

*Impact of COVID – 19 on foreign
returning migrant workers in
Nepal:
A knowledge attitude and
preference study in Province 2 & 7*
Final Report

Institute of Strategic and Socio-Economic Research (ISSR)



December 2020



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**Impact of COVID 19 on Foreign Returnee Migrant workers in Nepal:
A knowledge Attitude and Preference Study in Provinces 2 and 7**

Final Report

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Nepal is one of the leading labor exporting countries, with annually out-migration of over four hundred thousand of young adult population for short-term employment in different parts of the world, with major destination countries are India, Gulf countries, Malaysia, and South Korea. COVID-19 pandemic at global scale has impacted adversely foreign migrant workers across the countries, large numbers of them are forced into return to their home country. All of these recent pandemic related development around the globe have very adverse consequences in socio-economic and livelihood opportunities of Nepalese foreign migrants' populations working over 100 countries across the globe. Large numbers of Nepali migrant workers have returned from India, Gulf countries (Qatar, UAE, Saudi Arabia), and in Malaysia- also the major destination countries of Nepali migrant workers.

As per recent estimates from Government of Nepal, more than 600,000 Nepali migrant workers likely to return to their home in Nepal within a year largely due to the COVID pandemic related factors. In fact, during the period of last nine months, over 500,000 Nepali foreign migrant workers have already returned to Nepal from India, and other countries in the Gulf region due to the slowdown of the economy in these destination countries because of the COVID related pandemic across the world.

Large inflow of returnee labor migrants in Nepal will pose a challenge for its reintegration into the country domestic labor markets. When over 600,000 returnee migrant workers come back in short span of time, and then already job losses are at high level across the sectors in the country, there is likely to have massive pressure on jobs and employment in the domestic economy, which effects may be there even years to come. Creation of suitable employment opportunities and job security at home for all of the potential adult workers entering into the labor markets, plus the returnee migrant workers of about 600,000 in a year, will be a great challenge for the government. In this regard, selection of specific schemes in self-employment or wage employment (either in agriculture or non-agriculture sectors) is critically important.

So far, almost all policy makers have considered that agriculture sector will absorb all of the added numbers of returning migrant workers from India and from the third countries. Moreover, it is not known definitely whether the returnee foreign migrant workers will be interested to engage again in farming sector for their employment and livelihoods, when they have left the farming activities here long back, and have gone abroad for other non-agricultural sector employment? In that circumstances, there is no clear understanding among the concerned policy makers and planners on what alternate policy measures and interventions to be taken in the domestic labor markets to provide adequate employment opportunity and income generation for absorption of additional labor forces in this year and for couple of years down the road.

In this context main purpose of this study is to analyze issues and problems that foreign returnee migrant workers have been facing in Nepal recently because of loss of their jobs due to the COVID-19 pandemic related factors and their sudden returning to Nepal. The specific objectives of the study are:

- a) To assess impact of the COVID Pandemic on Nepali foreign migrant laborers largely through desk study of recent literature, reports, and news bulletins on the topic.
- b) To conduct a rapid sample survey among returnee foreign migrants in province 7 (Sudurpaschim Pradesh) and in province 2 to assess extent of their hardship now and their knowledge, attitude and preferences (KAP) for reintegration into the domestic labor markets,
- c) To assess and analyzing choices of the returnee migrants on getting employment in major sectors and sub-sectors of the domestic job markets, and
- d) To recommend policy measures for enhancing welfare of the returnee migrant workers by their smooth reintegration in the domestic labor markets.

This study uses mixed methods of social science research, whereby, both qualitative and quantitative data were collected. Within Nepal, the study focuses more on returnee migrant workers issues in Province number 2 and province number 7 (Sudurpaschim province), accordingly, the empirical survey with returning migrants was done in both the provinces. These two provinces have got a very high out migration rate of labor forces in the country. Furthermore, scale of absolute poverty and vulnerability are also very high in these two provinces than the other provinces of the country. Besides, in the relative term, the unemployment rate is already at high level in these two provinces than in other provinces of Nepal. In relative term, the remittance in-flow in these two provinces is a backbone of the livelihoods of the population living in the surveyed locations.

More specifically, for quantitative data, a survey of 214 individual respondents from the two provinces (105 individuals from Province 2 & 109 individuals from Province 7) was done, who were recently returnee migrant workers in Nepal from India, Gulf Countries and various other sources. The empirical survey was done using a framework of rapid assessment, and with framework of Knowledge, Attitude and Preferences (KAP) of foreign migrant Nepali workers (returnee workers) in terms of their socioeconomic profile, knowledge, characteristics, their present thinking and perspectives, and potential engagement into existing employment and livelihoods locally, and assess alternate options for their effective reintegration in the local and national labor markets. Based on the findings of the rapid sample survey, then we discuss also on alternate policy measures for effectively restoration of their employment and livelihoods, and alternate options for effectively reintegration of returnee foreign migrant workers in the local and regional labor markets in the country.

The majority of respondents surveyed were youth, with average age between 21 to 40 years (85% of total sample respondents) and were 100% male migrant workers. To mitigate the situation of COVID-19 pandemic, instead of direct consultation meeting and interview, virtual methods such as zoom conference and telephone based interview was done for one-to one survey with the respondent for quantitative data points. Then, qualitative data were collected through case studies reporting and KII with certain knowledgeable persons.

Likewise, the selected factors and indicators associated with attitude and preference of the returnee migrant (sample selected respondents) are analyzed using the simple summary statistics and graphical presentation, and comparison of the findings in province 2 (largely Terai region) and in far western region (Sudur Paschim province and a district of Karnali province).

The empirical finding from the study shows that the COVID-19 pandemic situation has huge adverse impacts on Nepali returnee migrant working in India as well as those working in gulf countries, and to others working in Kathmandu, and in other urban centers of Nepal. Of the total sample, 78 percent of the foreign migrants' recent returned in Nepal were not normal as per their schedule, but they all were almost 100 percentage forced returnee migrants in case of Province number 7, over 55 percent in case of province 2. These issues are also largely determining their vulnerability in the back home. The results show that entire migrants of province 7 have recently returned Nepal largely due to the CORONA Pandemic in India. While in case of province 2, only 60 percent of the respondents mentioned that they have come home back home due to the COVID pandemic related locked down in their destination country.

All respondents from both the provinces mentioned that COVID-19 has negatively affected their earning activity. The COVID-19 pandemic situation has created uncertainty on Nepali migrant forces abroad (across the countries), including presence of opportunity to continue jobs and employment (and possibility of shift of jobs to other sectors) in the same destination countries. Among the sources of income most adversely affected are income losses from daily labor (76%) and from agriculture related income (14%) in province 2, while for the migrants of province 7, the most adversely affected sources are their income loss from foreign employment (100%)- all from loss of employment in India.

Level of vulnerability and success of re-integration programme and economic vulnerability to them and their families depend upon, whether the returnee labor migrants are engaged in any income generating activities in the country. This study shows that more than half (56%) respondents (among the return migrant), after returning from foreign country, are still unemployed in both the provinces. In province 2 such unemployed rates are 50 percent while in province 7 it is 63 percent. Among the intention of remittance labour on starting of new business returnee, the survey result shows that 57% returnee migrant in Province 2 would lie to start their own business in both agriculture

and non-agriculture sector, while in Province 7, such interested migrants are about 14%.

Documentation and analysis of experience of returnee labor migrant is very important factors for re-integration programme of Government of Nepal. Looking at the nature of job migrant perform at their work place, respondents from province 2 were largely working in construction and other sectors. Whereas, respondents from province 7 (i.e., in India context) were mostly working in Hotel and Service sectors (60%), and then in security related jobs (27%). Agricultural, driver and mechanics jobs are less common for the migrants' labor from Nepal, while hospitality, security and construction sub-sectors are the prime job markets for most of the migrant labor from Nepal. However, only 30% of the returnee migrants poses basic skills to do the jobs/business in the domestic markets in Nepal.

The access of government service to the returning migrants regarding the re-integration programme is limited. Almost all of the respondents (i.e. 96%) from province 2 said they do not know the rules of re-integration. In case of province 7, respondents remain silent and unanswered this question, only 15 respondents (14%) out of 109 respond the answer. They don't know about the funding mechanisms, though, about 97 percent of the respondents mentioned that they can manage their own source of fund for doing the business that they are planning. In terms of taking support of the local government for this newly planned activity, entire migrants (i.e. 100%) from province 7 is totally agree to take support from province government; while in province 2, only 14 percent agree for such support, and rest 44% respondents are in dilemma on taking any support of the local government for their planned activity in the near future.

Regarding access to market, entire (100%) respondents mentioned that their product will be sold in the local market. In case of province 2, it is fifty-fifty situation. Half of their product (54%) will be sold in local market while rest of the products (i.e., 46%) is for other markets. Returnee migrant workers preferred several livelihood options in Nepal. Among them household traditional farming activities (31%), starting new farming business with little more new investments (25%), engage in non-agricultural employment (20%) and start own non-agricultural business (10%) are important one. Migrants from both the province are much more closure to follow mentioned options for their income generating activities for livelihood.

In COVID-19 situation, returnee migrants and also others prefer to engage in agriculture and its related sub-sectoral work activities. In agriculture, some 43 percent of the respondents would like to engage in farming food crops, while others also like Poultry, Livestock, Agro-enterprise, Daily labor. Besides these activities some workers want to do other activities and few have not planned yet. Province-wide variation can be found in the choice; in Province 7 migrants want to more concentrate on farming crops and raising livestock, while in province 2 farmers are interested on poultry, agro-enterprises and daily labor. From the two provinces surveyed, their choices for self-business varied sharply between the two provinces, as summarized below.

