiness, we should use multiple sources of information, methods, investigators and theories known as triangulation. To verify the trustworthiness of the quantitative data I tried to triangulate the data collected from different sources. I had collected data regarding field of remittances investment from household survey. Most of the cases, people were not so much open and interested to share their income and its investment. Comparing the data from other sources I felt that during household survey people normally told low income or tried to hide them. May be it was due to the Maoist activities because if they knew the real income they could ask for donation for their movement. Some people exaggerated their income. So, to validate the trustworthiness of quantitative data of household survey I tried to triangulate it with the information obtained from interview with different actors of the village, statistics from local cooperative, administration and also with previous research conducted in different parts of the country

I used this methods and it has minimised the risk of misinterpretation or biased result of my research. In addition, I have used citations and several cases from farmers and local people to highlight certain issues and tried to relate them to other relevant researches (references). I have checked the plausibility of my research with supervisor and/or colleagues before embarking on detailed research design. Similarly, to enhance the reliability and validity of the data and analysis all the research processes are made transparent. To further verify the validity of the qualitative data I examined the interaction of local people in different social and cultural activities. Among them *parma* is one of the notable social practice among local farmers during peak agricultural seasons. It is a kind of labour exchange under which a man/woman works for another household and in return he/she has the right to receive the same amount of labour. Children less than fifteen years are not accepted as a labour in general (Chapagain, 2003:30). To identify the present social interaction among local farmers I asked about the *parma* system and its continuity to the local people and key informants.

I asked to the local youths about the participation in *deusi* and *bhailo* to see further effects of labour migration on social cohesion. It is a cultural practice among youths performs in Tihar (Second biggest festival of Nepalese falls in Oct-Nov). Besides, I also examined the participation of local people in another cultural practice called *sansare pooja* (worship of forest god). Through key informant interviews I tried to know the continuity and change of *sansare pooja*. During interviews, most of the key informants informed that household split is higher in those households whose members have gone abroad for work. Therefore, I examined the causes of household split through “theory of house household fissions” to see the effects of labour migration on social unity.

3.10 Data Analysis

Primarily, I use qualitative descriptive and textual analysis methods to explain the information. Besides, I also use descriptive statistics to analyze the quantitative data obtained from household survey. Resulting maps, figures, tables and diagram from quantitative analysis are visually presented to communicate results more effectively.

3.10.1 Textual Analysis

Textual analysis (also known as content analysis) referring to reading and interpreting text is a standard methodology in social sciences. Furthermore, in qualitative research it refers to deconstructing texts, and analyzing multiple meanings they contain. Holsti (1969:14) offers a broad definition of content analysis as "any technique for making inferences by objectively and systematically identifying specified characteristics of messages". Forbes (2003:125) writes that content analysis is one of the basic techniques for examining a text. He further added that texts might include conventional forms of printed material, such as non-fiction, fiction or a blend of the two (factoid or faction). Texts can also include maps, photographs, paintings, films and multimedia images. It is an important tool for geographers and many projects use various texts either as only material, or as a tool providing background information, or as parts of the data material. Every text is interwoven by multiple meanings, ideologies and interpretations of the world.

Different printed/published texts, maps, interviews (noted), sorties and myths were analyzed using symbol analysis to acquire their connotation and denotation. It was attempted to find which connotation and metaphors that were attached to central symbols (concepts, words) that are used in the text. Possible textual informations were categorized according to a certain theoretical framework, which have informed the data analysis, providing at the end a meaningful reading of content under scrutiny.

3.10.2 Quantitative Data Analysis

The quantitative data were collected through fifty sample household survey. Firstly, the collected data were transferred, tabulated and processed through NSDstat programme. The counting and analysis are done with the help of this software or, where necessary, by hand and Microsoft Excel programme. Secondly, quantitative technique such as calculation of percentage, ratio and mean were done. Cartographic techniques through GIS are applied to demonstrate the information on figures and maps effectively.

Chapter - IV

Study Area

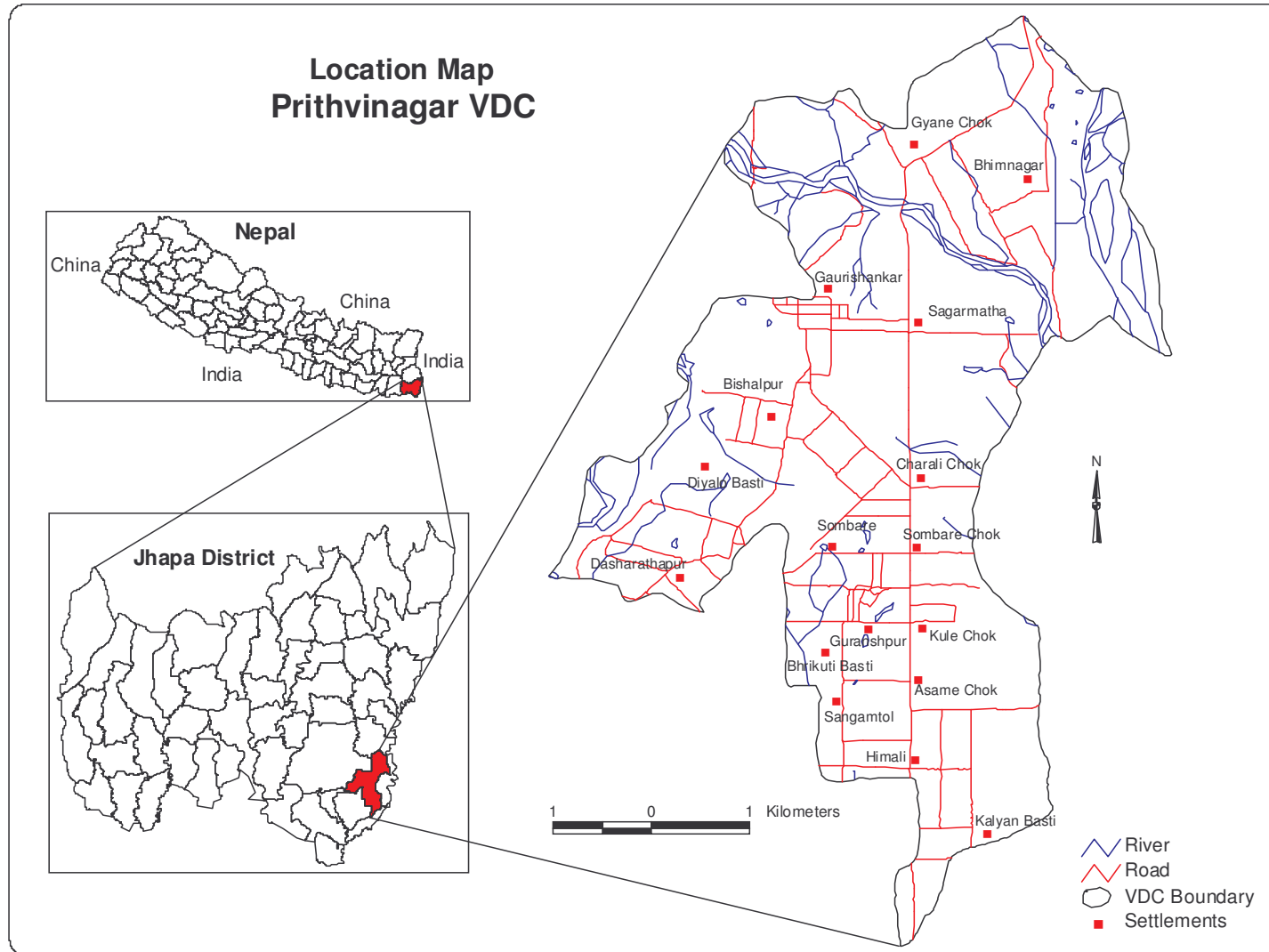
4.1 Introduction of the Study Area

Prithvinagar Village Development Committee lies in the south-eastern end of Jhapa district and few kilometres away from the Indo-Nepal border. Jhapa has an area of 1606 sq. km. and a population about 688109 (CBS et. al., 2001). Geographically the district lies between 26°20' to 26°50' north latitude and 87°39' to 88°12' east latitude. The VDC is situated between 26°25'51" north latitude to 26°30'46" north latitude and between 88°02'09" east longitudes to 88°04'53" east longitude. It is surrounded by Maheshpur VDC in the north and east direction. Jalthal and Balubadi VDCs are in the west. Similarly, Pathamari and Baniyani VDCs are in the south. According to the government's topographic survey 1991 the total area of VDC is 23.24 sq. km.

Topographically, it is a plain VDC having slightly rolling in the north to flat plain in the south. The average elevation above mean sea level gradually rises from about 60 meters near the Indian border (Kechanakawal, the lowest elevation of Nepal) to about 90 meters in the north near the Bhadrapur Municipality (the district headquarter). The general direction of slope is from north to south. The average elevation is 70 meters from the sea level. Having low gradient landscape and favourable climatic condition, commercial tea plantation is getting popular in recent years. Deuniya is a major river which flows in the northern part and ends to Mechi River, the eastern border demarcation between India and Nepal. It has some small streams and lakes but no permanent irrigation facilities. Kamaldhap Forest located in the north-east part of the VDC is the major source of fuel, timber and fodder for local people.

According to the local old people large part of the VDC was covered by forest until two decades ago. Largely due to the migration of people from India and various parts of Nepal, most forest was destroyed for fuel wood, construction of houses, cultivated land and resettlement programme. Most of the forest loss was for resettlement programme launched by the Government in 1970/71 and expansion of agriculture land.

Map 4.1: Location map of study area



After the establishment of *Nepal Punarbas Company* (Nepal Resettlement Company) in the Village, Government started to distribute land on the basis of the number of households. It did not matter how many members a house had. However, it was very important to have a family, i.e. husband, wife and children to become a complete *pariwar* (family) and *ghar* (house). That means, if someone had house but unmarried then he would not be eligible to get land from *Nepal Punarbas Company*. Some people who had more than one sons of marriageable age, got married, became father and applied for new land as a new *ghar* and *pariwar*. In this way, initially two *bigha* (1 bigha is equivalent to 0.67 hectares) lands were distributed for each household. It was upland, suitable for residence as well as maize and millet cultivation. Most people made their house on that land and it became home surrounding land. Even now people called it *gharbari* (homestead area). Soon, Company realized that still people lack land for rice cultivation. So, again government added one *bigha* low land for each household. It was additional plot and known as *thap plot* (additional plot).

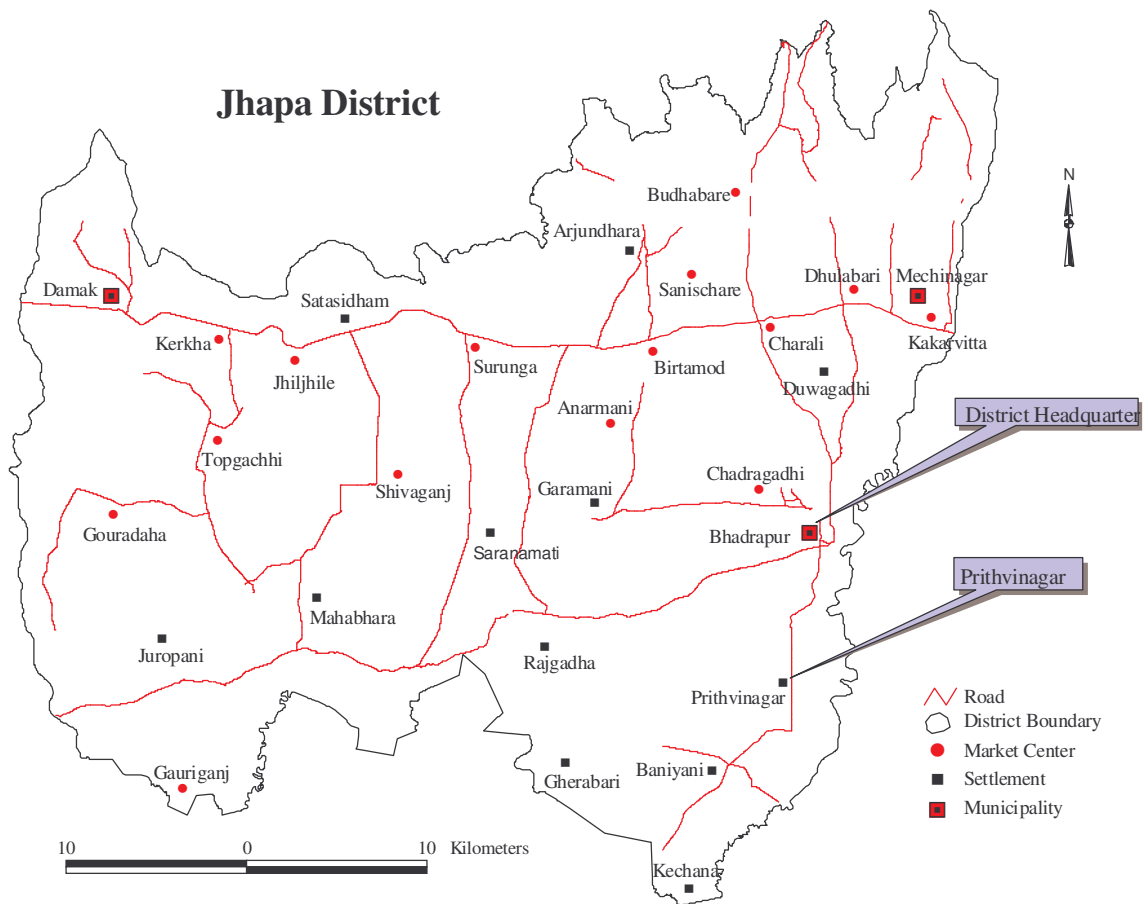
During the early stage of land distribution, most people worked as volunteer and in return the resettlement company provided basic food like wheat flour, pulses, oil, salt and powder milk free on the basis of family numbers for the newly settled people. It did so because the recently distributed land was almost covered by forest and farmer had to wait to convert these forest lands in to agricultural land. Gradually, people cleared forest and a small police station was established for the security of people from wild animals and Indian robbers from near by Indian border villages. Later, a primary school was established on initiation of local people.

In this chapter I will discuss the infrastructure and socio-economic setting of the village. At the end of this chapter present and past migration pattern will be discussed to set background for labour migration and remittances which will be discussed in the chapter five in details through different categories, metaphorization and relevant theories.

4.2 Infrastructure Setting

According to the VDC record (2003) it has 31,527 populations and 2795 households. Most parts of the VDC has basic infrastructure facilities such as road, communication, health post, schools, drinking water, electricity and proximity to the district market centre and headquarter (see map 4.2). Considering population size and infrastructure the VDC

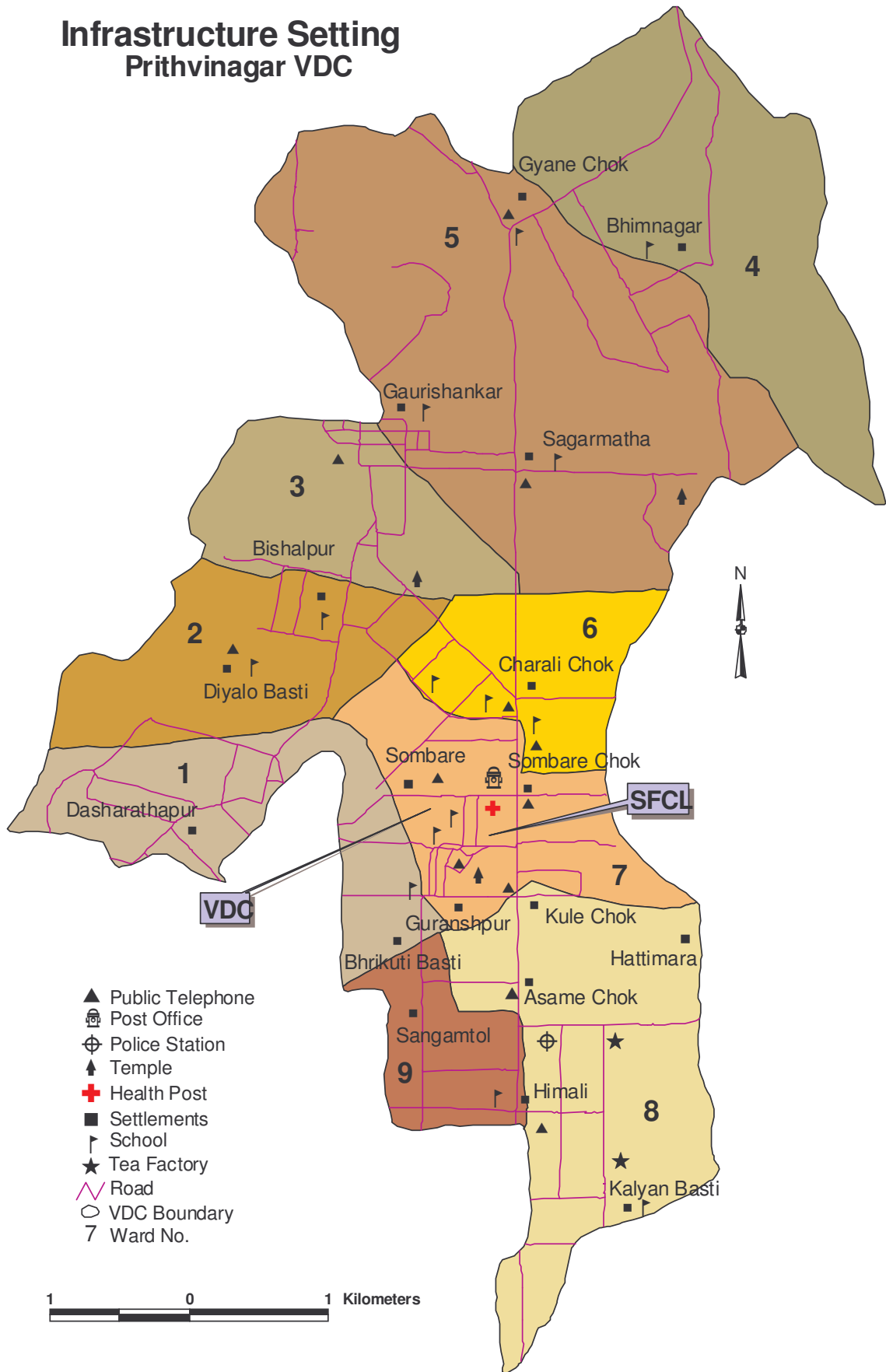
meets urban characteristic. According to the Government’s definition “any area within the Kingdom of Nepal, having a population of at least twenty thousand and with electricity, roads, drinking water and communications facilities, as a municipal area for Tarai region any area in the hilly and mountainous area, having a population of at least ten thousand and with electricity, transportation, drinking water and communication facilities, as a municipal area (MOLD, 1999:29)”. However, local people like to call it a big village and it seems quite rational because still village lacks good hospital, blacktop road, pure drinking tap water, electricity and telephone for all the households.



Map 4.2: Jhapa District and Major Market Centres

The main north south gravel road (Jhapa Chowk to Kechana) which is 21.67 Km long (Nepal Road Statistics, 1998:25) crosses the village from middle and covers around 15 km portion of Prithvinagar VDC. Besides this, there are many *kachhi sadak* (earthen road) to link each village. As mentioned earlier, it is a planned resettlement VDC; this *kachhi sadak* links most of the settlements of Prithvinagar. Every morning, nearly ten public buses carry people from most of the villages to the near by cities Bhadrapur, Birtamod (see map 4.2) and other cities of Eastern Nepal and again return at evening via same route.

Infrastructure Setting Prithvinagar VDC



Map 4.3: Infrastructure Setting in Prithvinagar

As a means of communication, now, telephone has played a vital role. But, still, government has not provided telephone facility for every house. So, people either use PCO (public call office) or communication shop. Ward numbers four and five, which are situated near Bhadrapur Municipality, have private telephone for very limited households. Some people have cordless phone and some emigrant's families and businessmen even have mobile phones. Due to the recently developed political situation (agreement between Government and Maoist), telecommunication office located in the near by city has demanded application from new mobile users. Therefore, according to the local people, very soon they will get mobile telephone facility. Prithvinagar has a *chhoti hulak* (local area post office) near VDC office.

In early 1990, government constructed a big water tank in the middle of the village for safe drinking water. Underground water pipes were installed for pure water distribution up to each small village. Very few households benefited from this facility. Because people had to deposit around 3,000 NRs. for new connection and even water supply was not very reliable. Most of the houses had already their own tube well or well. The offer for drinking water was very expensive at that time. As a result, water supply program became a failure.

