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## Emigration of Labour Resources and its Impact on Farm Families: The Case in the Mid Hills of Nepal

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### Abstract

With increasing economic liberalisation and globalisation the mobility of human beings have increased many fold. The number of people living outside their country of birth increased from 75 million in 1960 to 191 million in 2005 (of which over 86 million are migrant workers). In Nepal, in 2003–04, about 15 % of economically active male and 2 % females were involved in work migration. Migration has significant developmental impacts both on sending as well as receiving countries. For the sending countries, the positive impact is in the form of remittances. The major negative impact is the loss of labour resource. As per International Monetary Fund, the remittances received by the developing countries have surpassed the total developmental aid, which indicates the growing importance of remittances on development. In the year 2006, the total remittance received in Nepal was about US\$ 1.5 billion (about 18 % of the total GDP).

Nepal is an agricultural country with the contribution of 39 percent to the national GDP. However, the agriculture sector performance is determined by limited resources and constrained by structural weaknesses. In such a situation, the cash that rural agricultural households receive in form of remittance is of great significance not only for meeting household needs but also as investment.

To analyse the determinants of migration and its impact, a total of about 500 households were surveyed using a semi-structured questionnaire. Apart from household survey, the study also uses group discussion, key informant interview and secondary data sources. The study is conducted in two hill districts of Nepal and is focused on two major streams of international migration - namely, cross border migration to India and other countries.

The major destination of migrants is India but this portfolio is widening and Gulf countries are gaining popularity. The main reason for the increased migration is lack of sufficient opportunity in the country to meet the basic food and non food requirements of the households. Therefore, migration is perceived to have improved the household livelihood situation. The paper presents the major factors influencing migration decision and the impact of migration on farm families in the mid hills of Nepal.

**Keywords:** Farm families, labour-migration, Nepal, remittances