The threshold income opportunity of a worker in a local market is an important factor for his/her decision to stay within a locality, in country migration to distance markets, or migrate abroad for other jobs and employment. The survey responses on this factor show that on an average, a returnee migrant expect to about Rs. 27,500 per month of income, which varies from Rs. 30,200 per month in case of respondents from Province 2, and Rs. 18,400 from that of the province 7. This result is based upon the total 42 percent of respondents, as the response rate for this question was relatively very less than other factors. The expected per month income of the respondent varies also due to his target for destination countries for migration (opportunity of benefits forgone etc.).

WAY FORWARD/RECOMMENDATION

Based on the results and discussions as noted earlier, following recommendations are provided for better managing the distress on returnee migrants and for their better reintegration into the domestic labor markets. Some of them are listed below.

- 1) Data-base management of foreign going migrant labor forces to be strengthened, with managing the migration data scientifically incorporating skill type of migrant workers (both in migration and out-migration); a competent manpower is placed for data management task at MOLESS so that the data can be analyzed regularly by the MOLESS and other agencies interested on the topic.
- 2) There is a need of timely information sharing system to be adopted by the various tiers of the governments for their reintegration schemes in each jurisdiction.
- 3) Government focus of re-integration of program activities to be more on vulnerable groups. The vulnerable returnee migrants are landless, with large number of dependent and un-skilled labor, or from the socially disadvantage groups.
- 4) Gender and social inclusion dimensions of returnee migrant needs to be given special attentions while designing re-integration programs at local and provincial governments.
- 5) Targeted funding mechanisms need to be created for creation of employments on diverse set of activities at municipality level and provincial government level, including addressing the need for vulnerable groups and other social disadvantage groups.
- 6) Considering the diverse landscape and socioeconomic activities being done across the countries, demand led and strength-based livelihoods and employment opportunities needs to be created at local level. These need to include both agriculture and non-agriculture-based interventions.
- 7) Large numbers of these returnee migrant workers needs support in business management training and full package support that need to ensure handholding support for business development, skill development training, access to finance and linkages with the products and service markets.
- 8) There should be provision that the municipality and provincial government should also provide psycho-social counselling to some of the returnee migrants, who have faced traumatized events in the process of loss of income and employment due to the COVID.
- 9) The local support to the returnee migrant workers should focus more on employment and income security with livelihood approach, who have been mentally disturbed in foreign countries during the COVID-19 pandemic, or who have suffered adversely during the transition process.
- 10) The returnee groups need special economic package and rehabilitation programme for the returnee migrant workers, who lost their job abroad and were not able to repay the loans they owed to various banks, cooperatives, various other business loans.
- 11) Capacity of local government officials to be developed, particularly on business counselling and Business Development Supports, management of market Information systems (MIS) need to be improved. There is need of re-integration plan to be set up in each local government that is tailored to the specific needs and requirements of the locality.
- 12) Coordination between three tiers of government needs to be improved in terms of implementing the income and employment generating activities, for grant supports and various other technical and institutional supports (tax breaks, etc.) for such locally supported enterprises. Roles and responsibilities of each tier of government on reintegration of foreign returnee workers needs to be clearly specified to avoid ad-huck and duplication on various efforts in this effort.

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

The COVID 19 pandemic has now emerged as a worst threat to the humankind that we have observed in the last few centuries. As of late mid November 2020), globally over one and half million lives have already been lost mainly due to the COVID 19 infections, and over 20 million cases of the virus's infection have already been reported worldwide, since the disease emerged from the China in the last week of December 2019. In fact, in large number of the countries, the pace of spread of the COVID 19 Virus is still at accelerated pace, and third and rounds of surge on COVID infestation is still looming in USA, UK, and in other developed economies of Europe, despite of excellent health care and medical services available there.

In case of Nepal, fortunately, only limited numbers of positive cases (244,000) of the COVID virus infection have been reported till end of November 2020; out of them nearly 230,000 have already recovered, and the death toll is relatively less (over 1600) due to the COVID infection than in many other places. Since 11 Chaitra 2076 BS (or 22 March 2020 AD), the government has lockdown nationwide, which has been gradually eased starting from 22 July 2020, but still the economic activities have not recovered even 50% of the level seen just before imposing the pandemic (reflection by traffic flow). During the initial period of four to five months, economic and business activities have almost been standstill. In fact, the hardship is more to daily wage earners and those working in informal sector activities.

During the period of last nine months, large numbers of Nepali migrant workers have returned to Nepal from India and other countries in the Gulf region, largely due to the factors associated with slowdown of the economy in these destination countries because of the COVID 19 Global pandemic. Besides, the out of Nepali migrant workers have also been almost standstill during the last four months, all of which have led to increased unemployment rate and tensions in the domestic labor market equilibrium as well. The problems are more severe in western Nepal (Sudurpaschim province) and in Province number 2, where the unemployment rate has already been high level even before the COVID 19 pandemic emerged. Hence, the study also intends

to focus more on migration of Nepalese populations in these two provinces. In particular, this is done by analyzing knowledge, attitude, and preference of recently returnee migrant workers in terms of their intensions and options for reintegration into the local labor markets.

In this context, using the framework of rapid assessment, this study will analyze the Knowledge, attitude and preferences of Foreign Migrant Nepali workers (returnee workers) in terms of their potential engagement into alternate livelihoods locally, and assess alternate options their effective reintegration in the local and national markets. Based on the findings of the rapid survey, the study also discusses on alternate policy measures for effectively restoration of the employment and livelihoods of the returnee workers, and alternate options for effectively reintegration of returnee foreign migrant workers in the local and regional labor markets in the country.

1.1 BACKGROUND

The COVID 19 pandemic has not only created health related fear among the people worldwide but has also severely crushed economic and business activities across the countries. The pandemic has virtually led to an economic lock down and stoppage of movements of over 50-60 percentage of the world population, causing deep recession across large numbers of countries, both in developed and developing world. In fact, many renowned economists and philosophers have also mentioned that the adverse effects of COVID 19 has already outpaced the economic and financial losses caused by the Great Depression in USA and in western hemisphere in 1929 and in early 1930s. The COVID pandemic is one of the worst catastrophic events upon the human kinds during the last couple of centuries.

For example, a recent UN report has mentioned that global hours worked could drop by 10.5 per cent in a quarter after the COVID pandemic, equivalent to 305 million full-time workers with a 48-hour of work a week (CCSA, 2020). Likewise, a recent report from ILO (2020a) says that the full and partial lockdown imposed in response to the COVID Pandemic, along with other

restrictions, is already affecting almost 2.2 billion workers, representing approximately 68% of the world's workforce. Smaller enterprises are facing losses as a result vulnerability of millions of workers have increased in terms of losses of income, temporary reductions in working time and complete loss of their jobs (ILO, 2020b). Almost all parts of the world, by and large, migrant workers are particularly vulnerable due to the to the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic, which has constrained both their ability to access their places of work in the countries of destination as well as their ability to return to their countries of origin (2020c). In fact, nearly 94 per cent of the world's workers are living in countries with some sort of workplace that are now closure due to the lock down (ILO: 2020d).

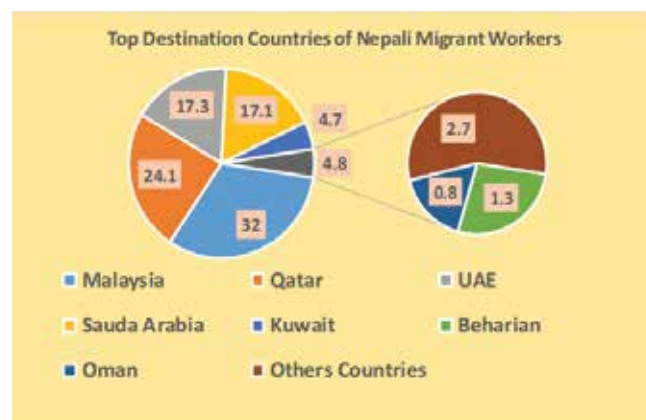
1.2 CONTEXT - THE PROBLEM AND SITUATION OF FOREIGN MIGRANT EMPLOYMENT

When comes to COVID impacts in Nepal, over three million of Nepali population have been working abroad as migrant workers; out of them nearly one million migrant Nepali workers were working in India in late 2019. Most of the Nepali migrant population working in India are engaged in service sector (hotels and restaurant, security guard business, household services, and other petty services), who are the impacted badly, as the service and informal sectors are the worst affected sectors in India by the COVID 19 pandemic and the associated lockdown measures taken in India and in Nepal during the last 9-10 months. The pandemic related lock down and restriction on movements of people and economic activities has brought most part of the economy to almost at a halt. A rough estimates suggest that the pandemic has directly affected on over two million of daily wages earning workers and another million workers on temporary contract basis of employment in Nepal; in addition of another two to three millions of other informal sector workers that are employed in various informal activities in Nepal (ab unpublished report).

With this scale of loss of employment (partly or fully) and income of over five to six million populations within a short span of one year, it has led heavy tools on almost all sectors of the economy. At present, Nepali migrant workers are legally working with their labor permits in over 115 countries, however, large numbers of

them are concentrated in few selected countries such as in India, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, UAE, Malaysia, South Korea, and Kuwait (Figure 1). The rapid spread of Corona virus across the countries has led to losses of jobs and livelihood income of a large number of these Nepali migrant laborers working abroad, especially those who are working in India, Gulf countries (GCC countries) and in Malaysia.