The majority of the houses in Prithvinagar VDC are one-floor brick houses having corrugated roof. There are, however, still some wooden houses having thatched roof. In major road junctions, newly settled area and market centres a few multi-storey concrete houses can be seen. Most of the new houses are colourful with separate kitchen and have small gardens in front of the house and toilet/bathroom at backside.

Electricity is available in most part of the VDC except some area of ward number 1, 2 and 3. Therefore, most of the families have radio and a television set. For the entertainment, the VDC has a cinema hall and several audio and video parlours. In mild sickness, people use local health post. Besides, several medical shops, family planning and health workers are serving health facilities to the villagers. Some medical clinics have even provided good medical facilities twice a week.

Here are two large-scale tea refining and packaging industries and other several small-scale cottage industries. As small-scale industries the VDC has a number of rice, flour and oil mills, sawmills, furniture industries, cake and bread industries and some snacks industries. Still Prithvinagar has not any permanent marketing centre except some permanent shops at cross roads and dense settlement area. *Hatbazar* (periodic market) takes places once a week at Sombare, Bihibare, Himali, Sagarmatha and Gyane Chowk. Permanent grocery, electronics, medicine, readymade garment and hardware shops are found at most of the road junctions. Bhadrapur and Thakurgang (Small town of Bihar, India located in border area) are the main market centres for the villagers.

Thirteen schools including a government higher secondary school are serving education facilities in the village. Schools are conveniently located in all nine wards. For higher-level education students have to go Bhadrapur Municipality at Mechi Multiple Campus which is approximately 10 Km. away from VDC where bachelor level education is provided in science, law and commerce faculties and master level in humanities and social sciences in few selected subjects.

Until a few years ago, there used to be a permanent border security police station in the VDC. Due to the intensification of Maoist activities in the village, government withdrew all the security personnel to the district police office. The VDC has a non-profit local organization called SFCL (Small Farmer Cooperative Limited) run by local people with the motive to develop local agriculture and small farmer's livelihood. Basically, it provides banking facilities such as daily saving and loan in reasonable interest for local farmers.

4.3 Socio-economic Setting of Prithvinagar

As mentioned in previous paragraphs, Prithvinagar is a planned resettlement VDC (1970-71) and at that time total of 931 households had been resettled in 1641 hectars of land (Kansakar, 1979:48). After the establishment of resettlement project, in-migration continued to Prithvinagar. The average household size is 11.3, which is remarkably higher than the national average 5.5 (CBS et. al., 2001). Male and female comprise 47.9% and 52.1% respectively. Among all wards, five and nine have the highest and the lowest population with 8,868 and 1,803 respectively. This comprises 28.13% and 5.71% of the

total VDC population (31,527). Population Census 2001 could not be held in the VDC in its totality due to the Maoist's insurgency. Therefore, it has only 9879 population in the record of Central Bureau of Statistics (2001) Nepal. Latest population record was not available during fieldwork. Because VDC office was shifted to the district headquarter and according to the VDC secretary vital registration (migration, marriage, death and birth) process has not been done since 2003 due to the Maoist's activities.

The VDC is characterized by multi-ethnic and multi-lingual character. Brahmin and Chhetri both castes have the highest proportion in caste/ethnicity with 32.2% and 23.3% respectively (CBS, 2001). Ganesh has the lowest proportion in the VDC. According to my household survey Brahman and Chhetri are in the first and second position with 18% and 16% respectively. Limbu ranks in the third position with 14% and Newar is in the fourth position with 12% proportion. According to *Varna*⁴ classification *matwali* (Limbu, Rai, Gurung and Magar) has dominancy in the village with 56%. *Thulo jat* (twice born) and *pani nachalne* (untouchable: low caste) have 36% and 8% proportion respectively. Indigenous people (Satar and Rajbansi) are known as tribal groups falling outside this *varna* System. Since the VDC is planned resettlement all the people except indigenous groups (*Satar* and *Rajbansi*) have migrated from other places. Brahmin, Chhetri, Newar, Gurung, Kami and Damai believe in Hinduism. Some Rai and Limbu believe in local religion (Kiratism) but other follow Hinduism. Tamang and Magar also believe in Buddhism. However, all the castes including local tribal groups celebrate Dashain and Tihar, the main festival of Hindus.

According to the VDC record, the main occupation of this VDC is agriculture. Still 84% of its people are dependent on crop farming and other agricultural activities. But this data is not so relevant. During my fieldwork, most of the agricultural fields were seen barren though it was time for maintaining and preparing field for rice planting. In key informant interviews people informed that several farmers have abandoned agriculture in recent years due to the lack of man-power and low productivity of the land.

⁴ Varna: Four traditional social classes (Brahman, Kshtriya, Vaishya and Sudra) in Hinduism. Brahman were born from mouth of God Brahma to study and advice, Kshtriya from arms to protect, Vaishya from thighs to cultivate and Shudra from feet to serve.

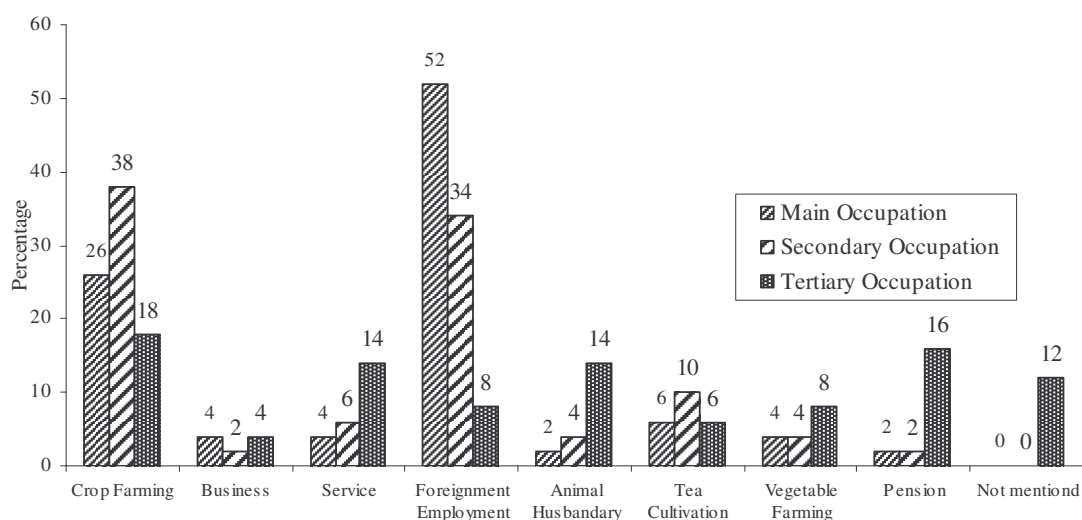


Figure 4.1: Occupations by household

Data from my sample survey confirmed this assertion. According to the household survey data, foreign employment is the main occupation of Prithvinagar VDC followed by crop farming. Fifty two percent of the households claimed their main occupation to be foreign employment whereas households having main occupation of farming are only 26%. Even in secondary occupation foreign employment rank in second position with 34% which is just below the farming. It shows that foreign employment has become a preferred occupation in recent time. Service, animal husbandry (dairy farming), vegetable farming and tea cultivation are other notable occupations. During my fieldwork I saw many rice, maize and wheat fields converted into tea garden. But still proportion of people having tea cultivation occupation is low. According to the local tea farmers it takes around 4-5 years to mature a tea plant. So, in 4-5 years tea cultivation will be the second most important occupation.



Photo 4.1: Rice field left for tea cultivation

Till early 1990s most of the houses were wooden having thatched roof. But now, wooden houses having thatched room are becoming rare. According to my household survey 58%

houses are made of brick with corrugated roof. Most of the old wooden houses having thatched roof are converted into corrugated roof (24%). People working in British and Indian Army have made concrete houses (18%) at major crossroads and emerging local market centres. Traditional concept of extended family is decreasing gradually and concept of nuclear family is emerging rapidly (see chapter six for details). Extended and joint families have more labour force than nuclear family. As a result, at the moment they are seen wealthier in terms of labour force. In nuclear family father have to look after all his children and wife.

According to Aase (1985:36) the material well-being of the household will to some extent depend upon the relation between its “productive potential” and its “consumption needs”. A household with many producers and relatively few consumers will be better off than a household consisting of mother, father, many children and old disable grandparents. Aase (Ibid) further writes that theoretically, it is possible to express a household’s labour capacity through a producer/consumer-ratio weighting all the household members according to their assumed labour capacity and consumption needs.

If so, then newly established nuclear households in Prithvinagar are poor in terms of labour force and income but may be they will be well-off after ten years. Parents have admitted their children in private schools and a new educated generation is emerging in the village. So, Aase (Ibid: 38) suggests to describe this situation in terms of “stages in the household’s development cycle” rather than in terms of household “types”. Stages of household development cycle changes over time in accordance with the “household’s development cycle”. After ten years, small children will become youngsters, educated and will contribute to the income yielding activities themselves and mother will also get more time to productive and income oriented work.

4.4 Past Migration History

Migration has been an important component of population redistribution in Nepal. People have been migrating from rural-to-rural and rural-to-urban areas in search of employment and educational opportunities (KC, 2003:130). Major streams of internal migration are rural-to rural (68.2%) and rural-to-urban (25.5% in 2001 and 31.2% in 1996). Urban-to-urban (2.8%) and urban-to-rural (3.5) are of lesser importance (Ibid:141-142).

In-migration history in eastern Tarai especially in Jhapa District is not very old. In Jhapa, the trend of in-migration was low before 1957. Hostile climate and malaria became a barrier for new settlers (Bhandari, 2003:64). Now, in eastern Tarai, in-migration is 75.6% while out-migration is 24.4% (KC 2003:158, Figure 15.8). In the case of Prithvinagar VDC, in-migration started only after 1970/71 when Government of Nepal started resettlement programme. Initially the program was for former British and Indian army families who were living in a nearby village called Suryanagar. Later many other people from different places grabbed this opportunity.

Before resettlement program, the place was inhabited by indigenous people called *Satar* and *Rajbansi* and the rest of the village was covered by dense forest. After resettlement program, there was massive influx of people from different parts of the country as well as Bhutan, India and Burma wherever Nepalese were living. So, due to the mass arrival of other caste people these indigenous people were replaced and now living in the vicinity area either in rented land, bank of the river or *aailani jagga* (open land having no ownership). According to the senior people of the village, 3 *bigha* lands were equally distributed to all the families. There was no caste discrimination for the land distribution and even no official identification was needed for new settlers. To know the reality, I went to the Hattimara (Satar Village) and asked to *Manjihadam* (head of Satar community). He said it was true, the resettlement company had offered equal land to all the people and some indigenous people had taken that facility. But after living some months, they realized that it would be difficult to live among *pahade* (Nepalese migrated from hills) and other caste people. They felt insecure and abandoned their distributed land. As a result, now they have no land and working as a low wage labourers in local tea garden and processing industry to feed their family and children.

There are a number of stories why people came to this VDC. According to an old man, who himself was migrated from Ilam (eastern hill district of Nepal) mentioned that he came to this village to get some agriculture land. He further mentioned that there was big rumour that government was going to distribute free land in Prithvinagar. It was necessary to have family to get land. So, many people from his village and district came with their wives and children. Another old man who had come from Assam (Indian State)

mentioned the same story with different passion. He said there was big flood in Bramhaputra River and all his land was under terrible flood. He became landless and returned to his own country (Nepal). Some other people from Burma said they were attacked many times by Burmese and returned to their native country for the security of their wives and children. Others who had already substantial land in their old place also got equal land. Therefore, whatever the stories are, the fact is people came in to this place to grab the opportunity of resettlement program. Consequently, after resettlement programme migration increased tremendously with foreign-born and native born population, which has contributed for rapid population growth of Prithvinagar.

4.5 Present Migration Pattern

In-migration played a very important role from the very beginning of the village establishment. Today, parents and grandparents either came from other parts of Nepal, India, Bhutan and Burma. Since many people were already in British and Indian Army before coming to this place nobody has exact idea when out-migration has started in Prithvinagar. No information and data was found in this regard. When we talk about the present migration pattern in Prithvinagar then labour migration from village started in late 1980s and early 1990s.

According to the manager of SFCL (Small Farmer Cooperative Limited), there was a man who first migrated to Kathmandu for employment in garment factory in late 1980s. Others many people said, some people used to go Panjab (Indian State) and Delhi as seasonal agricultural labour works around 15-20 years before. Local farmers claimed that some people even went to Delhi for unskilled labourer and other household works during that period. Anyway, if we noticed manager and local farmer's statements then we can conclude that labour migration was started in late 1980s. When foreign employment to Gulf States began in early 1990s the flow took its momentum.

Above discussions give the socio-economic background of the study area and overview of migration pattern in Prithvinagar VDC. In next chapter I will discuss about causes of migration, its volume, direction and area of remittance investment according to the local categories and try to relate with the relevant theories.

Chapter - V

Labour Migration and Remittances

5.1 Motives for Migration

Access to employment abroad is determined by a variety of factors both at home and abroad, which effectively filter and constrains the opportunities available and determine who goes from where to where (Seddon et al., 2001:40). Personal networks and linkages, the structure of labour markets and manpower agencies are the variety of factors which shape emigration in Nepal. According to the Nepal Living Standard Survey 2003/04 (CBS et al., 2004) an overwhelming majority (75%) ascribed the reason of migration to “family reason”. This is followed by “easier life style (12%), “looking for job” (7%), and education/training (3%). The 2001 census in Nepal included five main reasons for migration namely trading, agriculture, employment, study/training and marriage. (CBS, 2002 cited in KC, 2003: 146).

According to some recent studies emigration is caused by some economic and political factors and is likely to increase. Bhattarai (2005:54) writes that the main motives behind the labour migration in Nepal are: money to pay debts; enrol children in to the school; jewelleries for women members of the family; general medical expenses; and a bit more comfortable life than previous one. Thieme and Wyss (2005:71) writes that the main incentives to migrate are the need for (higher) income in order to cover daily expenses and repay debts, the desire for a higher standard of living, like buying land or a house, or the wish to provide one’s children with a (good) education. According to Kansakar (2005:75) the main reason of the overwhelming proportion of international migrants is economic. Subedi (2003:252) writes that because of rapid population growth (more than 2.2% per annum), economic stagnancy, limited employment opportunities and increased insurgent activities in the rural areas together with state’s increased security operations, more and more young adults are looking for employment opportunities outside the country.

In the case of Prithvinagar VDC, it is difficult to say exactly why youngsters go abroad for employment. During household survey and key informant interviews I asked many people why youngsters are going abroad for employment. I normally got the answer for “money” or most informants just laughed, and said “*gau ma kam chhaina*” (no jobs available in the village). I asked them again have you ever tried to find out work here in your own village. Again they replied in similar fashion and said only *majduri* (unskilled labour work) is available and we can not feed our family with these low paying job. But, according to my key informants young people hesitate to work as a wage labourer in their own village. They think if they worked in agriculture field as a wage labourer they will loose their respect among friends and neighbours.

Why many people in Prithvinagar see labour migration as the only way to get money will be explained in the following paragraphs, analysing alternative strategies of earnings. These are

- Agriculture
- Wage Labour
- Self Employment

Through agriculture, the possibilities to produce a surplus and make money out of it seem to be quite poor. Most of the families in Prithvinagar do not even produce enough to meet their own needs and almost no family in Prithvinagar gets significant proportion of its cash income from agriculture. Land is very limited and now it has been expensive after the introduction of large tea estates in the village. On the other hand price for agricultural products are quite low. Although the weather is favourable for paddy and maize cultivation, farmers are not interested in further cultivation due to the lack of irrigation facility and market. Cultivation is based on monsoon rain but land is slanting and rainwater does not last for long time.

Most desirable work is office work, so called “10 to 4 jobs” or recruit in either British or Indian Army. Though 10-4 jobs are not highly paid but its regular working-hours, the monthly salary, the prospect of pension and most importantly social respect always attract local youngsters. Former VDC chairman said *matwali* (Rai, Limbu, Gurung, Magar) people who constitute the majority (56%) of Prithvinagar’s population, have however, very low chances of ever getting one of these rare jobs. The main reason is lack of education and experience. Now, they have another option to join in British and Indian

army, which is a dream job for most of the *matwali* youngsters. One local boy who had recently tried to join in Indian army explained that now it is very difficult to join even in Indian army. It needs very good physical condition. Minimum required qualification is SLC and *galla walla* (army recruit agent) demands a high amount as bribe to ensure the recruitment. The recruitment process is even harder in the British army. They need SLC in first division and candidates have to pass extra English test and they must have very sound health and physic.

Those jobs which are available to people of Prithvinagar are mostly labourers in tea estate, in local construction work and of course in agriculture. These jobs are badly paid. The wage is not good enough to feed a family and most importantly does not earn respect among friends and neighbours. But a local high school teacher does not agree with the statement. He said many people (especially landless and indigenou) are working as wage labourer and maintaining their family. And the bitter truth is local boys feel ashamed to do such low status work.

It may seem surprising that even educated youngsters choose a job abroad and work in so called 3D jobs, “dirty, dangerous and degrading”. One returned migrant cleared this contradiction. He said, one at least earns much more for the same job and people do not want their friends to see them doing dirty work.

Here, the theory of dual labour market is very helpful for me to understand such ostensible paradox. It explains that migrants consider their stay in the receiving country as temporary and develop an instrumental relation to their work, which allows them to accept jobs they would never do at home. “Even though migrants see their jobs only as a means to earn money, these jobs enable them to increase their social status and prestige at home in their own reference-group” (Massey et al, 1993:441). A youngster supports this last statement, saying that the reason why he is dreaming of going aboard is that when he comes back, he will finally be respected.

Own business could be an alternative employment inside the village. But again difficulty is high investment needed as well as the risk involved. When I asked about the reason why they do not try to start their own business, many informants commented that we (Nepalese) are not willing to take a risk or they consider themselves as not having good

business skills. To start a new business, most of the households or individuals in Prithvinagar depend on loans from relatives, parents, local well off and SFCL. To get loan, the trustworthiness of the applicant and his plans are very important. So, it proves that labour migration constitutes for many households in Prithvinagar the best way to earn their living. Because local agriculture is below subsistence, wage labour is badly paid and associated with low status and self employment needs substantial investment and is assumed to be very risky.

According to my household more than 36% household said their member has gone abroad due to the lack of employment in the village. High wage rate, lack of agriculture land and presence of friends and relatives are other important causes followed by 14.6%, 10.4% and 10.4% in order. Most of the migrants mentioning above motives fall in “*Arab lahure*” category. Present political situation and lack of agriculture land rank in the second and third position with 14.6% and 12.5% respectively. Now from above mentioned statistics we can say that lack of employment in the village is the main cause behind migration. Above analysis of alternative strategies of earning also support this statistics.

Coming back to other important incentives, migrants almost unanimously declared to migrate in order to earn money to clear debt, to make a new house and to gain the social prestige and dignity. Some other said they went aboard to see a new country. In Nepal it is in many cases, more prestigious or less degrading to work abroad than within country.

Several individuals, especially retired armies (*Indian lahure* and *British lahure*) mentioned that migration just is or was a “trend”, that “everybody went”. Migration seemed and seems to be something natural or something so common, that the majority does not have to think whether they would like to go or not. This applies to most of the categories of migrants (Arab, British and *Indian lahure*). As long as one fulfils the preconditions, which are primarily of a financial nature everybody want to go. I find that Prithvinagar is exactly as Massey et al. (1993:452) describe communities where migration is prevalent. Migration has become a common behaviour pattern in Prithvinagar and is part of the community’s values.