FIGURE 1: TOP DESTINATION FOR NEPALI MIGRANT WORKER, EXCLUDING INDIA (JULY 2015 TO APRIL 2019)



Data source: Adapted data from MOLESS 2020 & IOM 2019

The problem of job losses of migrant labors will be further accelerated in India and in the region of Gulf countries in the coming few months. The economy of several countries in the region of GCC is going to be contracted in 2020 (IMF 2020) also due to a historically lowest prices of gasolines observed in 2020, and due to reduced demands for the GCC region produced goods and services in other developed countries in Western Europe, Australia, and USA and Canada, as a result of the global pandemic of 2020.

Large numbers of Nepali migrant workers and other Nepali s are residing in these countries of GCC in Southeast Asia (Malaysia, South Korea), in India, in western countries (USA, UK, several countries in Europe, and in Australia), who have lost jobs and are adversely affected by the pandemic and its related lockdown and other strict measures adopted in these destination markets.

As a result of the loss of their jobs and employment opportunity in the destination countries, and the pandemic associated various

other socio-psychological factors, large-numbers of Nepali foreign migrants would be coming back to Nepal soon, as soon as the lock down is eased and the air travel restrictions is gradually eased. A recent report from the Government of Nepal mentioned that more than 600,000 Nepali migrant workers likely to return to their home in Nepal within a span of one year due to loss of their job and increased anxiety about their health abroad due to the Pandemic. Large number of Nepali migrant laborer are also returning before expiring of their full term of contract, largely due to non-renewal of contracts from the gulf countries and Malaysia. The domestic labor markets of Nepal have been impacted adversely due to the four to five months long lockdown. Almost all workers involved in tourisms sector, in hotel and restaurant industries, and in public transportation and related mass entertainment and mass transportation sectors have been devastated severally. Likewise, back bone of industries and several other service sectors have been so much devastated that it may take another 2-3 years to revive these sectors to the level that of the pre-pandemic level of operation. Thus, serious worrisome situation prevails in Nepal, where remittance income from the migrant workers contributes nearly 27 % of the annual GDP of the country, and turn, affecting various sectors of the economy.

When large numbers of Nepali foreign migrant workers return to Nepal in a short period of time, it is going to have huge pressures on their rehabilitation and reintegration into the domestic labor markets, especially at local and provincial level labor markets. So far, almost all policy makers have considered that agriculture sector will absorb all of the large numbers of returning migrant workers from India and from the third countries. Moreover, it is not known definitely whether the returnee foreign migrant workers would be still interested to engage in farming sector for their employment and livelihoods, when they have left the farming long back and went abroad for employment? In that sense, still there is no clear understanding among the concerned policy makers on what policy measures and interventions to be taken in the domestic labor markets that would provide adequate employment opportunity and income generation for absorption of additional of three millions of additional labor forces in the labor markets in this year.

In this context, this planned study attempts to analyze the concerns and opportunity of returning migrant workers by asking a brief question directly to each returnee workers from abroad. In particularly, this will be done using the framework of knowledge attitude and preference (KAP) based analysis of the returning workers, largely to be located in two provinces of Nepal (Province 2 and in 7 (Sudurpaschim province)). Among the seven provinces of Nepal, large numbers of returnee migrant workers are located in province 2, Sudurpaschim province, Furthermore, large numbers of these migrant workers have returned in these provinces from India than that of the other provinces of Nepal. Besides, the unemployment rate prevailing in these two provinces is relatively much higher level than in other provinces of Nepal. Hence, we purposively identified these two provinces for the telephone interview to get the more inside on the ground reality and better pictures on perspectives and preference of the returnee migrants from outside for their reintegration into the domestic labor markets.

CHAPTER II

OBJECTIVES AND SCOPE OF THE ASSESSMENT

Objectives and scope of the study are briefly summarized in this chapter. First objectives are described then scope of the study are listed afterward.

2.1 OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

Major objective of this study is to analyze issues and problems that foreign returnee migrant workers in Nepal have faced because of loss of their jobs due to COVID related lockdown in the major destination countries of Nepali migrant workers. Then, the objective is to analyze current issues and problems associated with the returnee migrant workers in province numbers 7 and 2, and assess their preference for reintegration into the local labor markets. The specific objectives of the study are:

- e) To assess impact of the COVID Pandemic on Nepali foreign migrant laborers largely through desk study of available literature and reports, news bulleting on the topic.
- f) To conduct a rapid survey among returnee foreign migrants in province 7 (Sudurpaschim Pradesh) and in province 2 to assess extent of their hardship, their knowledge, attitude and preferences

for reintegration into the domestic markets.

g) To assess and analyzing choices of the returnee migrants for employment on getting employment in major sectors and sub-sectors in of the domestic job markets s, and

h) To recommend policy measures for enhancing welfare of the returnee migrant workers by their smooth reintegration in the domestic labor markets

2.2 SCOPE OF THE STUDY

Almost all sectors of the Nepalese economy have been badly hit by the global pandemic. Given the limited time and other resources, the focus of this study is more on evaluation and documentation of preference and aspiration of the returnee Nepali migrant workers from foreign countries. This is done for better understanding of all the present situation and problems and constraints that these migrant workers have been facing now. The focus of the study is to have better understanding on what the knowledge, attitude and preference of the returnees of the foreign migrant workers, and what they would be interested to do for their basic employment and livelihoods in Nepal in the immediate near future. The data and information compiled out of the rapid assessment, as planned in this study, is expected to provide better knowledgebase for assessing prospectus of effective integration of the returnee migrant population into the domestic labor markets.

The survey questionnaires are designed accordingly in focusing on to obtain more of preference and attitude of the returnee workers in the selected areas of high outmigration regions of Nepal. Given the limitation of various internal and external factors (time, resources, lock down context in the economy), we focus the study in two provinces – Province 2 and in far western Nepal (province 7 or Sudur Paschim province). The problems of unemployment of returnee migrant workers are more severe in these two provinces than in other provinces, as more numbers of migrant workers have returned there recently, and also largely from India.

From the rapid assessment done on these two provinces, we expected to get better picture of the present constraints and the ground level problems of the returnee migrant workers in the

country within a given short-span of time. Some of the places in Sudurpaschim (such as Achhams district) have a very long history of high intensity of outmigration of population to India and in other parts of Nepal for seasonal as well as long duration of employment. Large numbers of populations from Achhams, Bajhang, etc., go for seasonal labour work in Uttarakhand and Himachal states of India for informal service related work activities.

CHAPTER III

STUDY METHODOLOGY, ACTIVITIES AND THE STUDY SITES

Study methodology, study sites, and sampling size of the field survey are briefly described and summarized in this section.

3.1 OVERALL STUDY METHODOLOGY

We used mixed methods and approach of the study to complete the assignment by using both quantitative data across the 210 individual respondents from the two province (Province 2 and 7). Out migration rate for foreign employment is very high at both the province 2 and province 7. For example, Achams district in Province 7 and Dhanusha and Sarlahi districts are historically places with a very high rate of outmigration of adult for foreign employment.

The study findings are based on the content analysis and review of the recently available reports in Nepal and outside. We reviewed the pre much as possible, the data and information used is based on the data compiled by the team members using the mobile phone based interview with randomly selected returnee from each of the study sites.

3.2 STUDY SITES AND SELECTION OF RESPONDENTS

For the survey of foreign returnee migrant workers, we did rapid assessment in two provinces namely province 2 and province 7 (Sudurpaschim provinces) with historically a very high out migration rate in the country. Furthermore, scale of absolute poverty and vulnerability are also very high in these two provinces than the other provinces of the country. Besides, in the relative term, the unemployment rate is already at high level in these two provinces than in other provinces of Nepal. In relative

term, the remittance in flow from these two provinces is also backbone of the livelihoods of the population living in the surveyed locations. The selected factors and indicators associated with attitude and preference of the returnee migrant (sample selected respondents) are analyzed using the simple summary statistics and graphical presentation, and comparison of the findings in province 2 (largely Terai region) and in far western region (Sudur Paschim province and a district of Karnali province).

In addition to the desk review by the authors in Kathmandu, we used data and information from primary survey (phone-based survey), wherein the focus of the phone interview was more on ground realities on major socio-economic issues and implications (indicators) of the returnee migrants who have lost employment abroad. Then, the study analyzes, document, and assess their knowledge, attitude and preference for better integrating them into domestic labor markets

PHONE-BASED INTERVIEW

Considering the prolong lock down in the economy and health threat and risk of pandemic and disease infection during the lock down period, we used telephone based interview to compile needed data and information from recently returned foreign migrants in the targeted municipalities of the two provinces. The phono interview with the respondent was done after getting name list of the returnee migrants in the targeted sites.

At first, telephone survey of about 200 returnees' persons were planned for a telephone interview from the two provinces, at the rate of about 100 returnees per provinces. Duet to the telephone survey, largely short questionnaires will be prepared. Individual level data and information compiled from one-to-one telephone interview was supplemented by desk review of literatures and reports on status of migrant workers across the provinces. This includes review analysis of issues covered by the major newspaper on the topics recently.

In total of 214 respondents were interviewed using telephone survey: 105 were from province 2 and 109 from province 7 (Sudurpaschim Province), as summarized in Table 1. We had great difficulty in getting name list of the returnee migrants from

a single agency in each of the province, hence the name lists were obtained directly from each of the municipalities, and key informants survey in case of Sudurpaschim province, and using a snow ball sampling methods in case of province number 2 (see in Table 1).