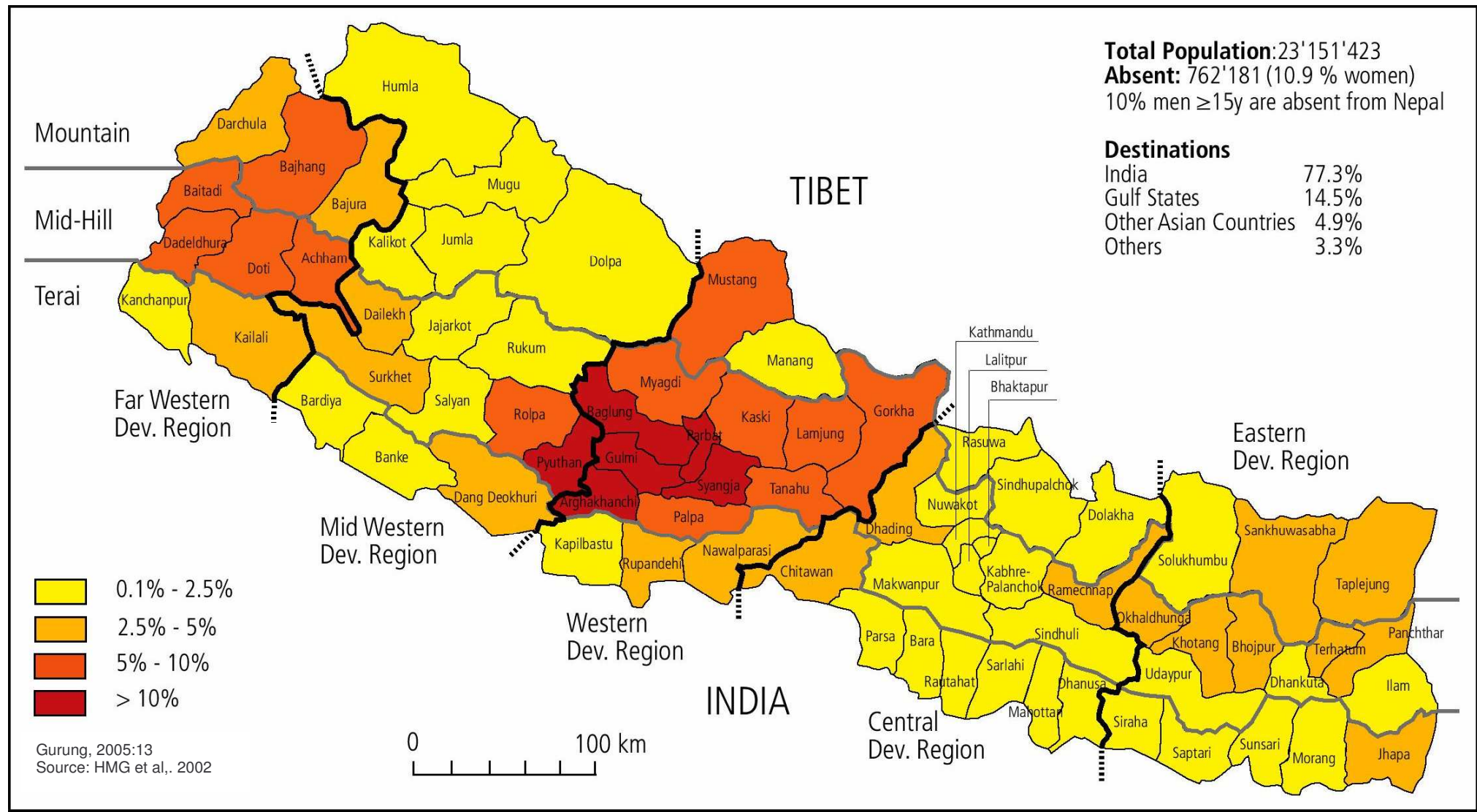
Considering the different local categories, most *ID Wallas* go abroad because of the presence of friends and relatives. They have either family or relatives living in these countries or they have permanent residence permit. As a result they have easy entry and access to these countries.

5.2 Volume and Direction

The most cited data on international migration in Nepal originates from the latest nationwide census in 2001 (Kollmair et al., 2006:153), where 762,181 persons have been registered being abroad. According to the Nepal Living Standard Survey 2003/04 (CBS et al., 2004:105) about 37% of the enumerated population aged 5 years and above have migrated from another VDC or municipality or from outside the country. Data of Ministry of Labour and Transport Management (2006:3) shows that the largest numbers of Nepali workers are going to Malaysia, Qatar, Saudi Arabia and UAE in that order. Afghanistan, Seychelles, Cyprus, Macau and Russia have also been the destination of Nepali workers. On the whole, number of Nepali workers going for foreign employment has increased by 32.23% as compared to the same period of the previous year 2005 (Ibid). According to the most recent data of Ministry of Labour and Transport Management the number of people leaving Nepal for employment abroad is increased by 11.34% in the period between mid-July 2006 and mid-February 2007 compared to similar period of previous fiscal year (The Kathmandu Post, Wednesday, Feb 14, 2007).

Some other research carried out in different years has shown different figures. Seddon et al., (2001) estimate that there are approximately 1.3 million Nepalese emigrants working in India. In India Nepalese immigrant association estimates the number of Nepalese up to 3 million, which is six times higher than official statistics state (Thieme et al., 2005:62). For migration to Gulf States, official sources such as the national census speak of 110,000 migrants (HMG et al, 2002 cited in Kollmair, 2006, 153) in 2001. Ministry of Labour and Transport registered only slightly less than 104,000 migrants (Graner and Gurung 2003, Subedi 2003 cited in Ibid). Another estimate suggests that between 200,000 and 400,000 Nepali persons are working in Gulf countries (Graner and Gurung, 2003:299). Considering the estimations for India and Gulf States, the percentages of the total population would be between 6.5% and 14.7%, compared to the officially recorded 3.3%. So, above mentioned figures suggest that the estimation of migration figures in Nepal is several times higher than official statistics show (see map 5.1 for more figures).

Map 5.1: Nepal population absent abroad, percentage per district



Apart from India, Bhutan and UK the international migration history is not very long in Prithvinagar. Open border as well as cultural similarity, presence of friends and relatives and to some extent similar language are key factors for movement between India and Nepal.

Table 5.1: Volumes and directions of labour migration in Prithvinagar

Countries	Year							Total
	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006*	
Kathmandu	2	1	1	1	0	0	0	5
Other parts of Nepal	0	1	1	0	0	0	0	2
India	1	2	1	0	0	0	0	4
Bhutan	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	1
U.A.E.	0	1	2	2	3	4	2	14
Saudi Arabia	1	2	0	1	3	4	2	13
Qatar	1	2	3	3	3	4	5	21
Kuwait	1	0	0	0	0	1	1	3
Bahrain	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	2
Oman	0	0	0	1	1	0	0	2
Malaysia	1	1	1	1	2	4	3	13
Singapore	2	1	1	0	0	0	0	4
South Korea	0	0	0	1	2	2	1	6
Afghanistan	0	0	0	1	1	0	0	2
Iraq	0	0	0	1	1	1	0	3
Japan	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	1
UK	2	0	0	1	1	0	0	4
Hong Kong	0	1	2	1	2	0	0	6
Israel	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	1
Total	13	14	12	14	20	20	14	107

Source: Field Survey, 2006

2006 year consists data only till June

During fieldwork 50 household interviews were taken and 107 members had gone to different countries for employment from 48 households. I did not find any migrants in two households. So, number of migrants from sample survey shows that in average at least two members have gone outside from Prithvinagar from each household. It also shows the dominancy of joint family in foreign employment. And I can say that at least a member had gone outside home for work from 96% household of the VDC. The migrant's proportion seems overwhelming but a study carried out in 2003 also shows that at least a member had gone abroad in Prithvinagar from 74% household (Bhandari, 2003:78). In that study internal migrants were excluded.

According to above table one person had gone to Bhutan as a worker in 2000. But according to the migrant's wife Bhutan sealed its border for Nepalese workers after 1990s

due to the refugee dispute between Nepal and Bhutan. I guess this person might have gone many years before to Bhutan. According to the key informants it is almost impossible to enter Bhutan without visa especially after 1990 when Bhutan expelled Nepalese from its Southern territory. Table 5.1 shows that after 2000 nobody has gone to Bhutan for work which also confirms the informant's statement. Before 1990s the largest stream of international migration was directed to India in Prithvinagar. But the trend reduced drastically especially when Saudi Arabia emerged as a new destination for Nepalese workers in early 1990s and later Malaysia in 1997/98. According to my household survey the trend to India was continuing till 2002. After 2000 nobody has gone to India which also depicts less importance of Indian labour market.

According to the household survey 21 migrants (the highest number) has gone to Qatar which resembles recent national trend. According to the latest data from Ministry of Labour and Transport Management, the workers leaving for Qatar and Malaysia, the two largest Nepal labour absorbing countries increased by around 31% and 6% in January 2007 (The Kathmandu Post, Wednesday, February 14, 2007). The Post writes that due to the strict Malaysian rules in recent years more workers have started to accept employment in Qatar, Saudi Arabia and UAE. Two years before workers going to Malaysia was increasing.

Of the total out-migrants 14 migrants have gone to UAE. Most of the workers are working in two major cities Abu Dhabi and Dubai. Dubai is very popular among local young adults. Migrants have already told several things about Dubai city, its beauty and recent development to their local friends and relatives. Mr. Thapa, aged 31, who is planning to go Dubai, showed me a beautiful postcard of Dubai city sent by his friend and said why he is dreaming for this beautiful city.

Saudi Arabia and Malaysia both are in the third position of labour destination countries with 13 migrants. Trends are almost similar in both countries. Till one year back, the number of workers going to Malaysia was increasing. But in upcoming years number of workers will decrease due to the recently changed rule of Malaysian labour immigration. As a result many prospective migrants will probably choose their destination either Qatar or Saudi Arabia.

After 1996/97 the volume of going to Saudi Arabia had been decreasing and had shown very clear shift towards Malaysia. It was believed that this increase had been associated with both as increase in demand of workers in West Asia, South Korea and latterly in Malaysia where Bangladeshi labour migrants were considered no more welcome (Subedi: 2003:263). But, above mentioned statistics from my household survey reveals that in Prithvinagar the direction has again changed from South-east Asia (Malaysia) to West Asia (Saudi Arabia, Qatar and UAE) after 2005/06 with increasing volume.



Photo 5.1: Crowd in a manpower office at Kathmandu

South Korea, Afghanistan and Iraq are some other countries where local youths have gone in recent years. Nowadays, South Korea became a very attractive and popular destination for migrants because of its higher demand of industrial labour and attractive payment than the Gulf States. According to my survey, volume is increasing in Korea. A few persons have gone to Korea from Prithvinagar in the past years. But currently, government has allowed Nepalese workers to go to Korea. During my fieldwork a reputed manpower agency has advertised in a national daily for large numbers of Nepalese workers to work in Korea. Many youngsters were interested in that advertisement. Therefore, in future, Korea can be a well-liked labourer receiving country in Prithvinagar as well as in Nepal. Recent agreement with Nepalese government with South Korean Labour Minister will have easy immigration access to Nepalese workers. Compared to Nepal, Korea has very high labour payment and with official labour agreement between two governments, probability of obtaining job is very high. Todaro (1969:139) writes that “decision to migrate from rural areas will be functionally related to two variables: 1) the rural urban real income differential and 2) probability of obtaining job”. Here Todaro’s (1969) model of labour migration is applicable and there will be further increment of Nepalese workers in South Korea labour market.

After US attack in Afghanistan and Iraq many local boys have gone to these two countries for employment. During fieldwork I found a boy who worked in Basra (Iraq) for nine months in US Army canteen. He managed to get there with the help of a broker after paying 200,000 NRs. According to him his salary was around 100,000 NRs per month and even job was indoor and not so difficult. But the security situation was deteriorating gradually in Basra and he returned to his village after several requests of his parents and wife. After tragic murder of 12 Nepalese workers in Iraq in August 2004, Government of Nepal has banned migration to Iraq. According to that boy many youths of Prithvinagar are still working in Iraq in spite of high life risk from Islamic militants only due to the high payment. Afghanistan has same story but after 2005 nobody has gone to this country from Prithvinagar.

The changing direction of the labour migration is not merely dependent upon the international migration policy. In the case of Prithvinagar it depends on several factors such as personal contact, access to manpower agencies (especially local broker for foreign employment) and money to buy ticket and probability of getting visa. Then Todaro's (1969) model of labour migration is not sufficient here because rural urban income differential and probability of obtaining job are not only factors to determine the labour migration in Prithvinagar. Access of prospective migrants to *bidesh lane dalal* (manpower agent) has played a vital role for increase in volumes and directions of labour migration. Similarly, a number of local brokers associated with manpower agencies and the destination country have also played a significant role for volumes and directions of international labour migration in Prithvinagar.

Large number of brokers for Saudi Arabia, Malaysia and Qatar in Prithvinagar always welcome local youngsters for foreign employment. Name of some popular junctions in Prithvinagar are changed in to Arabian name (such as Qatar *Chowk* and Saudi *Chowk*) due to these large numbers of brokers at that place. Local agents are more reliable than an agent from Kathmandu. A local boy said, if anything went wrong or in the case of betrayal a local broker can be found easily.

UK, Singapore and India have equal number (4) of migrants but the number is decreasing in these countries. In fact nobody has gone to Singapore and India for work since 2003 and UK since 2005. Most of the migrants in these countries belong to categories of

British lahure, Indian lahure, Id Walla and their family and relatives. Since 1980s, for internal as well as external reasons British government has curtailed its recruitment of *Gurkhas*. When Hong Kong was formally returned to China, of the 8,000 *Gurkhas* there, 5,500 were given retirement in 1991. Thus foreign labour migration associated with UK has decreased to a larger extent (Subedi, 2003:257). Other reasons of decreasing number in UK from Prithvinagar are tough competition for recruitment, strong physical fitness and shift of recruit centre and *galla walla* from Dharan to Pokhara. A boy who had recently disqualified for British army said that compulsory English language test and lack of SLC certificate having first division mark made him unsuccessful. Same things apply to Singapore police. For *Indian lahure, galla walla* demands high amount for recruitment. So instead to pay to *galla walla* youths are going South Korea and Dubai for higher income.

Hong Kong is another destination where 6 migrants have gone. But since last couple of years nobody has gone to this city. Large amount of money required and difficulties in obtaining visa have created problem for workers going to Hong Kong. According to former VDC chairman, Hong Kong and Singapore are those places where most of the people from Prithvinagar are ID holders, so called *ID walla*. He claimed that most of them who had ID have already gone. So, the trend seems decreasing to these countries.

Workers going to Kuwait have stopped since 2002 to 2004. Last US Iraq war had made a negative image towards Kuwait among local youths. Limited number of broker is another crucial factor for its decline. But after 2005 again youths are migrating to this country. Oman and Bahrain are other countries having low number of migrants where migrants have stopped to go since last couple of years. Only one migrant had gone to Japan in 2002. Since then movement to this country has stopped only due to the high investment and difficulty in obtaining visa.

Migrants to Kathmandu are students and garment factory workers. After 2004 nobody has gone to Kathmandu. These days most of the garment factories in Kathmandu are either replaced in other parts of the country or remain closed. Migrations to other parts of the country are directed to Dharan and Biratnagar.

5.3 Amount of Remittances

People of many countries, especially in the developing world depend on income from foreign jobs (Wyss, 2004:1). This is true for a large volume of Nepal's population. The latest census 2001 (HMG et al., 2002), indicates that 3.3% or 762181 persons are abroad. According to NLSS a percentage of 24.4% of all household (approximately 1120846) receive remittances from abroad (CBS et al., 2004:74).

Kollmair et al., (2006:155) write that the amount of money remitted per person annually varies considerably from one country to another. According to them a migrant in India remits on average only 9,000 NRs per year, whereas migrants to the western countries are able to send an average 450,000 NRs per year. Remittances from Gulf States average by approximately 90,000 NRs per year. The overall average send by a migrant is 38,128 NRs (Ibid).

According to the NLSS 2003/04 (CBS et al., 2004:74) the total value of international remittances was 35.6 billion NRs. In a recent study Kollmair et al., (2006:156) estimate that the total flow of remittances was 44 billion in 2003, equivalent to approximately 604 million US\$. They further write that this is a sum nearly doubling all of foreign aid (multilateral and bilateral grants and loans) to Nepal (23.7 billion NRs) in the same year. But Gurung (2005:14) has different statistic. He claims that Nepal received around 100 billion rupees in 2003 as remittance money. So the above mentioned statistics show that there are great variations in total remittances inflow in Nepal.

The exact amount of total remittance inflow in Prithvinagar is difficult to estimate. The amount varies substantially and ranges from 50,000 NRs to above 500,000 NRs per year. An *Indian lahure* sends around 100,000 NRs per year whereas a *British lahure* send above 500,000 NRs in a year. A migrant from Malaysia sends around 85,000 NRs per year and *Arab lahure* send almost similar amount. According to my survey, in average a migrant sends around 75,000 NRs per year in Prithvinagar. So, total amount of remittances inflow will be 8025,000 NRs per year of surveyed households. If we estimate this figure with all the migrants' households then total amount could be much higher. Normally *Kathmandu lahure* do not send any money to the village.

Temporary migrants are more likely to remit and remit larger amounts than permanent migrants. Wage and country of destination also have significant and positive effect on both the propensity to remit and the amount that is remitted. In Prithvinagar, neither family size nor family wealth influenced remitting behaviour. Family ties of migrants to their parents however stand out as a strong variable to determine the amount. Those who visited home in the past 12 months are not more likely to remit larger amounts. It seems that migrants who have strong attachments to their family tend to send money. Those who took money from home tend to remit and remit more than those who did not receive such support. Here it seems that an *Arab lahure* who receive support from parents send large proportion of his income than an *ID walla* of Hong Kong and Singapore. Most of the *ID wallas* have taken their spouses and children to them. *Arab lahure* left their family at home and have better family ties than *ID walla*.

In Prithvinagar, I found a family adaptive strategy for sending money in which the family bears the initial costs and subsistence support while the migrant is not earning. Then family receives benefits of such investment in the form of remittances. It can also view as mutual altruism that the family and migrant bridge for each other.

In this study, then, remitting behaviour is best seen as an outcome of an implicit contractual arrangement between migrant and family. The family pools its resource to finance the move and pay for the associated costs. In return, the migrant is expected to bring money and goods for the family and improve the welfare of other members left behind. Here Poirine (1997) “theory of implicit family loan” exactly fits. Aase also (1996) finds similar remitting behaviour between migrants and family in a village called Gujar Pind in Pakistan.

5.4 How are Remittances Used?

A comprehensive literature in Nepal suggests that remittances are too often put to unproductive uses – satisfying basic consumption needs, buying consumer durables, building a house for the migrant’s retirement, or spending in festivals as well as daily life (Khatiwada, 2005:12). Pant writes (2005:25) that in Nepal spending patterns of remittances are governed by a host of factors such as the strength of the migrant’s kinship ties and intent to return to the country of origin. According to Gurung (2005:14) even

after meeting their subsistence needs, most of the migrant's families firstly prefer to repay their debt, education of their children, and thirdly they invest the amount in land and house in town or at road heads. But again field of investment varies substantially among different categories of migrants.

The parents of the migrants mostly decide how the remittances are used. Sometimes, it is the father who is in charge, but in even more cases in my household survey, it is the mother. However, if the migrant has a wife and children, this family sometimes has its own budget, while the parents look after themselves, living, for example, on the father's pension.

Case 5.1

Mr Gurung, aged 61, is an ex-Indian army and receives around 6,000 NRs pension each month. His son has gone to Qatar and he is living with his daughter-in-law and grand children. Mr Gurung said his pension goes for school fees and daily expenses and his son is saving money for new house.

In case 5.1, the money is spent for a specific purpose for example the school fees and daily expenses. Of course, it is also the possibility that sometimes migrants do not send money or send only part of their earnings. This is often done when they want to save money for a bigger long-term project like a new house, purchase of land or succeeding migration. Like in case 5.1, they accumulate the money and bring it back in the end of their stay abroad or send it only when the money is needed for the house. The migrant is therefore the primary one who decides how to spend the money, but once he has sent uncommitted money, he does not intervene anymore.



Photo 5.2: Migrants' children waiting for private school bus

There are ranges of different uses of remittances from short-term to medium or long-term purpose. How the remittances are used depends primarily on the financial circumstances of a household. The immediate needs of the household are the top priority. Remittances are first used to cover daily expenses like food, clothing, electricity, transportations, treatment, and

sometimes wages for agriculture labourers. For many households remittances are just enough to cover their daily expenses and they report having trouble repaying their debts. Once daily expenses are covered and debts are repaid, the remittances may go towards medium or long term goals. Education of the children has recently gained importance.

Case 5.2

Mr Dahal, aged 36, an Arab lahure enjoying his second holidays. Recently he cleared his debt and now planning to send his son in a good English medium school at nearby city.

Many parents have set great dream by the education of their children, hoping that their children will have better opportunities to get a job in Nepal and will not go abroad for unskilled labour work.

Case 5.3

Mrs. Khanal, 31, a housewife said, "I don't want to see my children going to a public school while others go to private schools".

From case 5.3 we can draw the conclusion that relative deprivation not only applies to income, but also to status symbols (which are an indication of income) and education level. Here using remittances for the children's education is a long-term investment. It is certainly based on altruistic love of parents towards their children but it may again be seen as part of an "implicit familial contractual arrangement" in the family as proposed in theory of "implicit familial contractual arrangement".

During household survey many respondents reported that area of investment depends upon the amount of remittances. A *British lahure* who gets around 2000£ per month have different area of remittance investment than an *Indian lahure* and *Arab lahure* who have several times lower salary than a *British lahure*. Similarly a Hong Kong/Singapore *ID walla* have different behaviour of remittance investment though he works as a wage labourer like a migrant to India and Gulf States. So, it is better to discuss remittance investment through different local categories.

Arab Lahure

Most of the migrants of this category go Gulf States through legal man power agencies with required travel document (passport) and working visa. They have 2-4 years work contract according to the destination country and company rules. Nepal government has

officially promoted this group of migrants. The amount of investment is almost similar (75,000 NRs. to 95,000 NRs.) to all the Gulf Countries and Malaysia. Sometimes amount varies due to the changing fare of air ticket, fluctuation in US currency rate and variation in service charge of different man-power agencies. Whatever the investment costs may be, it almost always means a large expenditure for the local household. A few migrants or their family members of *Arab lahure* finance for foreign employment with their own savings.

According to my survey, *Arab lahure* saves around 7,000 Nrs to 12,000 NRs each month. They have to work almost one year to six months to compensate their investment. Their first priority is to clear the debt. In the beginning most of the migrants go abroad for two years. During their first holiday, usually after two years, they return home with extended visa and return ticket if they are lucky to find work in a good company or with a kind owner. By above mentioned amount we can calculate that an *Arab lahure* can bring around 190,000 NRs to 288,000 NRs after two years. Most of the *Arab lahure* take loan either from local wealthy people, relatives, neighbours or local SFCL to get foreign employment.

Case 5.4

Mr. Karki, aged 41, had gone Saudi Arabia three years ago. He worked there two years as a house cleaner and saved around 200,000 NRs. He had taken 95,000 NRs from local moneylender to go abroad. When he returned, his total debt including two years interest was more than 150,000 NRs. He was very much frustrated and said he could not earn anything

Case 5.4 shows that if debt is reduced from total two years saving, total amount could be much lesser than my calculation. Local interest rate varies from 12% (Bank) to 36% (Local moneylender). That means after two years total amount of debt to be paid including interest will be more than 100,000 NRs. Besides, migrants have to pay substantial amount for family food and children's education. Expensive electronics devices, household amenities, gifts and cloths are other notable things where *Arab lahure* spend considerable amount.



Photo 5.3: Foundation of an Arab lahure's house

As a result, the total amount of saving will be very low and it is not good enough to invest in purchasing land and building new house as every *Arab lahure* dreams before his migration.

During household survey 33.3% household said at first they invest their remitted money in purchasing of land. More than 27% said they will pay their debt and 20.8% said they will construct a new house at first. The figures also show that very high amount of remitted money goes to pay debt. Though purchasing of land and building a new house are in priority of migrants' household, it is not possible for all *Arab lahure* in their first holidays due to the local land price and housing cost. Therefore, in first holiday *Arab lahure* just make a foundation for a house or try to buy some land in the condition that he will pay remaining money in his next visit/holiday.

Indian Lahure

Case 5.5

Mr. Shrestha, aged 56 was retired last year from Indian army. Now, he has a concrete house and four bigha (1 bigha is equivalent to 0.67 hectares) paddy lands in the village. He gets good pension (9,000 Nrs. per month). Beside, last year after his retirement he opened a grocery shop. His elder son is doing MBA and other children are studying at local English medium school.

Despite the fact that Indian and *Arab lahure* have similar income, *Indian lahure* are more prosperous and prestigious in the village. Their regular monthly salary, job guarantee and pension after retirement are most attractive features. People said their laborious daily life, helpful and friendly behaviours in the village made them prosperous, prestigious and trustworthy in the community. One old man said, I can trust an *Indian lahure*, but I can not trust an *Arab lahure*. According to him money of *Arab lahure* is like a boot polish. It can remove after some time.

Indian lahures can take their wives and children to their barracks. Usually they do not send their money until their wives join them. Their houses are sometimes rented out or are inhabited by the parents. Hence, they have better opportunities to save their salary. On the other hand, like *Arab lahure*, *Indian lahure* do not bring electronics, gifts and other home appliances. If wife is staying at home then mostly she decides where to invest.

Otherwise in joint family, which is the most case in this study, parents may also decide where and when to invest.

Case 5.6

Mrs. Thapa, aged 37, an Indian army wife said they have bought some paddy lands. According to her it is a safe investment for future. They can not work in old age and this land will support them to educate and feed their children.

During their service period *Indian lahure* normally invest their money to buy land for rice planting and lend it to others for cultivation either in sharecropping or in contract basis. Afterwards, they buy *ghaderi* (a piece of land for house construction) to increase their property in popular junctions, potential market centres and nearby cities. Besides, some of them have bought land for tea cultivation as well. In that sense their investment is more productive than *Arab lahure*. Considering the present political unrest, purchasing of land seems secure and productive future investment in the village because land price is increasing day by day. Mostly, they make house at the end of their service period.

British Lahure

Case 5.7

Mr. Limbu, aged 51, was recently retired from British army. He has 5 bigha lands, two concrete houses in the village and Kathmandu. He said now British army can live UK with entire family after their retirement. When I met him during fieldwork he was preparing to move UK permanently after selling his all village's property.

In terms of income, this category rank in top position. Many informants said nowadays a *British lahure* does not prefer to live in the village. It means even if they have high income, they have less investment in the village. Recently some *British lahure* have invested money in tea cultivation. Otherwise, they do not have any investment in the village. Mostly *British lahure* takes his wife and children with them to UK.

Case 5.8

Mr. Rai, aged 31, a British lahure enjoying his first holidays was planning to take his wife and children with him to UK. He said they have family apartment in their barrack at London.

Another important cause to take family to UK is education for their children. Recently British government has decided to provide citizenship for all ex-*Gurkhas* and Mr. Limbu has already decided to live in UK after his retirement. Former VDC chairman said now many former *British lahures* are also planning to go UK. Case 5.7 and 5.8 show that in future amount of remittance inflow from UK will reduce gradually in the village.

Case 5.9

Mr Limbu, aged 53, another ex- British army has bought 5 bigha lands for tea cultivation in the village. His elder son and two daughters are studying in Dharan in his multi-storey new house with their grandparents. When he gets free time from his tea farming he goes to Dharan to visits his children and parents.

Those who had retired before 1990 have invested their money in the village by purchasing land and making new house like Mr. Limbu in case 5.9. A few have bought land for tea cultivation. But after 1990 (in 1990 democracy was established in Nepal) migrants of this category started to make multi-storey house in Bhadrapur, Birtamod, Dharan and Kathmandu. My key informants said whatever they bring either as money or as home appliance all goes outside village. At present, many families of present *British lahure* are living in Dharan and Kathmandu. Most of them have land in the village given to neighbours and relatives for cultivation either for sharecropping or in contract basis (see chapter 7 for agriculture and land tenure system).

ID Walla

ID wallas are legal immigrants to Hong Kong and Singapore. Like *Arab lahure* they do not need to rely on an agency or a broker to get there. This lowers their investment costs considerably and the risk of losing one's money due to fraud by an agent or failure of a plan.

Case 5.10

Mr. Subba, aged 38, is a Hong Kong ID holder. All his family members live at Birtamod in his new house. During his holidays he visits his old village to see his friends, relatives and look after his rented lands.

This category of migrants has better income than *Arab lahure* and *Indian lahure*. Most of the *ID walla* families have already joined their husband and father. They have several networks and associations in Hong Kong and Singapore which help them to search

employment there. Contrary to the vast majority of migrants to other destinations, many *ID wallas* plan to live there for long time or even forever. So like *British lahure* migrants of this category also do not send all their money to the village. Those who send money have made house in the main junctions of the village or nearby cities. A few have made house even in Dharan and Kathmandu. Their considerable amount of money also goes for modern household amenities, electronics items, gift, festivals, party celebration and motorbike. *ID wallas* do not prefer to buy agriculture land since they have permanent residence permit in Hong and Singapore. But recently, Hong Kong government stopped issuing identification cards. It is reasonable to assume that migration to Hong Kong will decrease significantly as consequences.

Gurkha or Bahadur

They are uneducated, unskilled and seasonally migrate for agriculture wage labourers and other household works to Punjab, Delhi, Calcutta and Mumbai and other several Indian cities. This low paid migrant category does not have sufficient money to invest in their village. Whatever they earn and save it goes for daily household needs, other family expenses and paying debt.

Kathmandu Lahure

Although migrants of this category have got the name *lahure* they do not have income like *Arab lahure*, *Indian lahure*, *British lahure* and *ID walla*. Since *Kathmandu lahure* does not have more income the word *lahure* seems very ironic for them. Most of the migrants of this category are students and factory workers. The living cost in Kathmandu is very high and they are not in the condition to invest in their village.

Surprisingly during household survey nobody claimed marriage as a cause of labour migration. But marriage seems a regular social phenomenon among migrant youths after constructing a new house. Nowadays normally people spend around 150,000-200,000 NRs for a marriage. The amount seems around one year income of *Arab lahure* and *Indian lahure*. In that sense migrants spend large amount of their remittance in marriage and festival. This applies to all categories of migrants. For *British lahure and ID walla* the marriage amount could be even higher.

5.5 Migration and Transformation of Capital Forms

Migrants of all categories except migrants to Kathmandu (*Kathmandu lahure*) prefer to make house either in their first vacation or final return. Many people said from the second day of their arrival the house making process begins. Local tractors and trucks start to bring brick, iron rod, sand, cement and stones. People have very interesting guess about who else has arrived from overseas and what types of house is he going to build. During key informant interview, Mr. Subedi, a shopkeeper who has a grocery shop at the cross road, claimed that he can categorize migrants easily through the vehicles that they use to carry stuff to build their house. According to him, if a big truck starts to run in the village with cement, brick, sand and iron rod then he can easily guess that this is either a *British/Indian lahure* or an *ID walla* going to build a concrete house. He further said *Arab lahure* use tractor to carry house constructing stuff. The shopkeeper guess seems quite rational and logical. The vehicle used to carry the stuff reflects the migrant's income, his economic position in the village and type of house he is going to construct.



Photo 5.4: A new concrete house of a migrant near his parent house

Migrants who want to build a house return home mostly during Dashain and Tihar (The major two festivals in Nepal). Just before moving to the home, the migrant either pools his income or withdraws his saving from the bank and starts to mobilize his social contacts in the village to know the recent price of land, brick, cement and wood. He sends his arrival schedule to his family and friends. Then gossip begins among local young adults and friends. Some very close friends make plan to welcome their friend and even go to Bhadrapur and Birtamod to receive him and to carry his luggage. Both *British/Indian lahure* and *Arab lahure* receive warm welcome before coming to home. In this sense a successful migrant brings his social prestige and status in the village simultaneously with the foreign currency. After his arrival he starts to build new house

and make a prestigious identity in the village with his newly build house. That means the front of the newly build house reflects the social status of the family. But, the migrant's prestige does not last long in the village if he could not make a new house by his money. In Prithvinagar building a house is a social and economic goal of every migrant that is attained through the use of remittances.

Aase (1996:61) explains a similar case in Gujar Pind Village of Pakistan where villagers have shifted their emphasis from consumption of social relations to consumption of material goods like big house constructed by remittances in order to maintain their social respect. Hunan Village of China is another similar example where people have constructed house through remittances and achieve the goal of respect in the village (Murphy, 2002:104). During interview with an old man in a tavern he said *Bidesh gayo dhan kamayo, ghar banayo izzat badhayo* (people who went abroad and earned money and built a house raised their social status). The proverb has two clear metaphors. It compares the foreign employment with money and house with social prestige. Let's see this proverb with metaphorization

Foreign (A) = Money (B)
 House (C) = Social Status (D)

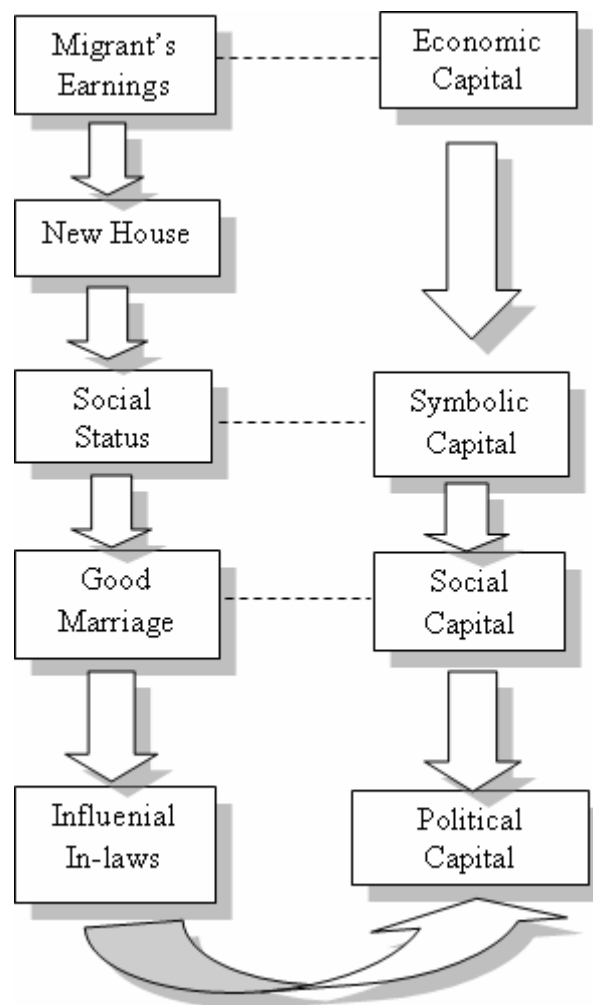


Figure 5.1: Transformation of various forms of capital

Here foreign stands for money which come through labour migration and house stands for social status. This was confirmed during my fieldwork. Some families in Prithvinagar who had built a new house from remittances requested me to take photographs with them

outside their new house. And those who had not built new house requested me to wait until they have built their new house, then come again and take photographs. With a new colourful house a migrant gains respect in the village and his earning (economic capital) transforms into social prestige (symbolic capital). See figure 5.1.

What happens when an *Arab lahure* makes a new house? Parents realize a need of a daughter-in-law and a marriage process begins. Although a successful migrant is an eligible groom among local girls, a new house having hi fi music system, flat colour television, DVD player and motorbike are good enough amenities to attract local wealthy parents who have daughters of marriageable age. A new house with modern amenities is so important that it raises the migrant's social and economic status in the village. As a result he can send marriage proposal to those wealthy families which was not possible before his migration.

Case 5.11

Mr. Limbu, aged 74, is a former ex-British army and former VDC chairman. He was retired in early 1980s and returned to his village. He bought 5 bigha agriculture lands and built a new house in the village. Since he own enough lands and new house gradually he became known as British lahure in the village. After two years of his retirement people elected him as a member of local high-school management committee and after 4 years he became chairman of the same committee.

His brother-in-law was already in village level politics and after the establishment of democracy in 1990 he became the ward chairman of his village. His term as a ward chairman was so popular that people again elected him as a ward chairman in VDC election.

Case 5.12

Mr. Tamang, aged 59, known as Major Saheb (Army officer) in the village, is an ex-Major of Indian army and former ward chairman of the VDC. After his retirement he made a concrete house in his village and gained social status. He had enough lands and property. He was very much interested for social work and development activities. Local youths elected him president of their club. His popularity was raising as a kind, helpful

and cooperative man. In last local-level election he elected as a ward chairman of the VDC.

Case 5.13

Mr. Luitel, aged 41 is a successful Arab Lahure and rich man of his village. Seven years before he was unemployed, landless and very poor. People did not care about him. When local foreign employment to Gulf States begun, he took loan from Bank and went abroad. Now, he owns lands and a concrete house near the main road. After making a new concrete and colourful house he gained his good social status in the village. During his second holidays he got good marriage offer from local wealthy family. His father-in-law is a well known village personality and he is thinking to join local politics.

After a good marriage with a daughter of local wealth family, migrants increase their social capital. Besides, in-laws social and economic support further consolidates their status in the village. Many migrants have transformed their social capital into political capital and became VDC, and ward chairman. School management committee and local clubs are other areas where migrants have gained positions.

But in the case of *Kathmandu lahure*, it does not apply. Most of the migrants who belong to this category are students gone for higher education and workers working in garment factories. In the case of students, some of them are involved in part-time job besides their studies. Their part-time income seems very low compared to the expensive house rent and food in Kathmandu. They hardly manage their studies with their part-time income. Ashok, aged 27, who himself is studying “Master in Business Administration” in Kathmandu is teaching in a boarding high school at Kathmandu. He said that he hardly manages his house rent, food and other daily expenses with his job. He was very frustrated with his colleagues from his own village. Since he is a master degree student in a reputed university of the nation he should be respected in the village. However, nobody cares about him in the village. Nobody lend him even hundred rupees. This, he simply said, is because he has no foreign income. On the other hand, some of his friends who even did not pass school level and went abroad and earned money, now have new houses in the village. Everybody talks about them. They have social respect and everybody in the village is ready to help them.

Workers in garment factories at Kathmandu have almost similar situation like students. Their nominal salary just covers their house rent, other daily expenses and children's school fees. If something goes wrong like sickness in the family, then they have to borrow money from home. That means no saving and no question of sending money to home.

Case 5.14

Mr. Shrestha, aged 49, had gone to Kathmandu around 15 years ago to work in a garment factory. He could not earn enough and sold all his properties in the village to support his family expenses at Kathmandu.

Case 5.14 shows that migrant workers from Prithvinagar to Kathmandu have no additional investment in the village. They come to the village during festivals to meet their relatives and parents and return Kathmandu with some home made food and grains.

To sum up, lack of employment and agriculture land in the village are two main reasons behind migration. Largest proportion (19.6%) of migrants has gone to Qatar which resembles recent national trend. UAE, Saudi Arabia and Malaysia are other popular destinations. The amount of remittance varies substantially and ranges from 50,000 NRs. to above 500,000 NRs per year. In Prithvinagar, I found family adaptive strategy (Implicit contractual arrangement between migrant and family) for sending money and Poirine (1997) theory of implicit family loan found applicable. Area of remittance investment varies among different categories of migrants. *British lahure* and *ID walla* have less investment than *Indian lahure* and *Arab lahure* inside the village. Once daily expenses are covered and debts are paid, the remittances go towards long term goals like a new house, purchase of land or succeeding migration. Migrant's economic capital (remittances) has been successfully transformed into symbolic (prestige) and social capital (in-law network) and finally they have been successful to transform their social prestige into political capital (position in various local institutions).

Chapter - VI

Consequences of Labour Migration and Social Cohesion

6.1 Introduction

Labour migration in Prithvinagar has brought several changes in both social and economic landscape of the village. Local youths have got opportunity to work and develop their skills abroad. Migrant's life standard has noticeably improved in recent years. Social values are shifting and women's roles at home are changed. Social cohesion is weakening day by day and a number of other social changes are seen in the village.

6.2 Increased Income and a Better Life

Foreign employment implies expectation of increased income and accumulation of modern household assets. There is no doubt that off farm and non-farm income contribute a large proportion of household income in Nepal and remittance constitutes an important element in that component of household' income (Seddon et al., 2001:30). In Prithvinagar, labour migration has significantly added to the annual household income of migrants' households. While remittances itself is an indication of income diversification, it has also helped further diversification of the local economics through establishment of petty business and other work of the remaining members. Multiplier effect of remittances has contributed diversification in source of income.

According to the VDC profile (2006) the proportional share of sources of income has changed. Four major changes are: decrease in the share of crop farming, increase in the share of remittance, increase in the share of dairy farming and commercial vegetable farming, and emergence of tea cultivation. Of the four noticeable changes, income from tea cultivation, and vegetable and dairy farming are limited to small proportion. The establishment of *dudha chisyan kendra* (milk chilling centre) in the village and subsequent investment into *bikase gai* (improved varieties of cow) and commercial vegetable farming have played an important role in increment. Although the share from service and pension seems to have gone down substantially, the absolute figures have doubled (VDC profile 2006). Land consolidation by local tea estates that resulted into

reduction in the landholding size of the local farm households plus decrease in crop yields are responsible for decrease in the share of crop farming.

According to my survey, only 6% households have less than 50,000 NRs income per year (see figure 6.1). Majority of the households (62%) have more than 100,000 NRs income per year and 32% have income between 50,000 to 100,000 NRs per year. According to the NLSS (HMG et al, 2004:37, Table 11.1) the average household income of Nepal is 80,111 NRs per year. My statistics show that most of the household average income is much higher than national average income in Prithvinagar.