TABLE 1: TOTAL NUMBER OF RESPONDENT, NUMBER OF DISTRICTS AND MUNICIPALITY COVERED BY THE PHONE BASED INTERVIEW SURVEY 2020

Respondents	Province		Total
	Province 2	Province 7 (Sudurpaschim)	
Total number of Respondents	105	109	214
Total number of Districts covered	5	2	7
Total number of municipalities covered	13	7	19

After compiling about 225 list of returnee migrant from each of the province, we picked returnee migrants for telephone interview randomly by marking a person who is with odd serial number in the list of persons compiled. For any person who was not able to contact using phone for the interview, we picked up the next odd umbers. The original target was to interview about 100 returnee migrant from each province with a set of issues on their constraints (knowledge), attitude and preference related issues in terms of reintegration into the domestic labor markets.

CHAPTER IV

GENERAL PROFILE OF THE RESPONDENTS

This chapter presents the results and discussion of empirical analysis of data and information obtained from a telephone interview with 214 individual respondents, 105 from province number 2 and 109 respondents from province number 7 (or Sudur Paschim Pradesh). The survey findings are compared between the two provinces side by side based on simple average of each groups. As appropriate, simple graphs and charts were used for summarizing the findings in some cases for better comparison of the data between the two provinces.

4.1 GENERAL SOCIOECONOMIC PROFILE OF THE SURVEY-RESPONDENTS

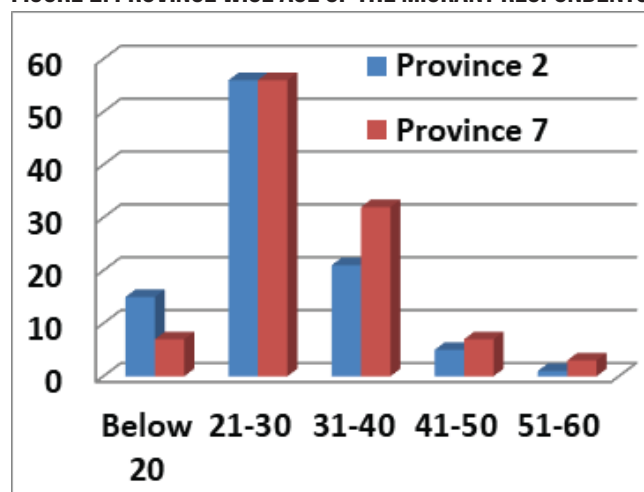
Socioeconomic factors related to the general profile of individual respondents (such as age, gender, educational level, caste/ethnic group, marital status, family size, etc.) of the respondents' individuals (households) are summarized in this section.

4.1.1 AGE OF THE RESPONDENTS

Usually young adults segment of population tends to go out long distance for employment and job than other age groups. Also, Age is one of the important factors determining migration pattern, destination countries, and employment types and kind of labor work to be done in the destination countries.

In this case, results on age related data from our surveyed from province 2 and 7 are summarized in Figure 2, which suggest that majority of returnee migrant are youth of age between 21 to 40 years of age (85% of total sample respondents). Moreover, same pattern of age of returnee migrants exists between the two provinces, and probably same patterns exists also for out-migration of labor from Nepal. Then, adult group of 31-40 years of age was another major groups migrating abroad for employment and income, they correspondent to about a quarter of the total respondents (Figure 2).

FIGURE 2: PROVINCE WISE AGE OF THE MIGRANT RESPONDENTS



Over 12% of the surveyed respondents in Province 2 were in fact less than 20 years of age adult, an alarming situation considering long-term loss of education opportunity to adult youth population due to their abandoning of the school and early-age entering into the unskilled labor markets.

The results on age distribution of the respondents (recently returnee foreign migrant workers) in fact indicate us that that government's re-integration programs need to focus more on needs and requirements of this age group, and to meet their aspiration while designing re-integration programs across the sites. In Nepal, in fact, youth out-migration for foreign labor market is at already alarming-scale. It is likely that the same pattern of age of returnee may also exist for out migration of labor even after COVID-19 global pandemic.

4.1.2 GENDER DIMENSIONS OF RETURNEE MIGRANT

All the surveyed respondents were male members (see Table 2), therefore we could document views and perspectives of only male returning migrants, and so is their attitude and preference for alternate jobs and livelihoods reported. As reported here, due to various policy and administration factors, names of female returnee migrant workers could not be obtained to the survey team in each of the provinces.

TABLE 2: GENDER DIMENSIONS OF THE RESPONDENTS

	Province 2		Province 7		Total	
	Number	%	Number	%	No	%
Male	105	100	109	100	214	100
Female	0	-	0	-	0	0
Total	105		109		214	

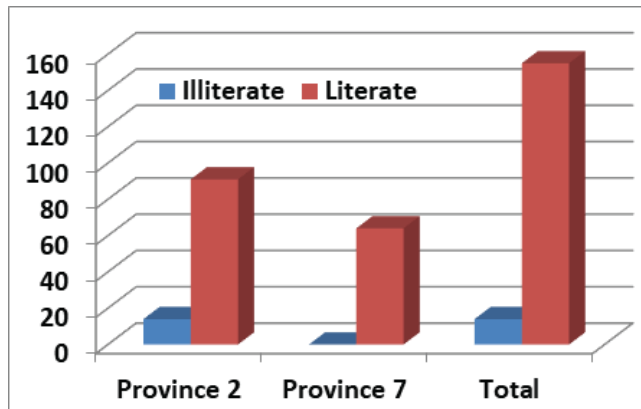
Moreover, feminization of migration is one of major issues in the literature on out migration of labor from Nepal. In earlier days, the out migration was largely domestic as women's' foreign migration for work from Nepal has been increasing but large-part of this migration is also illegal migration and outside of the framework of the government data base. Though our survey did not interview any women members of returnee migrants, based on findings of some of the recent studies and reports on the topics (MOLESS 2020), increased attention needs to be given to the gender dimensions of foreign migration, including issues of

special protection for women and targeted services to them uncertain regional pattern of migration.

4.1.3 EDUCATION LEVEL OF THE MIGRANT WORKERS

Among the interviewed migrant respondents, almost all mentioned as literature (see Figure 3), however, education level among the respondents was very low, hardly lower secondary level of education. In our survey, the respondents just mentioned they were literate, but when asked further on what class has he/she has passed, then large percentage of them could not provide detailed information on their schooling years etc. Furthermore, large- numbers of the respondents from province 7 did not response their education status, at all. Low level of education of adults' population in province 7 could be the reasons for large- numbers of their migrating to India for informal sector jobs and employments.

FIGURE 3: EDUCATION STATUS OF THE RESPONDENTS (IN NUMBER)



The level of education of returnee migrant labor also determine nature, process, and speed of their re-integration in the domestic labor markets in the country. Re-integration of educated returnee labor will be even easy through skill development training and business packages. There is high possibility of their skills are certified through CTEVT that make easy to get loan from the loan for their business plan, but less educated cohort of returnees would be left outside of the domestic labor markets.

4.1.4 CASTE/ETHNICITY OF THE RESPONDENTS

Even in small sample survey, there is a quite contrast on ethnicity and cast structure of the migration work forces in Nepalese

society, as the results are summarized in Table 3. Hill Brahmin/Chettri castes population dominated the sample survey in Province 7 (about 90%), whereas, their counter parts in Province 2 (Madeshi Brahman and Cherri) were less than 6% of total share. Unlike that Dalit, Muslim, and others socially left-behind groups were more from the province 2 (details are in Table 3).

TABLE 3: CASTE/ETHNIC GROUP STATUS OF THE RESPONDENTS

Caste/Ethnic Group Types	Province 2		Province 7		Total	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Hill Brahmin/Chettri	0	0.0	88	80.7	88	41.3
Janajati	6	5.8	0	0.0	6	2.8
Hill Dalit	0	0.0	21	19.3	21	9.9
Madhesi Brahmin/Chhetri	6	5.8	0	0.0	6	2.8
Madhesi Dalit	25	24.0	0	0.0	25	11.7
Muslim	10	9.6	0	0.0	10	4.7
Others	57	54.8	0	0.0	57	26.8
Total	104		109		213	

Among other reasons, lack of minimum thresh hold level of income and asset (wealth) and absence of other social network, the poor households, and dalit and Janajati social groups from province no 2 and almost all from the province 7 are not being able to out migrate for work in third countries (other than India) because of not being able to afford the huge initial costs (all hidden financial costs and transaction costs that is involved) involved to migrate to third countries for work (except India). As a result, despite of low paying in India, most of the less better-off adult male from province 2 and all most all migrant populations from province 7 tend to migrate to India for seasonal labor work such as informal sector labor work, security persons, restaurant workers, rice and wheat harvesting labor in Punjab, apple picking work (in Himachal), and so on. The same situation may prevail for migration process in all over the Nepal, as well.

4.1.5 MARITAL STATUS OF THE RETURNEES

More than two third of the respondents from the two provinces were married male (Table 4). Which indicates that the return migrants' family is dependent in one way or another to their father (as 100 % of our respondents were male members). If their job and employment prospectus is uncertain, it will affect their overall livelihood operations and their children education and expenditure on health services as well.

TABLE 4: MARITAL STATUS OF THE RESPONDENTS

	Province 2		Province 7		Total	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Unmarried	24	22.9	25	23.1	49	23.0
Married	81	77.1	84	77.8	165	77.5
Divorce	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0
Widow	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0
Others	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0
Total	105		109		214	

Marital status is an important push as well as a pull factor for labor migration in Nepal. It is general practice in Nepal is that once a youth is tied in marital relation, he has to set up a family such as separate cooking, etc. After some time of marriage, one is forced to have an income source for some threshold level. Once the new entrance in labor forces doesn't get a job in Nepal, then he (or she) is likely to migrate to India or to other foreign countries for search of employment and livelihoods. Marital factor is an important pull factor of migration, and its important has increased many folds in the critical situation of the COVID-19 pandemic. This is because the married person has to take care livelihood needs of his families.

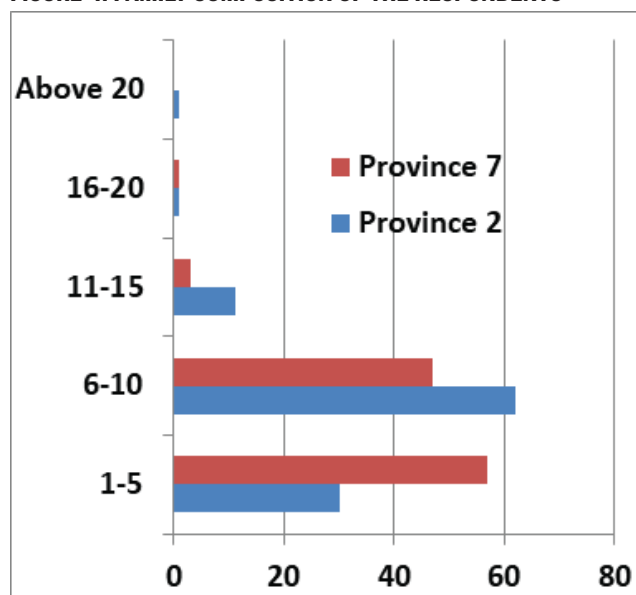
4.1.6 FAMILY SIZE AND RELATED CHARACTERISTICS OF THE RESPONDENTS (NO)

AVERAGE FAMILY SIZE

Size of family is linked with marital status. For example, whether one is a household head or not is an important push as well as pull factor for labor migration in Nepal. It determines how much family members he/she need to care of. It is also an important pull factors in the critical situation such as COVID-19 pandemic. In addition, it is also an important factor determining the process of re-integration in domestic labor markets. If a migrant worker has to support livelihoods of large number of family members who needs to be feed, one needs special attention during the process of re-integration. If there are many dependent family members on the returnee labor migrant, he/she needs urgent income sources.

The result shows great variation in average family size among the respondents in between the two provinces. Half of the respondents belong to province 7 have family size between 1 to 5 people in their household, almost double size than their counter part in province 2. About 60 percent of the respondent from province 2 stated that their household size ranges from 6 to 12

people, whereas, it was about 40 percent in province no 7. The average household size in province 2 is bigger than that of the province 7, which adds responsibility among the adults (male) to work hard to look after the family needs, especially more if they are poor and from marginal and social backward groups.

FIGURE 4: FAMILY COMPOSITION OF THE RESPONDENTS

RETURNEE'S ROLES IN THE HOUSEHOLD STRUCTURE

There is a quite contrast on structure of migration between Province 7 and province 2. One out of ten migrants from Province 2 were a family head of the household, whereas, five out of ten respondents from province 7 were household head. Details are in Table 5.

TABLE 5: MIGRANT PERSONS STATUS WITHIN THE HOUSEHOLD

Status within a family	Province 2		Province 7		Total	
	No	%	No	%	No	%
A household head in the family	9	8.6	60	55.0	69	32.2
Non-head of a family member	96	91.4	49	45.0	145	67.8
Total	105	100	109	100	214	100

The results in Table 5 indicate that the returnee migrants' population in province 7 are more vulnerable than that of the case in Province 2, with urgent needs of employment for meeting needs of their family members. It is likely that the population from Province 7 would immediately return to India again for search of jobs and employment, if they could not find jobs in the domestic labor markets sooner. In fact, this process has already been seen in some places in western Nepal, as a large numbers of Nepalese from western Nepal have started to go to India for daily employment and livelihoods despite of several hurdles at borders even in the stage of almost half-lock down like business activities in India too.

4.1.7 DESTINATION COUNTRIES AND DURATION ABROAD

MAJOR DESTINATION COUNTRIES OF THE RESPONDENT MIGRANT WORKERS

Among the sample respondent returnee migrant workers, their major destination countries were India, gulf countries, and Malaysia. As in other factors noted earlier, there is huge difference towards destination countries among the respondents between the two provinces (details in Table 6). All the surveyed respondents (returnee migrants) of province 7 were returnees from India, whereas only 56% of the returnees in case of province 2 were from India. Details are illustrated in Table 6. Among the remaining 44 percent of respondents' returnee migrants in province number 2 were returnees from Malaysia (27%), from Gulf countries (14%), and from other countries (3%). The results in Table 6 also suggests that adult people from province 7 are more depended upon India for their livelihood compared to people from province no 2 and other parts of Nepal: one reason for this trend is that migrant in India is a long year's tradition, and a social network has already been built there in each community. Besides, it is a low-cost to the individual to migrate India than other countries (traveling to Kathmandu for getting visas, etc.).

TABLE 6: DESTINATION COUNTRIES OF THE SURVEYED RETURNEE MIGRANT WORKERS

Returning from abroad	Province 2		Province 7		Sample Total	
	No	%	No	%	No	%
India	59	56	109	100.0	168	78.5
Gulf countries	15	14	0	0.0	15	7.0
Malaysia	28	27	0	0.0	28	13.1
Others	3	3	0	0.0	3	1.4
Total	105	100	109	100	214	100

In addition, large numbers of migration from Nepal, specially from Province number 2 and 7 are kind of forced migration rather than the form of developmental migration for work, as seen in case of migration of educated Nepali adults to third countries like Japan, Korea, or other European countries. In sum, there is a quite contrasting picture on out-migration pattern and process of rural youth between the provinces 2 and 7, as clearly illustrated by the survey results in Table 6.

DURATION OF STAY ABROAD

The survey results on duration of staying my migrant workers of Nepal are presented in Table 7. On an average, the returnee respondent from province 2 stayed about 2.2 years abroad whereas, the returnee from province 7 stayed about 6.25 years abroad before their returning to Nepal recently. This is due to visa limits in the case of third countries than the case of people migrating to India. None the less, nearly half of the respondents from Province 7 stayed in India over 5 years and then returned to Nepal after onset of the COVID pandemic (details in Table 7), suggests a deep social problems and socio-economic and family costs of migration that the Nepali society is bearing now due to the mass-scale migration of rural youth for search of employment in other countries.

TABLE 7: DURATION OF STAYED ABROAD BY THE RESPONDENT MIGRANT WORKERS

Duration of stayed abroad	Province 2		Province 7		Total of all sample	
	No	%	No	%	No	%
Less than a month	1	1.0	0	0.0	1	0.5
Up to one year	50	47.6	7	6.4	57	26.6
1 to 2 years	9	8.6	23	21.1	32	15.0
2 to 5 years	41	39.0	29	26.6	70	32.7
5 to 10 years	4	3.8	32	29.4	36	16.8
Above 10 years	0	0.0	18	16.5	18	8.4
Total respondents	105	100	109	100	214	100
Average numbers of years stayed abroad	2.2		6.25		4.3	

How long an average returnee would stay in the foreign countries and work for job and employment can also determine process and type of re-integration process into the domestic labor market. If a person spends several years abroad as a migrant worker, he/she would be definitely saving of more money and gaining of basic technical/management skill that will facilitate him/her for better re-integration in the domestic labor markets in Nepal. Moreover, there would be also of other attitudinal, social-cultural and networking related problems for re-integration, besides monetary advantage, and discussions on all of these issues are beyond scope of the study.

In sum, re-integration is a very complex process, thereby, local government and provincial government needs to design location-specific programs and other initiatives to tackle the problems locally rather than designing a nation-wide uniform set of programs and government interventions across all parts of the countries, which may not be able to address the specific needs and requirements of the returnee migrant populations.

4.1.8 MONTHLY INCOME AND KIND OF WORK DONE ABROAD

Average annual/monthly income received by a respondent depends upon economic status of destination countries. The results on average monthly income of the respondents are summarized in Table 8. The results in Table 8 clearly suggests us that the monthly average income of respondents of the survey drastically varies by the respondents' location (or by province). On an average, an average returnee worker from province 7, all of them are returnee from India, was receiving

average salary income of about Rs. 14,670 per month, which is only 43% of the monthly salary income received by their counter parts from Province 2. This is logical due to the separate labor market destination for the returnee migrants from the province 2 from that of the province 7, as also discussed it earlier.

The returnee migrants who worked abroad, other than India, have received higher monthly income compared to returnee's migrant workers from India, in case of province 7 all respondents are returnee from India. Results in Table 8 also indicate that only 16 percent of the returnee migrants in province 2 have monthly salary level (income) that ranges from 10,000 to 20,000; rest all 84 percent migrants from province 2 have much higher monthly income than their counter parts in province no 7 (Table 8). the low earning returnees in province 2 must be those who have just returned from India.