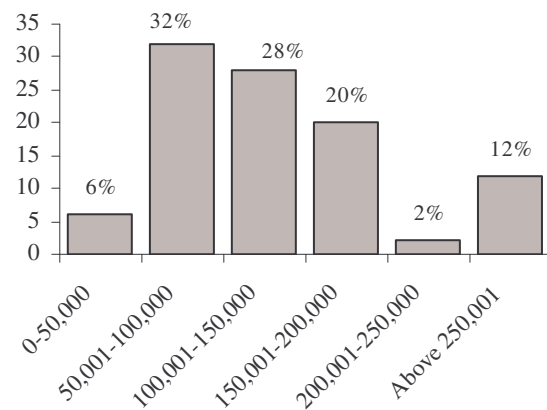


Figure 6.1: Average household income (NRs.) per year

A clear change is observed in the ownership of household assets among respondents. Most of the return migrants have good house in Prithvinagar. A “standard” house is incomplete without modern household assets. Migrants in Prithvinagar have taken this into account and they have collected substantial amount of household assets. Despite a rural setting most of them have sizeable *baithak kotha* (living room) with at least a television set (96% household) and 36% migrants’ households have television, radio, music system and basic furniture. The proportion having cupboard is also significant, i.e. 62% during field survey. These features are not common in rural living and it clearly indicates the increased living standard of local households. Parents and spouses of migrants have golden ornaments made in foreign countries. Household members have dresses from abroad. Although a small proportion, a few households also have refrigerator (5.3%) and even a mobile (2%) and cordless telephone set. Almost every household has a bicycle by now. Motorcycle (32%) is another popular item among youngsters in Prithvinagar.

According to VDC profile (2006) ten years ago the proportion of households living in wooden houses having thatch/straw roof was 59.3% but at present these houses have almost disappeared. Now, most of the houses are either brick with corrugated roof or *pakka* (concrete). A new house with modern amenities clearly reflects the increased life standard of migrants’ households.

6.3 Respects Towards Work and Opportunity to Develop Skills

During field visit some returned migrants reported that they have got opportunity to know the real value of hard labour after working many years under boiling sun and strict Arabian laws. Now, they have no hesitation and shyness to work in their village. An old father said his ruffian and lazy son became honest and laborious after working two years in Qatar. Some migrants also reported that they want to repeat their hard work even in their own village.

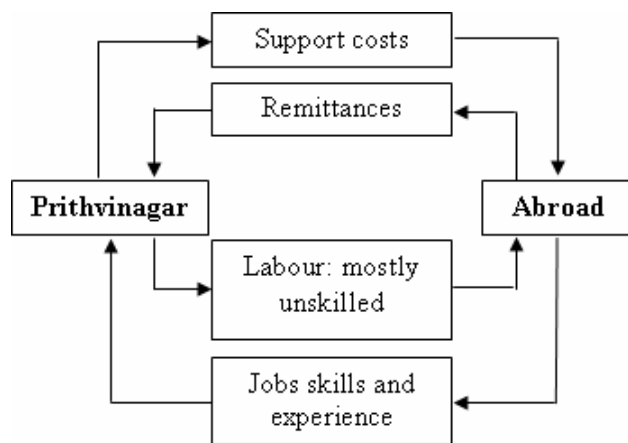


Figure 6.2: Simple model of cost and returns of labour migration from Prithvinagar

Though Nepalese labourers are unskilled and poorly educated, they have also got opportunity to develop their skills abroad. A few migrants have already shown their skill and have well established their small cottage industries in Prithvinagar. Most of the present local technicians (carpenter, plumber, electricians, mason etc.) were labour migrants some years ago. A

migrant said now he is using local carpenters in his new house. Five years ago people had to hire such technicians from nearby cities.

Case 6.1

Mr. Thebe, aged 45, learned his carpentry during his three years stay in Saudi Arabia. Now, he has a well known furniture shop in Prithvinagar and six local carpenters work in his workshop. He came home after three years and never returned abroad. These days he earns more than his previous foreign job in his own village living with family.

Case 6.2

Mr. Magar, aged 29, had gone Malaysia 4 years ago. He worked in an electricity shop and learned wiring. These days he is a busy electrician and earns more than 10,000 NRs per month.

In the above cases we see that labour migration has developed several skilled man-powers in the village. Besides money, migrants have brought a number of skills and knowledge.

As mentioned in Palmer's (1985:3-4) "theory of private gain and social loss" labour migration is not a complete social loss in Prithvinagar. However, this does not apply to *British lahure* and *ID walla* because mostly they do not return their village and those who are returned has settled down in Birtamod, Dharan and Kathmandu.

6.4 Changing Social Role of Women at Home

In Prithvinagar, males go outside village whereas women stay at home looking after their children, elders and so called easy household work. Labour migration has brought several changes of women's works inside or outside home. Before migration there was clear gender division of labour. Easy work is female and hard work is male sphere (see chapter 7.3 for division of work). After husband's migration wife has to work more to shoulder most of her husband's work additionally to the usual workload. In particular, changes are seen in management of family income and presence at communal work.

Workload extends heavily in a nuclear family when the man leaves. All the responsibilities go to wife. Sometimes migration brings family problem and anxiety when husband does not return home for long time. In sickness and death of family member the situation becomes more critical. The absence of husband for a long time creates social problem and psychological anxiety for wives at home. Gautam (2001:11) writes that this problem is stronger when family head represents a strong factor for family unification. Mrs Shrestha, a housewife said if woman talked to any man in the village, then villagers see her with doubt and make several gossips. During field visit I found some women who were seen tired and frustrated with long and continuous absence of their husband.

Despite the changes of role and increase workload, local women have taken migration as both opportunity and constraint. Some women said their responsibility begins from the very first day of their husband's migration and they have taken it as an opportunity or challenge to prove their capacity. After migration, women have to look after their own parents and addition their parents-in-law. Besides, they must look after children and prepare them for school. Periodically, they have to go to school to receive their children's progress report and to pay school's fee. Recent years women are even seen in the local administration office (VDC office) and banks. During household survey some elderly (60+) respondents reported that whenever they get ill their daughter-in-law would take them to the hospital.

Case 6.3

Mrs Shrestha, 37, is a housewife and a social worker. Her husband went to Saudi Arabia three years before. Presently, she is living with her three children and she has to deal with all the responsibilities of the house. Her husband sends remittance in regular intervals and she has invested some amount in highbred cow. As she said, now she is active and more dynamic compared to the other women of her community. Last year she was selected as a member of a Gramin Mahila Samuha (Rural Women Group) and School Sanchalak Samiti (School Management Committee). She was very happy and her responsibility and social prestige increased after husband's migration

Case 6.4

Mrs Acharya, now 24, is a newly married housewife. Presently, she is living with her parents-in-law in extended family having 13 members. Her husband went to Malaysia two years before. He sends money to her father-in-law and he does not give any money to her. According to her now she is alone and helpless in her own home. All the day she has to look after the household's work and she is even not allowed to move outside the home without father-in-law's permission. Once she had gone outside to receive her husband's telephone call, then father-in-law blamed her that she is planning for elopement. Therefore, she has not gone outside since that day. In her own words "sriman bidesh gayar ma aashahaya bhaya" (I became helpless due to my husband's migration).

In cases 6.3 and 6.4 we see that the extent of changing role of women at home varies in different households. Women living in extended family face a decreased participation in intra-household decision-making. In extended family, husband functions as a mediator between wives and parents by representing the wife's needs and interests. In Nepali culture daughters-in-law should be subordinate to her parents-in-law. Sometimes it creates gap and hesitation between them and daughter-in-law interests are less represented when husband migrates. Some women said they have to be more sensible with the society and family in the absence of their husband. A few families even torture and scold their daughter-in-law when her husband lives away from home.

On the other hand, in a nuclear family woman have to perform all the roles in the absence of her husband. In nuclear families they can compensate their workloads with independent decision making and thereby more freedom. For the woman of a nuclear

family, migration of her husband is an opportunity to go beyond her house and to participate in communal activities. Some women are even reported that they have got several opportunities to go outside home as a household head. These opportunities have made them quite open, dynamic and bold.

Besides, the changing role of women at home and their workload also depend on the age and number of children's they have. In extended family women having several adult children have better status and cooperation from parents-in-law than a newly married daughter-in-law. Grown up children can support their mother in her household work and they can even oppose their grand parents if anything goes wrong or any partiality occurs against their mother in the family. In the case of newly married daughter-in-law, most of the households treat her as an immature girl and keep her away from household decisions until she gives birth. Aase (1996:77) writes that in Pakistan a daughter-in-law is under the undisputed authority of her mother-in-law until she becomes a mother. Being a daughter-in-law and a new member of the family, normally it is very hard to express own feelings to her parent-in-law in Nepal, especially when husband lives outside home.

But it does not mean that migrants' wives in extended family are totally subordinated. There are other factors such as financial situation and quantity and quality of land to decide women status in migrant's household. Quantity and quality of land determine the household financial situation and generally it seems that women have better situation and more free role in wealthy families.

Case 6.5

Mrs. Koirala, aged 25, said she has to work many hours in the field because her husband has enough land.

Case 6.5 seems contradict to the statements made above. How can that be? Although some households have less amount of land, they have either regular income from local job or remittances from foreign employment. Such households' women have better situation. But in those households who have lots of land but no jobs or no other sources of regular income in the village, women have to work many hours in the field.

In both situations unless women have their own income and better education, very broadly speaking, some women are economically more dependent on their husband's income. Francis (1995:112) writes that in this situation women have lost control over decision-making. Other women have been largely cut off from access to male incomes and have become substantially independent of male authority. In this study, many women have found themselves in intermediate positions, where spheres of responsibility and control are subject to conflict.

6.5 Social Evils and Frustration among Youths

Labour migration has brought some social evils in the village. Many respondents reported that such cases appeared in recent years in the village. According to the former VDC chairman and SFCL manager clear negative effects are seen particularly among youths. They said many sons of former soldiers are having the dream of joining Indian and British army as well as going abroad. Because of the several hindrances only a few get selected. To get foreign employment, they have to face several obstacles for visa and to accumulate money. In "a theory of migration" Lee (1966:51) has mentioned similar intervening obstacles like physical barrier (Berlin Wall) and immigration laws which may restrict the movement. Drug abuse is common among youngsters. Several young men hang around in the village during the whole day.



Photo 6.1: Unsuccessful migrants playing "Ludo" at road junction

I found that many boys were playing cards, carom board and so on at junctions, local shops and tavern (see photo 6.1). According to themselves, they have no job and work in the village. Many villagers reported that they are neither interested in helping their parents in the fields nor going to school. They are always dreaming of going abroad. They need regular money for their gambling, drugs and *raksi* (local wine). As compared to their migrated friends they do not have money and sometimes even ready to commit small crimes for money.

Case 6.6

Mr. Subba, aged 23, recently sold his father's bicycle to pay his credit at local bar. The father registered the case at local administration and he became humiliated when local administration charged his son for stealing his father's bicycle.

Sometimes boys even steal from their parents and sell amenities of their house. Gradually, these boys join with the gang of local hooligans and spoil their life. During my fieldwork, a few such cases were noticed in the village.

Case 6.7

Mr. Dahal, aged 33, has a grocery shop at road junction. He said sometime a gang of druggist boys (unsuccessful migrants) take beer and snacks in credit from his shop. But they never remember to pay their credit. Last time he denied and boys threatened him, saying if anything happened to him they will not be responsible.

Case 6.8

Mrs. Pudal, aged 46, is a raksi pasale (owner of the local bar). She is irritated with local druggist boys. They always come to her bar and disturb her customers.

Due to the Maoist activities government had withdrawn police station temporarily from the village. As a result, these boys' activities are increasing day by day. Above cases show that tired and frustrated shopkeepers have no options except to satisfy their demand. Many people have learned the habit of drinking alcohol and gambling. Returned migrants are habituated to drinking alcohol and gambling. They learnt it when they had leisure time in foreign countries for relaxation after working many hours. These people become a bad example to local villagers and these activities have heavy economic and social consequences on their families and relatives

Case 6.9

A family spent lots of money in ornaments and cloths for their daughter-in-law. When her husband went abroad, she took everything with her and runaway with another guy. Now, the family is thinking to compensate their money from the girl's natal house.

Case 6.10

Mr. Limbu, aged 43, a migrant to Hong Kong, sent all his money to his wife who had already runaway with another young man.

Runaway of migrant's wife to other guy is seen as a serious social immorality in Prithvinagar. Since last three-four years several such cases are found in many migrants' households. As I mentioned in previous chapter (see chapter 5.5 for details) mostly migrants get married during his first holiday. Parents also force their daughter for marriage thinking that they got a good son-in-law as a successful migrant with foreign income. Predominantly these are arranged marriages and even the migrant himself do not know anything about the past history of his future wife. When the migrant goes abroad again for many years, then his wife resumes contact with her ex-boyfriend. Then they meet secretly and sometime runaway as well. Generally these cases are found in nuclear family where parent-in-law has far access to their daughter-in-law. The danger of runaway explains parents-in-law control with newly wed daughters-in-law. After giving birth, chances for elopement are smaller.

Remaining members of migrated households do not like to work in the village. They are just waiting for the remittances sent by their migrated members. Their idle sitting in the house has also created social evils. Villagers reported that migrant's family have reckless and wasteful behaviour and wear expensive dresses. Through western dresses vulgarity is entering in the village. Drinks, party, playing cards and watching movie in their television set and movie hall, and driving motorbike in high speed are often seen among migrants. Most of my key informants said the western culture is conquering the local culture step by step through foreign employment. Some old men complained that migrants' family have inferior feeling towards non-migrants households. They have foreign income and they think of themselves as modern and superior. How labour migration has brought changes in ways of achieving social recognition and to what extent social cohesion is deteriorating, will be discuss in the following chapter.

6.6 Ways of Achieving Social Prestige

What are the parameters that govern social judgement? If someone wants to sketch a clear and comprehensive description of how people reach their judgement of themselves and

others, what variables would one emphasize? People often hold views of their social worlds that seem connected to material object (Dunning, 1999:1). Aase (1996:60) has similar view. He writes that conspicuous exhibition of material items (big house) yields rank to the owner.

Prior to the beginning of foreign employment i.e. before early 1990s, Prithvinagar was completely a subsistence agriculture village. At that time people had different parameters to see their neighbours and their own prestige in the village. The variables to show the social status and respect in the villager were number of *hali* (servant especially for ploughing) number of own family labour in the family (brothers/sons), quantity and quality of land and paddy *kuniu* (paddy stack or rick), and of course education of the family members. These sorts of things were enough to become a *thulo manchhe* (big/elite man) in the village. According to Mr. Poudel, 59, in his time people were recognized by their labour, education, honesty, number of *parma* (labour exchange) (see chapter 6.8.1 for *parma*) he/she owned during whole agriculture season or how cooperative is he/she.



Photo 6.2: A new house signifying higher social status

At present, these things do not matter in the village. A new concrete colourful house, modern electronics and foreign employment or number of migrants determine the household's respect in Prithvinagar. As Aase said (1996:61-62)) "meaningful way of obtaining respect has substituted old traditional power and wisdom to enterprise". Villagers have shifted their emphasis from traditional agriculture to modern consumer goods (a colourful concrete house etc). Many migrants said now local wealthy people do not forget to include them in socio-communal activities because of their increased income and materials good in the village (i.e. economic capital and political capital).

A local high school teacher said in the past that the majority of the houses were wooden with thatched roof and it was not a matter of gaining social respect. Stratification of household ranking (status) began when migrants started to build concrete house in the village. Presently three types of houses (wooden corrugated, brick corrugated and

concrete) in the village shows the different social value (low to high value) of local households. A house having separate kitchen, attached bathroom and toilet, small garden at front side and disc antenna at roof are the indicators of newly emerged higher class in the village. Several migrants have motorbike but either they have 75 cc scooter or 150 cc Honda bike, it has extra importance in gaining social respect. A tractor and a motorbike are enough to recognize the rank of a family in the village. A shopkeeper said these days there are more than 20 tractors in the village and it is not as beneficial as before to own a tractor. But still migrants prefer to buy tractor because of its additional importance in gaining social status and symbolic capital. Low caste and lower class people also reported that they have now good treatment from higher caste and upper class people because they have foreign income, colour television and tape recorder in their house. A similar situation is observed in a small village in Pakistan. “The ranking of *zamindar* (landlord) and *kammi* (artisans) is often turned upside-down when they migrate. The *kammi* becomes a well paid *mystri* (carpenter) in the city, while the uneducated *zamindar* must be content with low status *mazadur* (worker) work” (Aase, 1998:12).

Aase (1996:61) writes that “the new respect-invoking items are all industrially produced outside the village and to have access to these sorts of things villagers need money”. In Prithvinagar, to raise the social respect social values are shifting from subsistence farming to migration income. Local higher secondary head teacher said shifting social values towards material goods has negative impacts in education among youths. School dropout has increased in recent years.

6.7 Migration and School Dropout

Children of successful migrants have pocket money or even motorcycle and they get whatever they want from their parents. As a result their devotion to education has suffered. Some children of migrants’ households have not paid keen attention towards education and numbers of SLC attaining students are decreasing year by year.

Case 6.11

Mr. Rai, aged 56, is an ex-Indian army driver. He was not satisfied with his son’s excellent performance in local high school. He has three sons. The oldest one is studying

in grade twelve. Every year his son becomes first in his class and school does not charge any tuition fees to him. The father was not happy with the excellent performance of his son. He said “if my son fail or drop school I will send him Dubai like his other friends”.

In case 6.11 we see how foreign employment is affecting education of local boys. Many parents are not interested to send their son to school. If their children fail in exam then it will be a good opportunity for parents to send their son abroad.

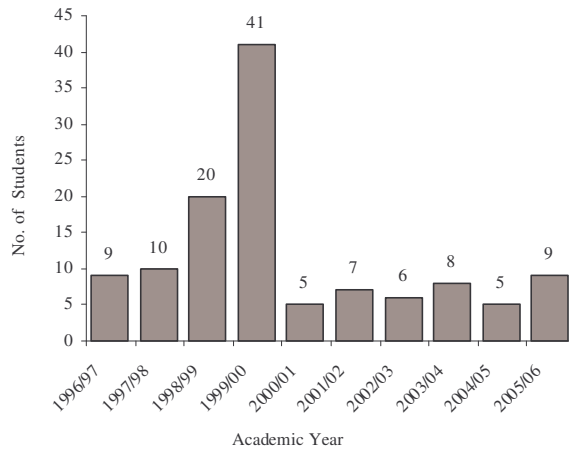


Figure 6.3: Number of SLC attending students at Himali Higher Secondary School

If we see the local high school result, since last 5-6 years school drop rate has increased and numbers of SLC attaining students are decreasing year by year (see Figure 6.3). But, the local high school head teacher said that migration is not a single factor for school drop out. Recently some private and government high schools have also been established in surrounding settlements. Private schools offer several facilities such as if

three students are from one family then the third child will be free. Parents are taking their children to boarding school to grab this opportunity.

6.8 Social Cohesion

Social cohesion does not have uniform and clear definition. Most of the research in social cohesion has been contradictory, vague and difficult to operationalise (Moody and White, 2003:105). Moody and White (Ibid) define social cohesion as a “field of forces that act on members to remain in the group” or “the resistance of a group to disruptive forces”. Ogdul (2001:321) writes that social cohesion in a neighbourhood is not necessarily an advantage in a process of modernization and rehabilitation. According to Muntaner and Lynch (1999:68) social cohesion is the amount of individual participation in social groups in the community. Wilkinson (cited in Ibid: 67) defines social cohesion as participation in public affairs, civic responsibility, or involvement in public life. According to him it can be measured with indicators of voting participation, newspaper readership, or number of cultural voluntary association.

In this study my aim is not to identify what social cohesion is, but to identify how social cohesion works in Prithvinagar VDC. During my fieldwork I asked my key informants and household heads to know their views on present social unity. Most of the key informants said the unity and solidarity of the village is deteriorating because of the labour migration. Former VDC chairman, SFCL manager, head teacher of local high school and some other village well known persons were very serious with this issue. According to them after 1990 when labour migration started in the village, participation of local youths in socio-economic and cultural activities decreased significantly.

To know how far labour migration is fragmenting rural solidarity, as suggested by Wilkinson (Ibid) I will try to see the participation of local youths in socio-economic and cultural activities. Besides, I will see the process of household split in Prithvinagar especially through Aase's (1996) "Theory of Household Fission".