TABLE 8: MONTHLY INCOME OF THE RESPONDENTS AND KIND OF WORK DONE ABROAD

Income per month (in Rs/month)	Province		Total
	Province 2	Province 7	
Less than 10000	1	0	1
10000-19999	16	101	117
20000-29999	28	8	36
30000-39999	17	0	17
40000-49999	37	0	37
50000 and above	6	0	6
Total of respondents	105	109	214
Average Income per person	33,533	14,680	23,930

NATURE AND TYPES OF JOB WHILE IN ABROAD

Looking at the nature of job that the migrant labors have been performing at their work place in destination countries, respondents from province 2 were largely working in their destination countries on construction and other sectors, whereas, respondents from province 7 (i.e., basically in India context) were mostly working in Hotel and Service sectors (60%), and then in security guards related jobs (27%). Details are provided in Table 9 below.

There is quite difference on jobs done and skill earned among the respondents in these two provinces. The respondents from province 2 had also gone to third countries (Gulf countries, Malaysia and Korea, etc.), and they work in these countries as

construction labor and other jobs than the jobs usually Nepali workers engage in the case of India. Considering sample total, agricultural, and driver and mechanics jobs are less common for the migrants' labor from Nepal, while hospitality, security and construction sub-sectors are the prime sector job markets for most of the migrant labor from Nepal.

TABLE 9: NATURE AND TYPES OF JOBS DONE BY THE RESPONDENTS WHILE IN ABROAD

Jobs at	Province 2		Province 7		Total	
	No	%	No	%	No	%
Agriculture based	4	3.8	1	0.9	5	2.3
Hotel & Service	6	5.7	65	59.6	71	33.2
Security	0	0.0	29	26.6	29	13.6
Construction	23	21.9	5	4.6	28	13.1
Driver or mechanics	0	0.0	3	2.8	3	1.4
Others	72	68.6	6	5.5	78	36.4
Total	105	100	109	100	214	100

Level of skills and experience of returnee labor migrant is very important factors for re-integration programme of Government of Nepal. These skills depend upon the what types of job she/he worked while they were in foreign countries. Both managerial and technical knowledge, skills and practices that the migrant workers would get during their job abroad is very important for them to engage in new business activities in back home in Nepal, once they returned here.

4.1.9 MIGRATION MOTIVATION OF RESPONDENTS

While analyzing main motivation of the migrant workers, the data and results presented in Table 10 suggest that the main driving force or main reasons for migration of Nepali adults for migrant work in abroad are: they could not find suitable work in Nepal (44%), and they were unemployed for long while they were in Nepal (24%). In the case of province 2, the main reasons for migration out of large percentage share of youth was to earn more income in the outside job market (30%). Interestingly, for one third of the respondent migrants (i.e., 33%) from province 2, the main motivation for them to go for foreign employment was to be able to pay back their family ridden debt burden in the local communities.

TABLE 10: MAIN MOTIVATION OF MIGRATION ABROAD BY THE RESPONDENTS

Reasons for migration abroad	Province 2		Province 7		Total	
	No	%	No	%	No	%
Could not find suitable work in Nepal	5	4.8	89	81.7	94	43.9
Were unemployed for long	32	30.5	19	17.4	51	23.8
To earn more income in outside job	32	30.5	1	0.9	33	15.4
To pay back family debt	35	33.3	0	0.0	35	16.4
To join friends and family members abroad	1	1.0	0	0.0	1	0.5
Total	105	100.0	109	100.0	214	100.0

There are also several push factors in the locality that motivate people to migrate. They may include conflict, drought, famine, or extreme religious and political activity. In the case of labor migration, low profit based economic activity and lack of job opportunities are strong push factors for migration of Nepali youth across the countries (Table 10). At present, many migrant labour are returning to home country due to COVID-19 pandemic situation, as a result of loss of job and risk of the virus infection. Thus, the public sector agencies should give more emphasis on livelihoods and income generating related intervention for the re-integration programs that the government should design soon.

4.1.10 REASONS FOR RECENT RETURNING TO NEPAL-COVID-19 OR OTHER EVENTS

PLANNED/UNPLANNED SCHEDULE OF RECENT RETURNING IN NEPAL S

Among the total sample total respondents, 78 percent of the respondents mentioned that it was an unplanned event (Table 11) for them, and it was not normal as per their schedule. In case of Province number 7, almost 100 % were forced returnee's workers compared to their counter parts just 55 percent in case of province 2 (Table 11). The returning process (planned or unplanned way) of migrant workers, and their duration of stay abroad, in fact, largely also determines their vulnerability in the back home. If a person from foreign migration (say Malaysia) returns before his planned schedules, he/she would incur huge economic loss from this process of foreign migration. There is already huge scale of hidden cost of foreign migration in terms of higher investment costs and fees paid to the agents (formal or informal means).

TABLE 11: REASONS FOR RECENT RETURNING SCHEDULE OF RESPONDENTS' AFTERMATH OF THE COVID

	Province 2		Province 7		Total	
	No	%	No	%	No	%
A. The recent returning schedule						
a1. A pre-planned schedule	47	44.8	0	0.0	47	22.0
a2. Sudden developed event (unplanned)	58	55.2	109	100.0	167	78.0
Total	105	100.0	109	100.0	214	100.0
B. Whether your Returning to Nepal now was due to COVID-19 Pandemic						
b1. Yes	60	58.8	109	100	169	80.1
b2. No	31	30.4	0	0	31	14.7
b3. Do not know	11	10.8	0	0	11	5.2
Total	102	100.0	109	100	211	100.0

COVID-19 PANDEMIC AND THE DECISION TO RETURNING TO NEPAL

Our results show that entire migrants of province 7 have recently returned Nepal largely due to the CORONA Pandemic in India (Table 11), while in case of province 2, only 60 percent of them mentioned that they have come home now largely due to the COVID pandemic related locked down (and fear) in their destination country. In fact, about 10 percent of the respondents in Province 2 even could not tell us whether they have returned home is due to the CORONA pandemic or by some other factors

The COVID-19 pandemic situation has huge adverse impacts on Nepali migrant population working in India and cross-border migrant workers (even other than India). This applies also to those working in gulf countries, and also for in country migration (such as to those working in Kathmandu and in other urban centers of Nepal). Since, even within Nepal, huge scale of reverse migration (from urban centers to rural villages) have been taken places in the last 7-8 months, after large number of migrant works just returned to their home.

CHAPTER V:

RESPONDENTS KNOWLEDGE ON COVID-19 AND RELATED FACTORS

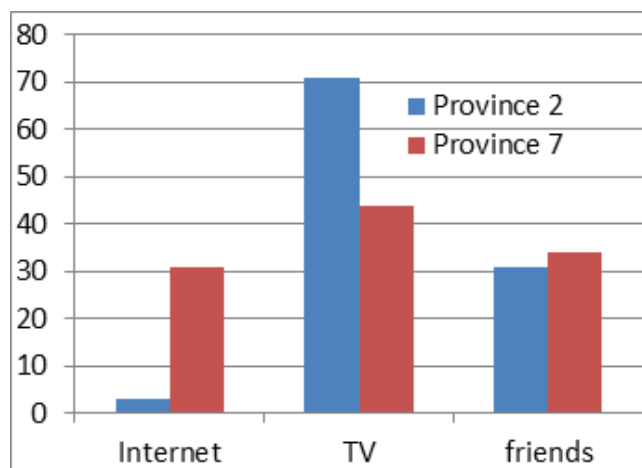
We have briefly summarized knowledge and understanding of the respondents towards the COVID 19 pandemic, and related health and safety measures that the returnee migrant workers have been practicing in Nepal now.

5.1 KNOWLEDGE ABOUT COVID-19 AND ITS SYSTEMS INFORMATION SOURCES ABOUT COVID-19

For the sample surveyed all respondents, the main sources of information about COVID-19 was TV news (54%), followed by

friend-circles information (30%) and then rest from internet news/e-mail (16%), as illustrated it in Figure 5. Moreover, internet based news for COVID was more among the surveyed respondents belonging to Province 7 (28%) than that of province no 2 (3%). In sum, government agencies or local government cannot rely only on online system based dissemination of information to these labor forces, then it is not going to work to pass the information to the returnee migrants in the two provinces noted here.

FIGURE 5: SOURCE OF INFORMATION ABOUT COVID 19 PANDEMIC TO THE SURVEY RESPONDENTS



KNOWLEDGE ON CORONA SYMPTOMS AMONG THE MIGRANT WORKERS

If the people have knowledge about the symptoms of Corona Virus, they will be able to approach to health centers sooner and secure medical supports, and be able to use facility of health services in faster pace and in timely manner. For example, the infected persons can do an early PCR test and apply appropriate isolation practices. Among the 214 total sample respondents, nearly 3/4th of the respondents (75%) mentioned that they know the key symptoms of the CORONA infections very well (Table 12), and remaining (about 25%) respondent know the Corona infection related systems only a little bit. The result in Table 12 clearly suggests that returnee's migrants are at least aware of the major symptoms of CORONA virus, hence, it is expected that they might have taken due care on various safety and prevention measures while in travel time, as well after returning to Nepal.

TABLE 12: KNOWLEDGE ON CORONA SYMPTOMS AMONG THE MIGRANT WORKERS

Major Information sources about COVID-19	Province 2		Province 7		Total	
	No	%	No	%	No	%
Know very well	65	61.9	95	87.2	160	74.8
Know little bit	39	37.1	14	12.8	53	24.8
Do not know much	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0
Know little	1	1.0	0	0.0	1	0.5
Total	105	100.0	109	100.0	214	100.0

5.2 PRESENT EMPLOYMENT AND LIVELIHOOD ENGAGEMENT OF THE RETURNEES

PRESENT ENGAGEMENT IN LOCAL LABOR MARKETS

For sample all respondents, more than half of the respondents (57%) were unemployed during the time of the survey (Table 13), even after returning from the respective foreign country. Over 78 months Unemployed rates of returnee migrant is much higher in province 7 than in the case of province 2 (63% Versus 50%, respectively). In province 2, returnee migrants started working in agricultural based work (10%), Constructions (13%) and other jobs as per their capacity and availability of jobs. But, in the case of province 7, the respondents are either unemployed or working in agriculture based activities (26%), and only small percentage of them (i.e. 11%) are working in other sectors. Details are in Table 13.

TABLE 13: PRESENT EMPLOYMENT AND JOB ENGAGEMENT OF THE RETURNEE MIGRANTS IN NEPAL

Present engagement of the migrants	Province 2		Province 7		Total	
	No	%	No	%	No	%
Unemployed now	52	50	69	63.3	121	56.5
Agriculture based	10	9.5	28	25.7	38	17.8
Hotel & Service	0	0.0	2	1.8	2	0.9
Security	0	0.0	1	0.9	1	0.5
Construction	21	20.0	4	3.7	25	11.7
Driver or mechanics	6	5.7	0	0.0	6	2.8
Other job	13	12.4	5	4.6	18	8.4
Do not know yet	3	2.9	0	0.0	3	1.4
Total	105	100.0	109	100.0	214	100.0

Whether the returnee labor migrants are engaged in any income generating activities in turn also determines level of potential success of re-integration programme and in reducing economic vulnerability to them and their families. It in fact also suggest lots on whether the returnees will re-migrate to abroad, or not. If the returnee migrant workers remain unemployed for a long time, then it is likely that they may again migrate out to the destination country (abroad), if they cannot find job and livelihoods opportunities in home for a long time.

PRIMARY SOURCES OF LIVELIHOOD

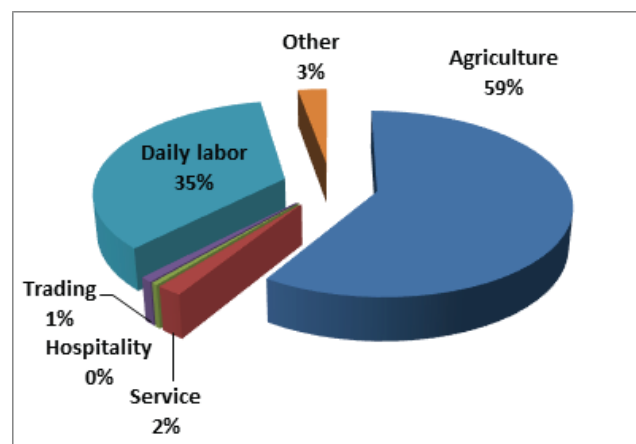
The survey result revealed that agriculture activities and daily wage labor earning are the two major sources of livelihoods options for the large numbers of respondents surveyed: about 58% and 35% of the total respondents respectively for the two activities (Table 14 and Figure 6). Both of agriculture and labor wage are lower income status work activities. However, actual level of dependency on these sectors vary between the two provinces. In province 7, agriculture is a primarily dominant sources of livelihood of the 84% of the respondent households followed by daily wage labor work activities (13%). While in province 2, daily wage labor is their primary source of income, employment and for livelihood for 57 % of respondents, followed by agriculture production (31%) (Details are in Table 14)

Strength based livelihood intervention is very sustainable. Building on their source and practice of income (traditional activities) will demand less additional investment, time and efforts, as well as reduce the barriers related to interventions. Thus, improvements in their traditional livelihoods activities is an essential part of re-integration of returnee migrant in the domestic labor markets.

TABLE 14: PRIMARY SOURCE OF INCOME AND LIVELIHOODS OF THE MIGRANT WORKERS

Primary sources of income and livelihoods of the respondents	Province 2		Province 7		Total	
	No	%	No	%	No	%
Agriculture	33	31.4	92	84.4	125	58.4
Service	2	1.9	2	1.8	4	1.9
Hospitality	0	0.0	1	0.9	1	0.5
Trading	2	1.9	0	0.0	2	0.9
Daily wage labor (misc.)	60	57.1	14	12.8	74	34.6
Other sectors	6	5.7	0	0.0	6	2.8
Total	105	100.0	109	100.0	214	100.0

FIGURE 6: PRIMARY SOURCES OF LIVELIHOOD FOR SAMPLE TOTAL OF RESPONDENTS (N= 214)



5.3 KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING ON BUSINESS PLANS FOR EMPLOYMENT AND LIVELIHOODS

Respondents were asked what they would like to do now for their livelihoods and in the near future. The results are summarized in Table 15. Over 60% of the respondents in province 2 (43%) and in province 7 (77%) do not have any plan for their work at the time of survey. Similarly, 13 percent respondent mentioned that they have plan to work on farming and farming related activities, the other 10 percent respondents aiming to start their own business in agriculture sector. Likewise, 8 percent wants to work for non- agricultural sector, and very small number of respondents (6%) are planning tier own business in non-agriculture sector. Variation in planning is high with the

return migrants at province 2 compared to the migrants among the province 7. One conclusion can be drawn from here is that migrant who went to other countries than India has little courage

to involve in their own business related to non-agriculture sector. But, given smaller sample size of our survey, we cannot generalize it for wider areas.

TABLE 15: MIGRANTS PLAN (WISH) TO ENGAGE ON ACTIVITIES AS PRIMARY SOURCE OF INCOME AND LIVELIHOODS IN NEPAL SOON

Wishes to engage for income and livelihoods	Province 2		Province 7		Sample Total	
	No	%	No	%	No	%
To work on farming/ farming related activities	25	23.8	2	1.8	27	12.6
To start own business in agriculture sector	6	5.7	15	13.8	21	9.8
To work for non- agricultural sector work	11	10.5	6	5.5	17	7.9
To start own business in non-agriculture sector	11	10.5	2	1.8	13	6.1
Others	6	5.7	0	0.0	6	2.8
Do not have any plan now	45	42.9	84	77.1	129	60.3
Total	105	100.0	109	100.0	214	100.0

The result in Table 15 shows that 57% return migrant in Province 2 start their own business in both agriculture and non-agriculture sector while in Province 7 such interested migrants are only 14%. The major interests in new business in the two province are:

- **In Province 2:** Agriculture, business, carpenter, construction, cycle repairing, daily wage work, drinking auto and/or tractor, factory based work, furniture, fishery, poultry farm, sewing and petty shop.
- **In Province 7:** Goat keeping, hotel service, petty shop, poultry farm, tailoring and vegetable farming.

Re-integration programme will be sustainable, if it is implemented based on the business plan of returnee migrant suitable in each locality. Capacity development and funding activities needs to be based on the realistic business plan of the returnee migrant workers. It also determines whether focus is given in agriculture or non-agriculture sector activities, while creating jobs and employment for returnee migrants.

5.4 UNDERSTANDING ON GOVERNMENTS RULES FOR OPENING NEW BUSINESS

RESPONDENT'S UNDERSTANDS ON GOVERNMENT RULES/ BARRIERS FOR NEW BUSINESS.

Government of Nepal has initiated re-integration program for returnee migrant. There are various provisions of skill certification, business management training, skill development

training, and soft credit facility. We asked the respondents about level of their understanding on government rules and regulations for setting up new business. The survey results are summarized in Table 16.

In the question of whether return migrant is actually familiar with government rules and requirements for setting up a new business in their area, almost all of the respondents (i.e. 96%) from province 2 said they do not know the rules and regulations. In case of province 7, respondents remain silent and unanswered this question, only 15 respondents (14%) out of 109 respond the answer. Also 13 out of 15 respondents mentioned that they are not familiar with government rules and requirements for setting up new business activities in their locality. It indicates that returnee migrant workers are mostly unaware about government rules and policies, thereby, this lack of knowledge (and information problem) could be a major setback for the take up of government programs by mass population. Hence, there is an urgent need of removing the barriers and solving the problems by which the returnee migrants have better access to government interventions.

TABLE 16: RESPONDENT'S UNDERSTANDS ON GOVERNMENT RULES/BARRIERS FOR NEW BUSINESS

Particulars	Province 2		Province 7		Sample Total	
	No	%	No	%	No	%
Know the rules and process very well	3	2.9	2	13.3	5	4.2
Only know little bit	1	1.0	0	0.0	1	0.8
Do not know the rules	85	81.0	1	6.7	86	71.7
Others	16	15.2	12	80.0	28	23.3
Total	105	100.0	15	100.0	120	100.0

COVID-19 has impacted negatively in all dimensions of people's livelihoods. However, there are some sectors which are mostly affected by it and by the lockdown process. After return to Nepal, migrant labor has also been facing very weak prospectus of getting jobs and earning opportunity. It is necessary to identify these vulnerable sectors and provide targeted support for recovery of these sectors as a part of the re-integration program, and better assuring employment and livelihoods to the returnee migrants.

5.5 COVID- 19 EFFECTS ON INCOME AND EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITIES OF MIGRANT WORKERS

COVID IMPACT ON INCOME LOSS

All respondents from both the provinces mentioned that COVID-19 has adversely affected their earning activities now, and also their earning potentials. The COVID-19 pandemic situation has created uncertainty on Nepali migrant forces abroad (across the countries). The results are summarized in Table 17. Only in some countries context, the COVID has provided some opportunity to continue jobs and employment (and possibility of shift of jobs to other sectors) easily in the destination countries.