6.8.1 *Parma*: Diminishing Practice of Labour Exchange

The practice of *parma* was very popular even until 5 to 7 years before. According to an old man, people used to celebrate it as an agriculture festival. For me it was a good example of how local people used to help each other in crisis and how they were living in unity and cooperation. Mr Pradhan said that everybody was interested in *parma*, and he still remembers that his son had cried a lot because he did not let him go for *parma*. For local school boys/girls and young adults it was a golden opportunity to gather, sing songs, say jokes and exchange gossips. People used to prepare special food called *chamre bhat* (fried rice) and *gundurk ko achar* (pickle of fermented and dried vegetables) for *parma*. I asked many people what is *parma* system? They said it is like a *pareko belama saghaune* (help someone in need). Generally people practice *parma* in peak agriculture season and specially it applies for paddy cultivation during transplanting time (see table 7.1 for agriculture calendar). It is a kind of labour exchange under which a man/woman work for another household and in return he/she has the right to receive the same amount of labour. For me it was a good parameter to identify the interaction among local households.

Case 6.12

Mrs. Khanal, aged 59, is a housewife. She said until 10 years before she had to go at least 15 days for parma, and to receive the same amount of labour during her paddy

cultivation. Now her daughter does not like to go parma. She has her college books to read and she disgraces to do so. Daughter who was listening her mother's opinion added that there will be many unknown people in the field and for her it is a shameful work to go parma and work free for her neighbour.

Above case shows how local practice is declining in different generations. Until 5 to 7 years before, people were proud for being a *parma* labour and number of days he/she worked as *parma* labourer was counted as his/her credit in the village. Case 6.12 and other several similar cases clearly depict the youth's opinion and decreasing trend of *parma* system in the village. Former VDC chairman said, now, people have money and they can even hire expensive labourers. They do not need help from their neighbours in peak agriculture season as before. Interaction among the neighbours is fading day by day.

6.8.2 Anshabanda: The Household Split

How social cohesion is breaking down in Prithvinagar VDC can be observed through *anshabanda*; known as household split. Due to the increasing population, the household split is a normal social phenomenon but these days rate of household split is higher than ever before. SFCL manager claimed that most of the families were extended before migration. Family conflict begins among the brothers/sons usually after migrants first holiday and finally ends with the fragmentation of parent's property and separate new house. My field data shows that all the nuclear families were living in joint families before migration.

The land fragmentation due to generation takeover is considered one of the structural problems inhibiting agricultural modernisation in Nepal (Sapkota, 2003:44). Construction of new house begins with the legal fragmentation of land or parent's property. Even the word *anshabanda* does not only reflect the household split. It is the legal fragmentation of parent's property and land as well. It was difficult to know how land is associated to household split in Prithvinagar. Here, Aase (1996) "theory of household fission" helped me to understand how conflict begins between migrant and non-migrants brothers. How is land associated to migration? How do brothers in a migrant's family lose each other's support? And how does household fission occur?

In Hindu law, land fragmentation has its roots in its traditional law of succession whereby all the male offspring are entitled to the parental property, including land. This right of use would normally be passed from fathers to sons, whereas only unmarried daughters above the age of 35 have the same right (Sapkota, 2003:44). But an amendment was made in 2002 on Land Act and it has provided equal rights of property for daughter-in-law and a daughter who is unmarried and has reached the age of 35 years (Ibid). This traditional system remains the main basis for land fragmentation in Prithvinagar.

After the migration of one brother, the remaining brothers and parents living at home either cultivate the jointly hold land or if family labour is not sufficient then lease the land to non-migrant households. When migrant saves substantial amount he sends money as part of an implicit contractual arrangement between migrant and family. Normally after two years migrant returns home for his first holiday and all the family members, friends and neighbours heartily welcome him. During his stay at home, he tries to get married with family support or if already married then tries to clear debt which he had taken for migration or try to invest his money in *ghaderi* (a piece of land for construction of house or residential plot) for his future new house. If he already own *ghaderi* then try to invest his money for a new house. Up to this moment everything goes according to the family plan and everybody in the family seems happy. When holiday ends migrant set out for his job again and remaining brothers and parents living at home assure him that they will look after his newly married wife. This time migrant does not send all his money to his brothers and parents. Either he sends money to his wife or sends directly to his bank account which he had opened during his first holiday.

When brothers living at home do not get money and gifts according to their expectation, then doubts emerge among them. They think that their working hard in the village is worthless and they are deprived from the earning opportunity. On the other hand, their migrated brother has good income, luxurious life and most importantly still equal rights on parent's property and land. According to the Nepalese constitution, all the male offspring are equally entitled to the parental property. So, ultimately brothers living in a joint or extended family start to live separately and as Aase (Ibid) said in "theory of household fission", household splits with the fragmentation of land among brothers.

Case 6.13

Mr. Thapa, aged 58 is an ex-Indian army. He has three sons and one daughter. Two sons and daughter were already married. The youngest son is studying in bachelor level at nearby city, Bhadrapur.

Three years before his elder son Khadga got married to his girlfriend. Khadga was unemployed and Mr. Thapa suggested him to go aboard for work. He pledged his land to the local bank and managed to send his son to Qatar. Now, Khadga sends money to his wife. On the other hand Mr. Thapa has to pay interest to the bank and he does not have access to his son's income. Some months ago, he asked for some money from his daughter-in-law. She threatened him and said if he requested her for money again she will go to her natal house. Mr. Thapa explained that his daughter-in-law is handing over his son's income to her mother. He was very much worried because his family is splitting and very soon the bank will confiscate his land if he does not clear the entire loan.

In many cases (43.8%) migrants send money to their wives. Since father invests money for his son he also expects money to clear debt and pay bank interest. In case 6.13 we see how household splits if migrant sent money to his wife.

6.8.3 Emergence of New forms of Inter-household Relationship

Foreign employment is a newly adapted strategy in Prithvinagar and it needs large amount of money. Most of the people of this VDC are farmers and not capable to pay for foreign employment. SFCL do not provide enough money to buy ticket and pay for visa. Therefore, many household are compelled to take loan in *dhito pass*⁵ from local moneylenders in high interest rate (24%-36% per year). According to my calculation, in normal condition it takes around 12 to 18 months to pay the interest of total loan for *Arab lahure*. If migrant did not get expected job or if migrant became sick during his abroad stay then he cannot pay his interest. Consequence, moneylender seizes land and migrant becomes landless in the village. There are a number of such other cases where many *Arab lahures* could not pay their loan and they lost their land. Due to the high interest rate

⁵ *Dhito pass* is a legal agreement between moneylender and creditor. In this system moneylender will be the temporary owner of the land and if migrant do not pay interest in time then ownership will be permanent or moneylender will seize the land.

moneylenders are earning substantial amount and through *dhito pass* system local moneylenders are becoming landlords in the village.

Case 6.14

Mr. Karki, aged 41, is an unsuccessful migrant. He had gone to Malaysia five years ago. He did not get good job there and could not pay his interest. After two years the moneylender seized his land and he became landless.

Local people said *dhito pass* system has created the two classes of landlord and landless in the village. Case 6.14 and other several similar cases show that gradually wealthy people are getting wealthier lending their money in high interest and many unsuccessful migrants are becoming landless. As a result, gap between two neighbours (moneylender and creditor) is widening in Prithvinagar.

6.8.4 Decreasing Recruitment to Socio-cultural Activities

During my fieldwork I asked many people why they think that labour migration is deteriorating the social unity and integrity of the village. The most common answer was “nobody in the village for any social, economic and cultural activities”. Mr. Khadka, an old man said it is very hard to get youth participation even for funeral. According to him the limited number of participation in funeral is sufficient to explain the effect of labour migration in social cohesion. Ten years before the number of mourners at a funeral used to be around 100-150 and even sometime more than 200 mourners depending upon reputation of past away person in the village. Now, hardly 30-50 people participate in a funeral. Most of the youngsters have gone abroad. Culturally, females are not allowed to join funerals and old people can not carry the dead body up to the *ghat* (crematory). Mr. Khadka said last time when an old man died in hospital then it had been difficult to gather people to bring the dead body in the village.

Deusi and *Bhailo* are another example of diminishing youth participation in cultural activity. *Deusi* and *bhailo* are cultural practices among youths performs in *Tihar* (second biggest festival falls in Oct-Nov) In *deusi*, a group of boys get together, carry whatever musical instruments they have or can play and sing *deusi* door to door, blessing the home and family in return for money and/or refreshments. Boys even perform various *deusi*

songs to collect money for their picnic, club's instrument and other social works. Similarly, a group of girls get together and sing *bhailo* door to door, giving blessing to the family in return for money and *sel roti* (home made bread especially prepared in *Tihar*). Mr. Dahal said until some years before at least 10 *deusi* groups used to visit his house. But last year only 2 groups came and even the number of boys in a group was very low. Maoist insurgency and poor security situation were also important causes for the low enrolment in *deusi*. However, local people again claimed labour migration to be the main cause, and individualism is increasing among the migrants households.

Mr. Adhikari, 29, a returned migrant from Malaysia said they had installed a tube well at a junction of their village by the money collected from *deusi*. According to him they had very good cooperation and unity in their village. In marriage, baptism and other religious ceremony people used to gather 1-2 days earlier, worked together and nobody had to hire workers for such functions. These days people hire workers for marriage or prefer to book hotel for party. A former ward chairman said eight years ago they had repaired their village's earth-road by villagers own labour donation and effort. In past years, villagers had very good unity and cooperation, ward chairman added. Now, people have money and motorbike but nobody wants to reconstruct the road for the village.

Sansare pooja was another socio-cultural activity used to practice until 5 years before. After rice harvesting all the village people including women and children used to go to nearby forest for *sansare pooja*. They used to sing songs, dance, eat several Nepali dishes and worship forest god. Besides, people used to discuss social issues during *sansare pooja*. It was like a picnic for the entire village. After the beginning of foreign employment this activity has stopped due to the massive out-flow of local youths. An old man said nowadays his villagers even could not organize a *sansare pooja*. According to him it is the result of migration and poor social solidarity.

I found some men who were not ready to accept that the social cohesion is weakening gradually in the VDC. They gave me two examples of several small farmers' groups and weekly held *kirtan* (hymn: religious songs of praise) among local households. Despite the large number of farmer groups they are not functioning properly. In fact some groups have conflict because some members of their group do not pay debt in time (see chapter

7.8 for details). In many small settlements, these groups have created conflict among local households and further weakened social harmony.

Kirtan is a gathering of old people and women and they sing several hymns. Mostly it occurs once a week at evening and lasts around 3-4 hours. Prithvinagar is a large VDC with more than 2,700 households and one *kirtan* group of 25-30 people is not adequate to prove the growing social cohesion in the VDC.



Photo 6.3: People singing hymns in Kirtan

In this chapter, I have tried to describe the losses and gains of labour migration through “theory of private gain social loss”. Migrants have net private gain with foreign income and modern household assets. Several migrants have got opportunity to develop their skills abroad. Besides money they have brought numerous skills to the village as a social gain. I found several changes of women’s work and roles inside and outside home. Women have taken migration as both opportunity and constrain. Further I attempted to show how women roles and responsibility vary in different types of households and how gender disparity widens when husband go outside home for long time. As an outcome of labour migration I found several social evils and frustration among unsuccessful migrants. Villagers have shifted their emphasis from subsistence agriculture to modern consumer goods. Due to the increased household fission, numbers of nuclear families are increasing gradually. Decreasing interaction among the local households, low participation of local youths in socio-cultural activities and increasing household fission show the weakening social cohesion in Prithvinagar.

Chapter - VII

Agriculture and Redistribution of Land Entitlement

7.1 Agriculture in Eastern Tarai

In Nepal, Agriculture is the major economic sector although it occupies less than one fifth of the total area of the country. It employs more than 80% of the economically active population and accounts for about 39% percent of gross domestic product (UNDP and FAO, 2001:1). About 80% of the total households are agricultural households and Tarai occupies 52.4% of the total agricultural land (HMG et al., 2004:20).

Eastern Tarai comprises five Tarai districts, i.e., Jhapa, Morang, Sunsari, Saptari and Siraha of Eastern Development Region (see map 5.1). This region has hot and humid climate and an extended monsoon enters from eastern districts. Eastern Tarai districts have a fertile alluvial soil, proximity to Indian market and access of Nepal East-West Mahendra Highway. Three and sometimes even four crops per year can be grown under favourable conditions. Rice, maize, wheat, millet and cash crops such as tea, jute, sugarcane, tobacco, and oilseeds are important crops.

7.2 Prithvinagar: Subsistence Agriculture in the Past

Before 1970, Prithvinagar was inhabited by mainly two indigenous groups called *Satar* and *Rajbanshi*. The number of the then indigenous households in the VDC was unknown but according to the *Manjihadam* (head of Satar community), at that time they had around 2-3 small villages consisting of 15-20 households in each settlement. He further explained that rest of the VDC land was covered by forest. At that time their main occupation was hunting and fishery. Local streams, small ponds and Mechi River were their main source of fishing. After the resettlement programme in 1970/71, government started to resettle Nepali people in-migrated from different parts of the country as well as India, Bhutan, and Burma. Due to the massive inflow of other castes people indigenous people replaced from the village (see chapter 4.4 for more about indigenous people).

Prithvinagar had a population of 15,612 a decade ago, of which 50.7% were male and 49.6% were female. The total number of households was 2,299 and the average households size was 6.8 (NRA, 1994). Subsistence agriculture was the main occupation. Paddy, maize, wheat were the main cereal crops. Paddy was the major crop produced by the households on *aawadi* (low lying field) and/or *gairi khet* (low lying irrigated field). Maize was another cereal crop, which was primarily produced on *danda khet* (un-irrigated upland) and *gharbari* (homestead area). Wheat was mostly produced on low-lying fields especially in winter after paddy. Potato, jute and mustard were other prominent cash crops produced in Prithvinagar.

In most of the areas rotational cropping system was done. Transplantation of paddy was done during June and August (see figure 7.1 for agriculture calendar). Wheat and maize are sown after the harvest of paddy. Apart from cereal and cash crops the people of Prithvinagar grow varieties of fruits such as guava, mango, banana, jackfruit, pineapple and litchi. Almost every household has varieties of fruit trees but not in the commercial scale. Varieties of vegetables such as potato, beans, gourd, pumpkin, radish, cabbage, cauliflower and several other green vegetables were also produced in small proportion and taken to the *hatbazar* (local periodic market).

Each of the resettled households was allocated 3 *bighas* (1 bigha is equivalent to 0.67 hectares) of agriculture land. Nearly 99% households depended upon agriculture was the primary source of income (see Kansakar, 1979:191-192) and they had few options outside agriculture then. Although some households were lucky to obtain good quality land with seasonal possibility of irrigation, many had to be content with upland only because the major portion of the cultivated area in Prithvinagar is *dando* (upland) without irrigation facility. Thus, they had to labour hard and the production was not enough to maintain a living. The households had to have various sources of income for maintaining their living in Prithvinagar VDC. The income from farm production was supplemented by service, petty business and wage work but their proportional shares were extremely small. This means that in the past households in Prithvinagar had heavy reliance on agriculture.

Table 7.1: Present agriculture calendar and other socio-economic activities in Prithvinagar

Major Activities		Apr/May	May/Jun	Jun/Jul	Jul/Aug	Aug/Sep	Sep/Oct	Oct/Nov	Nov/Dec	Dec/Jan	Jan/Feb	Feb/Mar	Mar/Apr
Paddy	Land preparation												
	Transplanting												
	Harvesting												
Wheat	Land preparation												
	Planting												
	Harvesting												
Maize	Land preparation												
	Planting												
	Harvesting												
Tea	Planting												
	Harvesting												
Vegetables	Planting												
	Harvesting												
Potato	Land preparation												
	Planting												
	Harvesting												
Dashain Festival													
Tihar Festival													
Major Marriage Seasons													
Free Time													
Busy Time													
Migration Months													
Migrants Return Months													
House Building Months													

Source: Field Survey, 2006

During the course of time especially over the past three decades there was rapid growth of population (Bhandari, 2003:98). As a result, a large section of the population entered into labour force who, unlike in the past, has some years of formal schooling. The unemployment was evident and as the population increased it resulted into fragmentation of landholding and crop yield decreased. With some formal schooling, the new generation has little interest in following the footsteps of their parents and perform agriculture as their only option. There was also the security concern in the village due to Moist, especially affecting the unemployed youths who were looking for new ways of earning. In early 1990s when foreign employment especially in Saudi Arabia had just begun and the youths were being aware of the opening of labour market in West Asia and South-east Asia, some entrepreneurs entered Prithvinagar village in search of land for tea cultivation. Since the entrepreneur offered good price many households sold their land. This money was used to finance their travel to foreign countries for employment. Consequently, many household members decided to go for foreign employment, which already was their preferred way of earning.

What happened when a huge portion of young adults leave the village for employment? Obviously the impact can be seen in agriculture production, land tenure system and land holding pattern. Now the question arise how local farmers have managed to mitigate this problem. What happens when one of the units (labour) of farming system is not available or does not function properly? How do people mobilize the resources in absence of labour power? Agriculture can be studied in a number of ways and even the simplest farm comprises a large number of components and types of relations among them. According to Turner and Brush (1987:12) one sensible response to this complexity is to dissect agriculture into component parts and types of relations in order to study each separately. In the following chapter I will discuss local agriculture dissecting them into different sub-units of farming system, labour intensity/availability and land, through particular emphasis on Turner and Brush (1987) farming system approach.

7.3 Present Availability of Labourer in the Village

Household is one of the major components of the farming system. Turner and Brush (1987) have defined household as a social unit that has right to land and its use. A household is a primary unit of production and consumption which determine the number

of labourers available for production. In terms of present number of available labourers, in Prithvinagar, joint families are more prosperous than nuclear families. A household with many producers and relatively few consumers are better off than a household consisting of mother, father, many children and old disable grandparents. Aase (1985:38) describes this situation in terms of “state in the household’s development cycle” rather than household types. He expresses a household’s labour capacity through a producer/consumer ratio (Ibid: 36).

In Prithvinagar, both household and agriculture works are divided mainly on the basis of sex/gender. Ploughing, terracing, sowing, fertilizer application, spraying commercial pesticides/insecticides and construction of house are known as “hard work”. These are mainly by men. Works such as weeding, transplanting and harvesting paddy and millet, collection of grasses and fodder, carrying head load as well as transportation of manure from cowshed to field are known as “easy work” and are left for females. Besides, women see all the household works such as cooking, house cleaning, bringing drinking water, caring children etc. Chapagain (2003:31) finds a similar basis of work division in eastern hills of Nepal as “soft work” and “hard work”. He writes that gender role provides allocation of labour within a society. In Nepal women contribute more than 50% labour in cereal production in the Hills and Tarai (Ibid).

In subsistence agriculture system land and labour are strongly related to local demographic condition. In this study, the most common labourer available for agriculture is own family labour. *Parma* (labour exchange) and wage labour are two other forms of labourers available in the village. Recent years, in some small villages, households have organized and developed *ghumti labour* team (rotation labourer, see chapter 7.7 for *ghumti labour*). However, the most capable family labour such as father and/or adult sons have gone abroad. According to my field survey at least a male member has gone abroad from 96% households. Thus, family labour is not available for so called “hard work” in the village and *parma* system is not as common as before. Local people and farmers explained that the cause of decreasing practice of *parma* system is again male labour migration and decreasing land holdings. At present, the only option left for the local households whose members have gone abroad is to hire labourer.

Wage labourers are also not easily available in the village. *Satar* and *Rajbanshi* who were known as local wage labourers are already engaged in *thula chiya bagan* (large tea estate) and tea processing industries. They have whole year work guarantee, quarter facility, labour union rights and reasonable wage in these tea gardens and industries. One old farmer said his two sons have gone abroad and he is too old for “hard work”. If he needs wage labourers then either he has to pay double than existing price or he has to provide work to workers for the entire year. In this situation it is difficult for local people to manage the local farming system. Turner and Brush (1987:15) writes that all farming systems have customs that organize and regulate the use of land and labour for crop production which may exist on both formal and informal levels. In Prithvinagar, mostly migrants’ households try to run agriculture by own family labour. If number of family labourer is not enough, which are the most cases in migrants’ households, then households lease their land to non-migrant households.

According to Turner and Brush (Ibid) it is very important to understand customs, rules and institutions of the local area in order to understand the farming system and its changing behaviours. In the following chapters I will discuss how land and labour are managed through different customs and rules especially through different local land tenure systems. What kind of institutions do farmer have established in order to manage their agriculture?

7.4 Land Tenure System and Classification in Nepal

In Nepal, land has traditionally been considered to be the property of the state. This system of state landlordism is known as *raikar* (Regmi, 1976:16). Traditionally, agricultural lands under *raikar* tenure were cultivated by private individuals, but within the limits required for subsistence and without the rights of alienation through sale or otherwise. Rights in *raikar* land thus comprised only the right to its use and its fruits (Ibid). In this system, state provides land ownership certificate to the landowners, but they have to pay annual rent to the state and they can easily trade the land ownership. It means the state is the owner of the land which is situated with this system. Since Prithvinagar VDC is a planned resettlement by Government, most of the lands fall in *raikar* category. Regmi (Ibid) writes that the emergence of private rights in the land resulted in the creation of a number of secondary forms of land tenure systems i.e. *Birta*, *Guthi*, *Jagir*,

and *Rakam* in Nepal. These secondary forms of land tenure systems are not available in Prithvinagar.

In Nepal, agricultural land has been traditionally classified on the basis of irrigation facilities, soils, or types of crops cultivated. In the hill districts and Kathmandu valley, the term *khet* and *pakho* are used to distinguish between irrigated and un-irrigated land (Regmi, 1978:37). According to Gurung (2005:20) horizontal terraces with risers for irrigated crops are known as *khet*. Sloping terraces for dry crops are called *pakho*. In Nepal, the 1963 Land Act (survey and measurement) has standardized the formulae for the gradation of agricultural lands in the two main categories (*dhanahar* or *khet* and *bhith* or *pakho*) throughout the country. *Abal*, *Doyam*, *Sim* and *Chahar* are sub categories of land under the two main categories on the basis of their soil quality and availability of irrigation (see Regmi, 1978, pp. 808-809 for detail classification). In the majority of Tarai districts, particularly in the eastern region, a similar distinction is made between *dhanahar* and *bhith*, while in the case of western districts, the corresponding terminology is different.

7.4.1 Local Categories of Land

The local land classification system is derived from topography, soil structure and availability of water. In Prithvinagar, government had distributed land mainly under two categories i.e. *gharbari* (homestead area or house surrounding land) which was two *bigha* (1 *bigha* is equivalent to 0.67 hectares) in size and *thap plot* (additional plot) which was one *bigha* in size. *Gharbari* is upland and also known as *dando khet* (un-irrigated upland) where rain water does not last long, no irrigation facility and suitable for maize, millet, potato and other seasonal vegetables. *Thap plot* is lowland, no irrigation facility but rain water last for long time and suitable for paddy and wheat cultivation.



Photo 7.1: Thap Plot (left) and Gharbari (right)

Farmers have developed another category of land called *aawadi* (open and fertile land) and it is known as *gairi khet* (low lying field). This is wet and fertile land, far from village and suitable for rice cultivation. Here moisture lasts throughout the year, possibility of irrigation and generally not suitable for other crops. Presently, most of *Arab lahure* have only *gharbari* and sold *thap plot* in order to raise money for foreign employment. Therefore, now, only 28% households have *gharbari*. Migrants' households, who have not sold their land have leased to non-migrant households. Those households who have sold *thap plot* to migrate their members have serious shortage of labourers. These households have still two *bighas gharbari* and to cultivate two *bighas* a household must have a strong ploughman and a pair of mature bullocks. To overcome this situation farmers have practiced different local land tenure system, developed different institutions and introduced technology in the village. Here, Turner and Brush (1987) farming system approach helped me to understand how human subsystem focuses on the social components of agriculture such as labour intensity, land tenure systems, land use, communication and diffusion of innovation.

7.4.2 Local Land Tenure System

In Prithvinagar, farmers are practising *adhiya* (sharecropping), *thekka* (contract) and *bandaki or byajmarani* (tenancy) to cultivate their land in the absence of own family labour and ploughing oxen/buffalos. According to the field data 46% households neither lease their land to others nor take any land in lease from others. People said political unrest and low productivity are the two main causes that people did not lease their land to other households.

Adhiya

It is a fifty-fifty sharing of production between land owner and lease holder. In this system, owner has to provide seed and fertilizer to the tenant. All categories of migrants' households (*Arab lahure*, *British lahure*, *Indian lahure*, *ID walla* and *Kathmandu lahure*) who have shortage of own family labour have leased their land for *adhiya* to other households with enough family labour but less land for cultivation. Nowadays local people have also leased their land to indigenous households which was not practiced until 4-5 years before. Table 7.2 (see page 103 for table 7.2) shows that 2% household have only *adhiya* land and 16% household have both own and *adhiya* land.

Thekka

In *thekka*, cultivator gets land on the basis of giving a fixed amount of grain to the land owner. The amount of grain is based on types of land and its productivity and will revise every year. Generally land owner claims his amount of grain from the tenant. From owner viewpoint it is an easy tenure system but for tenant it is a risky business because if something goes wrong such as weather or other natural calamities occurred during the year, then it could be great problem for tenant to fulfil the agreement.

Thekka is popular among *ID walla*, *Indian and British lahure*. They have nobody in the village to cultivate their land. Wives and children have already joined migrants and only disable parents are living in the village. For them this system seems suitable to overcome the shortage of labourers because in *thekka* system owner does not provide seed and fertilizer. They can collect their grain or money during their holidays.

Bandaki or Byajmarani

In this system, landowner leases his land by taking fixed amount of money from the cultivator. In return, lease holder cultivates the land. Land is leased for fixed time period for instance two years, five years and so on. When the contract period is over, the landowner returns money back to the cultivator and contract formally ends. This system is prevailing in *Indian lahure* and *British lahure* household. They lease the land in *bandaki* for many years to the local farmers and all family members join the migrant. Since the system lasts for many years, it is suitable for them and they can make another contract in their next visit.

However, these local tenure systems do not cover all the migrants' households. Many household are still cultivating their own land by themselves though their young male members have gone outside the village for employment. Some households do not have own family labour and enough land but still they are continuing their traditional occupation and making substantial amount of money from agriculture. How it is possible? Though agriculture labourers have gone outside village they send money to their home and farmers utilize that money to hire labourers. During household survey I found a man, aged 55, whose two sons had gone to UAE, who was still cultivating his land by himself. In addition, now he owns four high-breed cows. I asked him how he manages them in

absence of his sons. He explained that his two sons send money to him and he hires labourers and tractor to cultivate the land and to look after his cows. There are other several such cases.

Turner and Brush (1987) write that in absence of one of the agriculture unit or changes in some component (availability of labourer) of agriculture, farmers introduce technologies in agriculture to meet their goals. Labour migration has contributed to increase the farmer's income by introducing cash crops and technologies. In next chapter I will discuss how technology is introduced in the village and how farmers practice local institutions to surmount the shortage of labourers to run their traditional occupation.

Table 7.2: Local land tenure system

Types of Tenure	No. of Households	Percentage
Own land only	23	46
Adhiya only	1	2
Bandaki only	1	2
Thekka only	1	2
Own land and adhiya only	8	16
Own land and bandaki only	6	12
Own land and thekka only	5	10
Own land, aadhiya, bandaki and thekka	5	10

Source: Field Survey, 2006

7.5 Use of Tractors: Revolution in Subsistence Agriculture

In Nepal, four wheels tractors in the Tarai and two wheels tractors in the Kathmandu valley have brought revolution in the tillage operation and there is increasing trend on the adoption of tractors in Nepal (Manandhar, 2006:4). In Prithvinagar, tractors were introduced for agriculture since 1990s when some entrepreneurs enter the village and established *thula chiya bagan* (large tea estate). According to the manager of the local SFCL, now, more than 60% of the total agriculture land is occupied by these tea estates. Many people sold their land to the owner of the tea state and paid for foreign employment. These tea estates were rice and wheat fields in the past and after harvest farmers used to graze their cattle on that land. Consequently, number of bullocks decreased in the village in absence of pasture and agriculture land.

Agriculture labourers became very expensive and difficult to obtain. Previously *Rajbansi* and *Satar* were the major source of labourer in Prithvinagar. But after the establishment

of *thula chiya bagan* owner of the tea estate offered free quarter to these people to meet their labour demand. Most of these households were landless and were living in rented land. It was really good offer for them and they migrated to the tea estate quarters. Now, they have concrete quarter, electricity, reasonable wage and most importantly whole year job guarantee.

During my fieldwork I went to the tea estates (Khusbu Tea Estate & Aroma Tea Estate) to know the labourers' opinions. Many workers said they have better opportunities in these tea gardens and their wage is much easier than previous agriculture tasks. These tea estates have provided them bicycle in installment, they have weekly payment, union rights and now they do not have to walk many hours to find work. I saw many girls were plucking tea leaves in tree shadow with lots of funny chat, jokes and some were even singing songs (see photo 7.2). For them working in a group under tree shadow is fun (In tea garden, trees are planted to protect tea leaves from scorching sun and high temperature).

These sorts of facilities are not possible when someone works outside tea garden. In local households, they do not have work guarantee for entire year (mostly 2/3 days to some weeks in peak agriculture seasons) and demand is also very low. These days workers have options either to work permanently in garden or temporarily in the village.



Photo 7.2: Women plucking tea leaves (left) and receiving payment (right)

Gradually bullocks and their carts disappeared from the village and many ploughmen migrated to Gulf States. Thus, to fulfil the gap of shortage of labourer, in early 1990s some local wealthy people introduced tractors in the village. Many households said now it is much cheaper to plough their field by tractor than bullock. According to the local ploughing rate, a ploughman charges 150 NRs per day (Usually from 5.30 am to 9.30 am).

Besides, household has to provide *khaja* (breakfast) to the ploughman in the morning. A farmer said if bullocks and ploughman both are strong then it takes around 5-6 days to complete one round ploughing for one *bihga* land. Then total cost including breakfast will be around 900-1000 NRs to plough one *bihga* land. On the other hand, within an hour a tractor can plough one *bihga* land and it charges only 400 NRs which is half cheaper than bullock. Tractor can plough deeper than bullock and it also levels land at the same time. VDC secretary said currently there are more than 25 tractors in Prithvinagar. According to the World Bank, it is estimated that one tractor equals 24 bullocks (i.e. 12 pairs) in ploughing capacity (Aase, 1996:102). We can easily assume that the numbers of tractors available in the village are technically capable of cultivating remaining agriculture land in the village. Sometimes farmers also use tractors for tillage, transportation and threshing.

To large extent tractors have fulfilled the shortage of labourers in the village and remittances sent by migrants have made possible to use tractors for the local people. But it does not apply to all migrant households. Majority of the households have no more paddy land (*thap plot*) and those who own enough land are not interested to cultivate. During fieldwork I found that many rice planting lands were barren where farmers used to sow rice until some years before. I asked many people why these rice planting land are barren though it was time for preparing field and rice-transplanting. They said at present majority of the farmers have not enough agriculture land to use tractors (see chapter 7.9 for redistribution of land entitlement) and tractor does not fulfil all types of agriculture labour demand. For weeding and transplanting farmers have to rely on labourers. Agriculture productions have already gone down compared to investment cost. Those who have more land are not interested to pay high labour charge.

7.6 Changes in Farming System: Subsistence to Commercial

After 1990s when foreign employment to Gulf States began, technology entered in the village (tractors and water pump-set) and farmers moved from their traditional farming (paddy) to commercial cash crops (tea, potato, cauliflower, cabbage and tomato). According to Turner and Brush (1987) technology can be used for several agricultural tasks as well as post harvest and processing to overcome the shortage of labourers which ultimately changes the whole farming system. Gradually migrants started to send money in the village and farmers realized the importance of cash crops. SFCL also provided

training, loan and necessary agricultural support (training, seeds, fertilizer, modern agricultural equipments, pesticides and insecticides) to the farmers. On the other hand cereal crop production was below subsistence. Farmers sold their bullocks due to the lack of enough land, plough-man and pasture. At the same time, tea estates offered large number of jobs to the local indigenous people who were main source of agriculture workers in the village. Households own family labour had already gone outside village and serious shortage of labourers appeared in the village.

Case 1

Mr. Acharya, aged 62 said he has three sons. Two of them went to Qatar and he is not able to plough all his land. His younger son is too little to work in the field and studying. According to him nowadays agriculture labourers are almost impossible to find in the village. Local farmers can not provide work for whole year and tea-worker can not leave tea garden for few days keeping their job in risk. If someone hires labourers from own village then they charge double.

Case 2

Mr. Thebe, another farmer, 55, said if someone totally relies on hired labourers then his input cost will be higher than output cost. Last year he hired labourers and tractor for rice planting. It cost around 7,000 NRs for him but total rice production was less than 10 quintals which is equivalent to 6,000 NRs according to the local rate.

Above two cases clarify why many farmers left their rice planting plots barren. It also shows that shortage of labourer is not fully compensated by the remittances. Ghimire (2005:78) finds the similar case in Manang District of Nepal. SFCL manager has similar opinion with different logic. According to him in past years farmers did not calculate the input cost. They had their own family labour or they took help from neighbours as *parma*. Nowadays, own family labour is not available and *parma* system no more exists in the village due to the male out-migration. As a result farmers have to depend on wage labourers and technology to run their traditional occupation. The Manager further said now farmers have to pay for everything and they started to calculate the input cost. If input price is higher than expected production then farmers think it will be worthless to cultivate their land. Nobody is interested to run loss business.

This rational economic calculation of agriculture production does not apply to all farmers. Some farmers have found other solutions to utilize their land in absence of their own family labour by developing new customs and traditions. Other studies have also shown that the proper utilization of local customs, traditions, organization and institutions bring changes in the farming system and leads towards the positive agriculture development. The intensification in peasant farming system of Punjab to the green revolution was supported by the reorganization in the institutional arrangements (Leaf, 1987). Bandhopadhaya (1994) argues that the changes in local customs and traditions according to the changes in other components are needed for agriculture and economic growth.

7.7 Ghumti Labour and Parma

In Prithvinagar, farmers have organized and regulated the local customs and institutions and developed their own system to utilize their land and local labour. *Ghumti labour* (rotation labourer) is such a typical example under which farmers have successfully overcome the scarcity of labourers in the village.

Guranshpur is a small settlement of 15 households in Ward No. 7 of Prithvinagar VDC. This village has lowest migration rate (33%) than other settlements of the VDC. Out of 15 households 9 members have gone outside settlement from 5 households and the settlement is well known in the VDC for its intensive and commercial agriculture. In this settlement, villagers have shown that proper utilization of local resources can lead the people towards prosperity. During fieldwork I went to this village and asked the people how they have developed and organized *ghumti labour*.

According to the farmers of Guranshpur settlement, *ghumti labour* is a team of rotating labourers. A team comprises 12-15 labourers and they work rotationally in each household. Of the 15 households 9 households have at least one *bigha* tea garden in their *gharbari* (homestead area). In pick season i.e. from May to October they pluck tea leaves and rest of the year they engage in other works like irrigation, weeding, spraying commercial pesticides, insecticides and fertilizers. Tea leaves can be plucked three times in a month and to pluck one *bigha* tea leaves each round, it needs around 20 labourers. Team starts plucking from first house and within 9-10 days it completes one round plucking of entire settlement's gardens. After 10-12 days the team again starts to pluck

from first house. In this way this team works whole year and local farmers have managed permanent job for them. Other households have begun vegetable farming and they have their own *ghumti labour* team. Households have appointed a team leader to regulate *ghumti labour* and in return all labourers have to pay certain amount to the leader from their daily income.

As described by Turner and Brush (1987) here I found a good example of proper utilization of customs, rules and institutions to manage the land and local labour for their agriculture. However, this system is practiced in selected villages because much of the remitting money of *Arab lahure* goes for household consumption and other household needs. As described by Palmer (1985) in his theory of “Private gain and Social loss” migrants’ families pay less attention towards agricultural activity and that has resulted in declining activity of agriculture in Prithvinagar.

Parma is one of the important social practices among local farmers practiced during peak agriculture seasons. It is a kind of labour exchange under which a man/woman work for another household and in return he/she has the right to receive the same amount of labour. According to the local farmers this system was popular in the past. After the beginning of foreign employment, the system is gradually decreasing. Due to the massive outflow of young adults from the village it is very hard to get labourers under *parma* system. *Ghumti labour* system is limited to small settlements. SFCL Manager said the numbers of tea farmers are increasing year by year and *ghumti labour* is getting popular in the village.

For commercial tea and vegetable farming farmers need modern agriculture equipments and regular irrigation. How do people manage to buy such equipments? How do local farmers cope with financial problems? How do farmers sustain *ghumti labour* in non-productive seasons? In this situation they usually go local farmers’ cooperative.

7.8 Small Farmer Cooperative Limited (SFCL)

“Small Farmers Co-operative Limited” refers to the small farmers (SFs) organization, which is developed through institution with a view to building up institutional management capacity to implement SFDP (Small Farmer Development Program) through such organization (Bhandari, 2004:27). It is a grass root micro finance institution, which

is owned, managed and controlled by the local small farmers themselves. It emphasizes skill development, women empowerment, leadership development, local resources utilization, mutual co-operation and above all social mobilization. With this concept ADB/Nepal realized the necessity of institutional development of SFDP and visualized the potentialities of experiment of such programs in the sub-project-offices (SPOs) of Dhading district selecting them as 'Learning Laboratories'.



Photo 7.3: Prithvinagar SFCL office (left) and a small farmer receiving loan (right)

SFCL Prithvinagar was one of the sub-project offices established 16 Feb 1984 and handed over to local people on 23 Feb, 1996. According to the SFCL record, there were 59 female groups with 416 members and 126 male groups with 925 members at the time of handover in 1996. By the fiscal year 2002-03 the number of female groups had reached 79 with 579 members whereas male groups had reached 133 with 996 members. By June 2006, it had 1598 shareholders, 222 farmer groups including 12 inter-groups. Among 12 inter-groups women has only one group.

7.8.1 Organizational Structure of SFCL

Upon transformation of SPO into SFCL, planning, implementation, monitoring and supervision activities are carried out entirely by the beneficiary members through their involvement. It has three-tier organizational structure i.e., group, inter-group and the main committee. Groups are formed at the settlement level; Inter-groups at each ward level and main committee at the VDC level. A member representing each group forms the inter group and a leader from each inter group forms the main committee. The governing body of the organization handles daily operation of the organization and community worker. Women group organizers are employed by the main committee. Besides, promoters are

also appointed at this ward level in order to assist inter-group functioning and programme implementation.

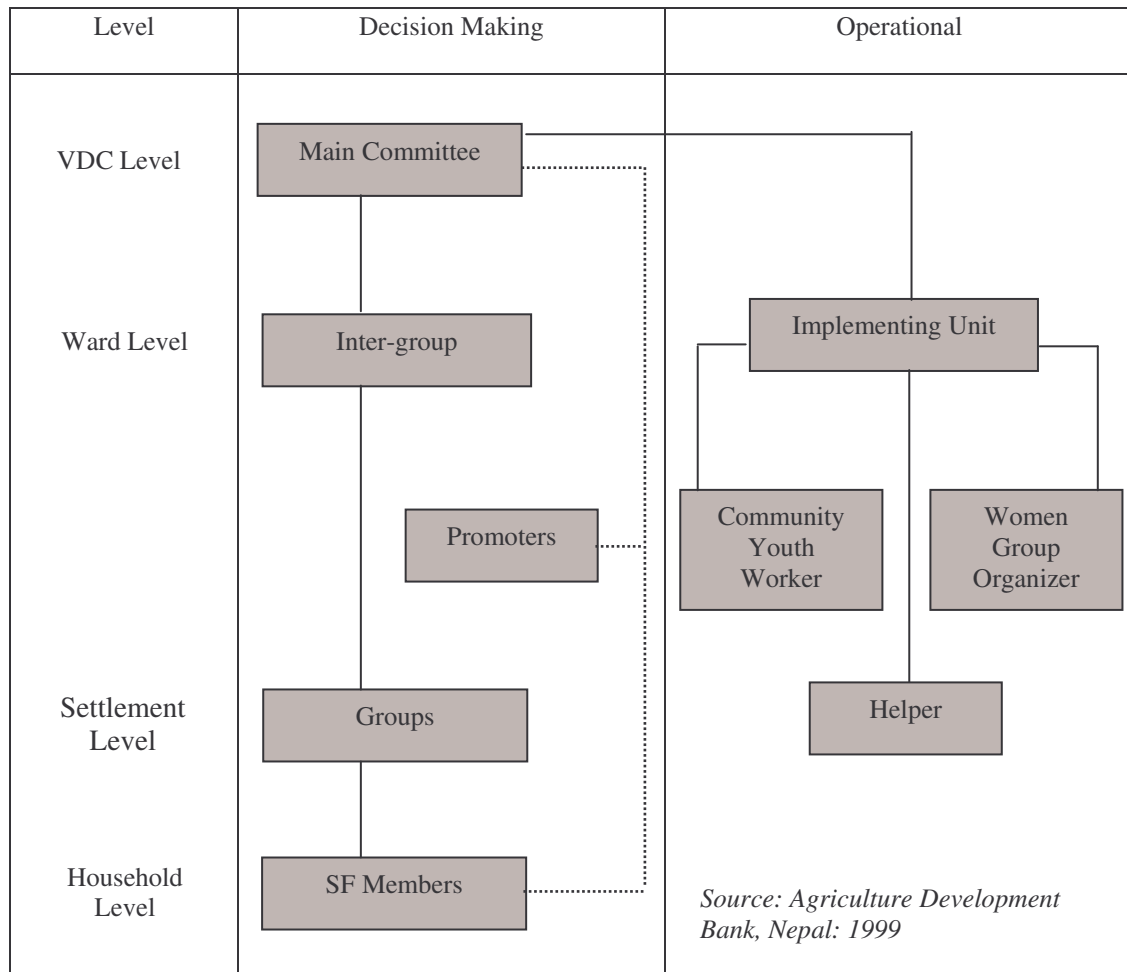


Figure 7.1: Organizational set-up of SFCL

7.8.2 Samuha Bachat and Sanchalan: Major Activities

Samuha Bachat (group saving) and *Sanchalan* (mobilization) programme is the most important and popular activities of SFCL among local small farmers. Most of the villages have at least a group of small farmers having minimum seven or nine members. Basically there are two types of groups: male group and female group. Some male groups have female members but I did not find any male member in female groups. Both groups have similar function, structure and aim. Every month group members arrange meeting to set their future agenda and discuss about past activities. During interviewing with the SFCL manager he requested me to see Mr. Bhandari, chairman of one of the popular and successful small farmer group. As a chairman of Group No. 40, one of the senior groups, he was very proud with his group. He was well informed about all the small farmers, their

groups and activities. According to him, like his group, all other groups have a committee with chairman, secretary, treasurer and members. Every month the secretary calls meeting in a suitable location and time.

Group members decide certain amount to be deposited in group saving fund. Contribution to the fund is compulsory for all the groups. The deposits are made from their own income. Chairman said they collect 50 NRs every month. But the amount varies between 50-500 NRs from major rice transplanting to harvesting seasons. All the members of this group have at least 1 *bigha* tea garden. Thus, in monsoon season (major tea leaves plucking season, see table 7.1 for agriculture calendar) they even collect up to 1,000 NRs in a month from each member. This scheme of saving reflects the efforts of small farmers towards attaining self-reliance. The group members themselves and SFCL workers guide them to manage the saving.



Photo 7.4: Group saving of male group (left) and female group (right)

The process is going on since group formed in 1986 to until this fieldwork in June 2006. Now, two major questions arise. First, how and where do farmers utilize this money? And second, how are these small farmer's groups associated with SFCL, local agriculture and economic development?

According to the chairman of Group No. 40, mostly they invest their money within their own group members or households mainly for agriculture purpose, for instances to hire labourers, to buy fertilizers, seeds, pesticides and insecticides. Nowadays, households use this saving fund to utilize *ghumti labour*. Chairman added that recently some members have demanded money to buy highbred cows for commercial dairy farming. But sometimes they use their money for social and other communal work such as to construct temple and public tap, maintain road, and so on. Besides, they contribute this fund in

emergency situation like death and accident inside group's households. Group members can even demand money for the construction and maintenance of house, to perform religious ceremony like baptism and son/daughter's marriage. For these purposes members have to pay higher interest (13-18%) than normal rate (9-12%) and they have special provision and fixed amount. So, *samuha bachat* and *sanchalan* is quite popular inside the village and Group No. 40 has already collected more than 300,000 NRs. In Prithvinagar, group saving has enabled local people to manage *ghumti labour*, introduce technology and cash crops in the village.

SFCL saves all the groups' collection and provide loan if any group request for its members. As mentioned earlier, all the groups have some collection. Amount depends upon when group formed and how much they collect in a month. If all groups manage at least some collection then why groups request for loan to SFCL for their members? Sometimes, farmers need more money such as to manage *ghumti labour* in off season, to buy highbred cow, to buy oxen for ploughing, to construct a house, marriage, baptism and to buy modern agriculture equipments like small tractor, spray tank, harvest machine etc. Nowadays farmers are even demanding money to send their son abroad for employment. These sorts of things need sizeable amount which is beyond individual saving. Group can not request money to SFCL for all above mentioned topic. For example, SFCL do not provide money for marriage, baptism and to buy ticket to Gulf States. How do farmers manage to get this type of loan?

According to Mr. Khadka, chairman of another group, in group's regular meeting members raise their issues. For example, Mr. A says he needs money to buy a cow. Other guy (Mr. B) says he needs money to send his son abroad and Mr. C needs money to buy a spray tank for his crops. Then group secretary make a note and committee discuss on farmer's issues. There are provisions to get loan to buy cow and spray tank but no provision of loan to go abroad. Everybody knows Mr. B's son is preparing to go aboard but he lacks money. Then, committee make a minute to send an application to SFCL to provide loan for Mr. B. in fake purpose like Mr. B also needs money to buy a highbred cow. Mr. Khadka assures that it is like a cheating but he added that everybody is doing so and it is for the betterment of local people and group members. If committee sends an application to SFCL with an explanation that why their members need money then SFCL

provide loan in reasonable interest without any guarantee and long administrative procedure. Only the condition is if the respective person does not pay his interest and installment in given time then committee can not request any further loan from SFCL for its other members. That means it loose its trust among other groups, villagers and to cooperative as well.

Through *samuha bachat* and *sanchalan* local cooperative is providing several socio-economic services and investment options to the local people. Both chairmen said these kinds of activities have brought social unity and integrity among small farmers. On the other hand, SFCL is promoting youngsters to go abroad for employment through providing loan. Many people reported that group should not request SFCL to provide loan for foreign employment. After getting loan, the boy goes abroad and does not send his money to his father to pay SFCL's loan. Consequently, groups lost their trust and gradually it will be a vital cause to collapse the group. Afterwards, the relation between father and son is disturbed and ends with household split. People said there are some other cases in neighbouring wards where groups are distorted because their members did not pay debt in time. One old man said, *yestai ho bhane aba bidesh janele chadai sahakari dubaune bhayo* (if this situation goes continuously, foreign employment migrants will bankrupt SFCL very soon).

SFCL is promoting foreign employment and labour migration indirectly providing fake funds. To know this fact, I again went to meet SFCL Manager. He informed me that SFCL invest its money mainly in three categories i.e. 1) One year or short term loan 2) Eighteen months or mid term investment loan and 3) Ten years or long term investment loan. In one year program, farmers get loan for paddy, wheat, maize, potato etc. Mid term investment goes for cow, ox, buffalo and other expensive livestock and long term investment is for tea cultivation. According to the manager, mid term loan is suitable for migrants and it has a very high demand. Many people apply for mid term loan but they use it to buy ticket to foreign countries. SFCL investment statistics also show that its largest proportion of investment (41.65%) has gone for mid term. On the other hand, short term investment which is meant for agriculture purpose and supposed to be highest, constitutes only 36.74% investment. Long term investment makes up 15.91% of SFCL credit.

7.9 Redistribution of Land Entitlement

Agriculture being the main source of living of the local people, attachment to land has got cultural, social and economic values in Prithvinagar VDC where employment opportunity outside agriculture is almost non-existent. With the rapid growing population and existence of property inheritance, the size of land holding is gradually decreasing below economy of the scale for maintaining household income.

All households were provided 3 *bighas* of land each in the 1970s. Currently only 18% has more than this holding size. According to my household survey households with less quantity of land have tried to buy more land. All the *Arab lahures* fall in this category and they have invested their money for purchasing of agriculture land and *ghaderi* (piece of land for construction of house). Most of the *British lahure* and *Indian lahures* have more than 3 *bighas* (18%) land and rest of the migrant households sold their land to pay for foreign employment.

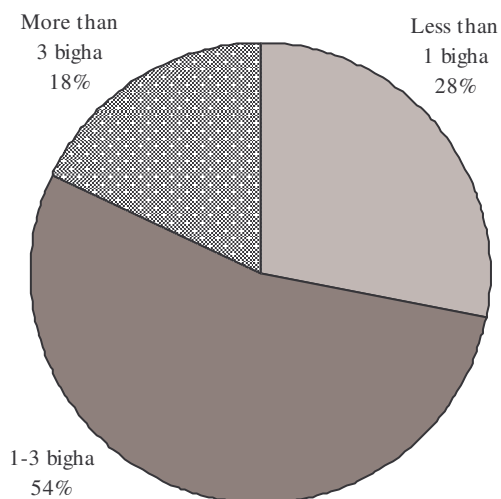


Figure 7.2: Present land holding pattern in Prithvinagar

In this chapter I have attempted to understand local agriculture dissecting it into different sub-units of farming system. In the past, households in Prithvinagar had heavy reliance on agriculture. After 1990, the most common household labour (own family labour) went abroad and impact of labour migration observed in agriculture production, land tenure system and land holding pattern. Labour is divided on the basis of sex. Hard work is left for male and easy work is left for female. *Adhiya*, *thekka* and *Bandaki* are three major forms of local land tenure system. Farmers introduced technology in their field to overcome the shortage of labourers. Besides, farmers have organized and regulated the local customs and institutions and developed *ghumti labour* (rotation labourers) to utilize their land and local labour. Households got self reliance through *samuha bachat* (group saving) and *sanchalan* (mobilization). With the rapidly growing population and shared property inheritance, the size of land holding is gradually decreasing below economy of the scale for maintaining household income and due to the labour migration equally distributed land by government has been fragmented.

Chapter - VIII

Conclusion

In the final chapter I will start by looking back to some of the discussions on the theoretical perspectives and their implication in this study. Afterwards, I will examine the research questions in turn as they correspond to the analysis in chapter five, six and seven. Finally there will be a short discussion on whether labour migration is bringing development to the village or dependence on international labour market.

8.1 Theoretical Evaluation

Compared to this study area, all the international labour markets for Nepalese workers have high payment. Due to the official labour agreement and involvement of several manpower agencies, the probability of obtaining job for Nepalese workers abroad is also very high. In this sense, Todaro's (1969) model of labour migration is applicable in Prithvinagar. However, the theory is not sufficient to explain the local migration because in the case of Prithvinagar, labour migration is depending upon several other factors such as migrant's personal contacts, access to manpower agencies, money to buy ticket and probability of getting visa. In his "theory of migration", Lee (1966:51) has mentioned similar hindrances as "intervening obstacles" like physical barrier (Berlin Wall) and immigration laws which may restrict the movement. Both Todaro (1969) and Lee (1966) are partly applicable to understand the local migration. Both Todaro (1969) and Lee (1966) as well as other old migration theories are not able to contextualize the social and cultural behaviours of local migrants. Dual labour market theory was very helpful to understand the ostensible paradox of why even educated youngsters choose a low status job abroad. Though migrants see their job only as a means to earn money, these jobs enable them to increase their social status and prestige at home in their own reference-group (Massey et al. 1993:441).

As explained in Piorine's (1997) "theory of implicit family loan", remitting behaviour in Prithvinagar is best seen as an outcome of an implicit contractual arrangement between the migrant and his family. Though male out-migration results in loss of local production and income inequality, it is not only social losses in Prithvinagar. Besides money,

migrants have brought numerous skills and knowledge to the village. Palmer's (1985) "Theory of private gain and social loss" is unable to explain the social gain achieved through migrants' new skills and knowledge. Aase's (1996) theory of household fission is very relevant to understand how household fission occurs. Further, this theory enabled me to understand the relations between land and migration and how conflicts begin among the brothers in the family. Turner and Brush's (1987) farming system approach was helpful to understand proper utilization of local customs, rules and institutions to manage the land and labour in local agriculture.

8.2 Findings

Households in Prithvinagar have witnessed a clear shift in occupation from dominantly agricultural to foreign employment. Three decade ago agriculture was the main occupation for 98.9% of the households. At present, only 26% households depend upon income from agriculture alone. Still people like to call themselves farmers but the share of remittance from foreign employment in the total annual household income among surveyed households was more than fifty percent. Commercial vegetable farming, tea cultivation, dairy farming and pension are other notable sources in the total annual household income.

Lack of employment and agricultural land in the village are two main reasons for migration. Alternative strategies of earnings in the village are not sufficient to feed the family. Local agriculture is below subsistence, wage labour is lowly paid and it is associated with low status. Self employment needs substantial investment and is assumed to be very risky. At least one person has gone outside home from 96% of the households. Before 1990s, the largest stream of international migration was directed to India and later it was towards South-east Asia. The direction of migration has again sifted from South-east Asia (Malaysia) to West Asia (Saudi Arabia, Qatar and UAE) after 2005. Now, South Korea is getting popular destination among local youths.

Amount of money remitted per persons annually varies from one country to another and ranges from 50,000 NRs. (*Arab lahure*) to above 500,000 NRs (*British lahure*) per year. According to my survey, in average a migrant sends around 75,000 NRs per year in Prithvinagar. Estimated 5025,000 NRs is remitted to Prithvinagar every year from 107

migrants of surveyed households, which is a substantial amount. How remittances are used depends primarily on the financial circumstances of a household, amount of remittances, and varies among different categories of migrants. Once daily expenses are covered and debts are repaid, the remittance may go toward medium or long term goals. *British lahure* and *ID walla* have less investment than *Indian lahure* and *Arab lahure* inside the village. Migrants' economic capital (remittances) has been successfully transformed into symbolic capital (prestige) and social capital (in-law network) and finally they have been successful to transform their social capital into political positions in various local institutions.

After 1990, household's labourers (own family labour) went abroad and impact of labour migration could be seen in agriculture production, land tenure system and land holding pattern. Labour is divided on the basis of sex. Hard work is left for male and easy work is left for female. Due to the male out-migration extensive changes are seen in women works and roles inside and outside home. Local wealthy people introduced technology in the village and farmers started to use technology in their field to overcome the shortage of labourer. Gradually some households started commercial cash crops production and vegetable farming. In Prithvinagar, farmers have organized and regulated the local customs and institutions and developed a new arrangement land of labourers called *ghumti labour* (rotation labourer) to utilize their land and overcome the shortage of labourers. *Adhiya*, *thekka* and *bandaki* are three major forms of present local land tenure system. Under these systems migrant households have leased their land to other households with enough family labour but less land for cultivation to utilize their land in absence of their own family labour. Households got self reliance through group saving and mobilization.

Migrants have net private gain with foreign income in the form of modern household assets. As a result, standard of migrants' households have improved substantially. Old wooden houses having thatched roof have been almost replaced by brick corrugated and concrete houses. Besides money, migrants have brought several skills (carpentry, wiring, plumbing, and mason) in the village as a social gain. Migrants are sending their children to private school. As an outcome of labour migration several social evils and frustration appeared among unsuccessful migrants. Ways of achieving social prestige have shifted from agriculture to modern consumer goods. Labour migration has brought individualism

among local households and youth's participation in socio-economic and cultural activities is diminishing day by day. Social cohesion is fading gradually and household fission results in more nuclear families and less joint families.

8.3 Labour Migration: Development or Dependence?

Nepal is one of the world's poorest countries with a population of around 25 million and per capita GDP under US\$ 1. Agriculture remains a major source of earning and tourism is also important. But one of Nepal's major exports is labour. Because of the lack of economic opportunities at home and increasing opportunities abroad, most rural households now depend on at least one member's earning from employment away from home and mostly from abroad. Migrants are sending money to home and according to Nepal Living Standard Survey (CBS et al, 2004) remittance is a major factor behind poverty decline. But, a question arise, whether labour migration is a good thing, bringing *bikash* (development) to the village, or whether it just produces dependence on international labour markets.

There are a number of issues related to migrant workers and on remittances in Nepal. Wealthy households belonging to so called "higher caste" are better benefited from overseas employments which are more remunerative. Whereas households in absolute poverty and from "so-called lower caste" who have no access to overseas employment simply because they are illiterate, have no information and can not pay for their travel and other expenses. This might further widen income inequality among Nepalese rural households in future course of time. Although the remittance have been significantly supportive to national economy and poverty reduction over a decade, but a productive force is much needed at home and the emigration of young hands and brain from the rural economy is not a long term solution. Migrants are using their remittances for the construction/purchase of new houses, household's amenities and ornaments, not for productive use.

During my fieldwork, many respondents reported foreign employment could not be a sustainable solution. A young boy can not work whole life abroad as a lowly paid worker. Whatever a Nepalese worker earns in Gulf States and Malaysia it goes for daily households needs and family expenses. Most of the migrants have already sold their lands to pay for the foreign employment. Except *Indian lahure* and *British lahure* other

migrants have no pensions and job security. So, when an *Arab lahure* returns home after working many years, probably he would have nothing to do at home. After last US Iraq war, many migrants from Kuwait had to return home before ending their job contract and similar case occurred when 12 Nepalese were brutally killed in Iraq by Islamic militants in 2004. There are growing cases of fraud, compelling workers to work in an inhuman environment with high physical risk, no social security at working place, and no honour to ILO Charter (Khatiwada, 2005:12).

Impact on children's education during the absence of his father and a wife's frustration and discrimination in her own home by parents-in-law due to the absence of her husband can not be compensated by remittance. Besides, absence of youngsters may result less innovative and development works in the village. Due to the massive outflow of young adults, local households have already realized the low participation of youths in socio-economic and cultural activities. As a result, interaction among the households is declining and social solidarity is fading down day by day. Decreasing involvement of young adults in local agriculture has further impacts on agriculture production. During my fieldwork, I found several hectors of barren lands, according to my study which is due to the shortage of agriculture labourers and low productivity. On the other hand, some households have maintained their good lives even in their own village by organizing their own customs and institutions and developing new arrangement of land and labour. It shows that utilizing own resources with new arrangement of local customs and institutions can be a good option to overcome the rural poverty rather than selling own land to landlords to invest for the foreign employment. Proper management of local resource can create further employment opportunities in the village.

To sum up, whether labour migration is the development or increasing dependency of rural households on remitted money in Nepal, needs further studies and more discussions.

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Appendix - I

Questionnaire for Household Survey

All Questions were asked in Nepali

Village.....Ward No.....House Type.....

Name of Respondent.....Religion.....

Caste/ethnicity

△ = Man

○ = Woman

| = Off Spring

— = Sibling

= = Marriage

Household Information

No.	Occupation	Annual Earning	Education	Extra Informations
1				
2				
3				
4				
5				
6				
7				
8				
9				
10				

1. Does your husband/father/son/brother have gone outside the village for work?
2. Why he went outside the village for work?
3. Whom does your husband/father/son/brother send money to and how much?
4. Are remittances put on your (or wife's) account?

5. If he sends to other member of your family, do you get that money? Or other members of the family can share that amount?
6. How/where do you spend/invest that money?
How much in household consumption (Food and fuel) and how much in others fields
- 7) Have you brought any electronics or other household amenities from abroad? If yes then could you please mention their name?
- 8) List of household amenities and consumer goods.
9. How much money did you or your husband/father/brother spend to go outside home for work?
10. If you had taken loan then how did you manage to get it? I mean from whom?
11. How much interest do you have to pay and what is the paying system (For example in instalment or clear in one time). If you took from SFCL or landlord then do you have to keep any guarantee for loan? Then normally what they prefer for guarantee?
12. Your member has gone outside the village. So, how do you manage your farm and labour scarcity? I mean you hire labour or take help from neighbours and relatives or lease your land to others.
- 13) If you have leased your land to others then what is the land tenure system in your village? Could you please mention the types and amount?
14. In your village, many people think that nowadays agriculture production has been decreasing gradually or people have no more interest in agriculture. Even I found lots of barren lands. If you think so, then could you please explain me why it is happening in the village?
15. In your opinion what kinds of effects do labour migration has in your family, community, socio-economic activities and culture? Do you think labour migration has brought the changes in ways of achieving social prestige?
- 16) Can you explain me an example that labour migration has brought conflict in local households and community regarding property inheritance (land entitlement).

Appendix - II

Key Informants Interview Guide

(Outline of major issues)

All Questions were asked in Nepali

1) Interview guide for former VDC and ward chairmen

- Labour migration
- Area of remittance investment
- Present agriculture situation
- Management of labour
- Impacts of labour migration

2) Interview guide for head teacher of local high school and other teachers

- Foreign employment
- Impact on education and social cohesion

3) Interview guide for manager of SFCL

- About SFCL and its contribution to local people
- Loan procedure, interest and payment
- Labour migration
- Area of remittance investment
- Agriculture and labour management
- Impact of labour migration

3) Interview guide for local shopkeepers

- Labour migration
- Activities of migrants' households
- Area of investment (especially purchase of daily items in their shops)
- Impacts of labour migration

4) Interview guide for senior (old) people, local leaders and social workers

- Labour migration (history)
- Activities of migrants' households
- Area of remittance investment
- Present agriculture situation and labour management
- Impacts of labour migration on socio-economic and socio-cultural activities
- Social cohesion