TABLE 17: WHETHER THE COVID-19 HAS ADVERSELY AFFECTED EARNING POTENTIAL OF THE RESPONDENT?

Whether adversely affected to income	Province 2		Province 7		Sample Total	
	No	%	No	%	No	%
Yes	101	96.2	109	100.0	210	98.1
No	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0
Do not know	4	3.8	0	0.0	4	1.9
Total Respondents	105	100.0	109	100.0	214	100.0

ADVERSELY AFFECTED BUSINESS BY THE COVID 19 MOST AFFECTED SOURCES

Among the sources of income affected by the COVID pandemic, daily labor (76%) and agriculture related income (14%) were affected more severely in province 2, while in the case of province 7, the most adversely affected earning activities were their foreign employment (100%), as they could not go to India for employment after the pandemic (Table 18).

TABLE 18: THE SOURCE OF INCOME OF THE RESPONDENTS THAT ARE MOST ADVERSELY AFFECTED BY THE COVID PANDEMIC

Most adversely affected business by COVID 19	Province 2		Province 7		Sample Total	
	No	%	No	%	No	%
Agriculture	15	14.3	0	0.0	15	7.0
Service	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0
Hospitality	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0
Trading	4	3.8	0	0.0	4	1.9
Daily labor	80	76.2	0	0.0	80	37.4
Other	6	5.7	109	100.0	115	53.7
Total	105	100.0	109	100.0	214	100.0

CHAPTER VI:

ATTITUDE AND APPROACHES FOR THE RETURNEE MIGRANTS

6.1 REASONS TO RETURNING NEPAL AND GOVERNMENT SUPPORTS IN RETURNING PROCESS

For success of a re-integration program, it is necessary to identify the people who were returned as routine process, and those who returned due to the risk of COVID-19. To address the livelihoods issues associated with the pandemic of COVID, it is necessary to focus the interventions on the returnee labor migrant who are more vulnerable and negatively and who have also more adversely affected by this virus. Accordingly, we asked the respondents for main reasons for their returning to Nepal in the recent past, and the answers of both the provinces are summarized in Table 6.1 below.

MAIN REASON FOR RETURNING TO NEPAL

The survey findings summarized in Table 19 suggest that entire respondents of returnee migrants (n=109) from province 7 decided to return home recently due to COVID-19 (i.e. 100%). While in province 2, only 63% migrants were returned home due to the COVID-19 pandemic related events in the destination countries. Apart from COVID-19, one third migrants (32%) in Province 2 also returned home because normal expiry of their employment contract, and 5 percent of them returned due to their health problem, as well. This result indicates that returnee migrants from India is taken place largely due to the COVID pandemic.

TABLE 19: MAJOR FACTORS AFFECTING DECISION TO RETURN TO NEPAL RECENTLY (IN 2020)

S N	Reasons for Recent Returning to Nepal	Province 2		Province 7		Total Sample	
		No	%	No	%	No	%
1	Due to COVID-19	66	63	109	100	175	82
2	Due to completion of job contract	34	33	0		34	16
3	Due to health problem	5	4	0		5	2
	Total	105	100	109	100	214	100

PERSPECTIVES ON GOVERNMENT SUPPORTS DURING THE RETURNING PROCESS

ADEQUACY OF GOVERNMENT SERVICE DURING THE RETURNING PROCESS

The survey data across 214 respondents suggest us that on an average 63 % of the returnees' felt then that the government support during their returning process to Nepal was adequate combining respondents from both the provinces (details are in

Table 20). However, one third of the migrants (37%) from province 2 even don't felt any of government support that they have got during their returning process to Nepal.

TABLE 20: GOVERNMENT SUPPORT FOR FOREIGN RETURNEE WORKERS DURING RETURNING PROCESS

Adequacy and quality of govt. government support services	Province 2		Province 7		Total	
	No	%	No	%	No	%
A. Whether government support during your returning process was adequate?						
A1) Was adequate	30	28.8	102	93.6	132	62.0
A2) Not adequate	35	33.7	7	6.4	42	19.7
A3) Was so so	1	1.0	0	0.0	1	0.5
A4) Do not know	38	36.5	0	0.0	38	17.8
Sub-Total	104	100	109	100	213	100
Satisfactory level of govt. support for you and others in the community	No	%	No	%	No	%
At satisfactory level s	21	20.4	103	94.5	124	58.5
No	42	40.8	6	5.5	48	22.6
Do not know	40	38.8	0	0.0	40	18.9
Total	103	100	109	100	212	100

LEVEL OF PUBLIC SERVICE PROVIDED TO THE RETURNEE MIGRANT WORKERS IN THE LOCAL COMMUNITY

The respondents from province 7 fully agreed that government supports for their community are at satisfactory level. But, respondent from province 2 disagree on this statement. About 40 percent of the respondents from Province 2 have said that the government service is not satisfactory, while another 39 percent said they do not know about such services in the community at all.

Government has provided various services to returnee migrant workers. The services are like ease in border crossing with India, and rescue from Malaysia and gulf countries, isolation services, and PCR testing, health facility, etc. Likewise, livelihood supports work like business management training through local government and loan from banks are also equally important facilities. Satisfaction level of services by the returnees is also determined by whether these services are implemented appropriately or not. It will support to improve the governance and institutional mechanism associated with livelihood integration.

6.2 PERSPECTIVES ON EMPLOYMENT AND LIVELIHOOD ENGAGEMENTS IN NEAR FUTURE

We have described here major findings on issues related to the respondents' perspectives and choices on kind of employments and business that they would like to do in the near future of time.

A) WHETHER ONE WOULD WORK IN NEPAL AFTERMATH OF THE PANDEMIC IS OVER

Among the returned migrants interviewed, 85 percent from province 2 and 23 percent from province 7 are sure to stay and work in Nepal even after the pandemic is over. There is quite difference on the respondents' perspectives on this point between the province 2 and province 7. In fact, nearly 50 percent respondents were ready to work in Nepal, if they get employment. They are ready to start their own self-operated business in Nepal soon. Likewise, 28 percent respondents revealed "no idea regarding what they will do after some times, either to stay in Nepal in the near future, or to go abroad again. The survey results are summarized in Table 21.

TABLE 21: RETURNEE MIGRANTS INTEREST TO STAY IN NEPAL, AND/OR, PLANNING FOR A SELF-OPERATED BUSINESS ACTIVITY IN NEPAL

Whether one is planning for self –operated business in Nepal	Province 2		Province 7		Sample Total	
	No	%	No	%	No	%
Agree/Disagree						
Strongly Agree	27	26.0	22	20.2	49	23.0
Moderately agree	30	28.8	3	2.8	33	15.5
Only So So	1	1.0	64	58.7	65	30.5
Not interested to start own business	6	5.8	0	0.0	6	2.8
Do not know at all	40	38.5	20	18.3	60	28.2
Total	104	100	109	100	213	100

The returnee migrants were keenly interested to start varieties of self-operating business in Nepal. Such business range from individual capacity of the respondents, as well as overall institutions and the provinces they are residing. From the two provinces surveyed, their choices for self-business varied sharply between the two provinces, as summarized below.

- **In Province 2:** The most preferred business as reported are: Agriculture, business, construction, cycle repairing, daily wage work, driving, factory based work, furniture, fishery, poultry farm, sewing, vegetable farming.

- **In Province 7:** The most preferred business as reported are Cattle raring, driving, fishing, goat keeping, hotel, mechanics, petty shop, poultry farm, tailoring and vegetable farming.

B) INTEREST ON TYPES OF SKILL IMPROVEMENT TRAINING

The survey results on skill training part of our survey are

summarized in Table 22. The results suggest that migrant workers from province 2 are interested more in skill enhancing training, than that of their counterparts in province 7, if it is provided by the government now. But, in case of province 7, about 67 percent respondents did not respond this question, which means that they are not much interested for any training (and skill enhancing activities) in Nepal, even if it is provided by the government (Details in 22). Among the respondents, about 22% opined that they are interested in training related to Vegetable farming, 18% have shown interest in Poultry Farming related training, then 10% have shown interest on carpentering and furniture making related work, 6 % have shown interest in factory work training like electric wiring, computer skills. In fact, then about 40% of them also opted for other training, not listed here. Like other factors, the training needs also greatly varies among the respondents between Province 2 and 7.

TABLE 22: SKILLED IMPROVEMENT TRAININGS THAT THE RESPONDENTS ARE INTERESTED

Agree/Disagree	Province 2		Province 7		Sample Total	
	No	%	No	%	No	%
Poultry farm	18	17.6	7	19.4	25	18.1
Fishing	6	5.9	7	0.0	6	4.3
Vegetable farming	24	23.5	0	16.7	30	21.7
Furniture making work	13	12.7	6	2.8	14	10.1
Factory work like, electric wiring, computer skills	7	6.9	1	2.8	8	5.8
Other skill trainings	34	33.3	1	58.3	55	39.9
Total	102	100	21		138	100.0

For a long time, the Foreign Employment Board has been providing skill training for potential migrant workers, which will be provided at the local level. These skill enhancing trainings to be provided to the migrants as per the demands of returnee migrant workers so that they would be reintegrated in the domestic markets smoothly at faster pace.

Identification and certification of skills of returnee migrant

workers and then finding appropriate jobs that are matching with the skills and competency of the returnee migrant (labor) is a complex task. However, government has taken few steps in this regards and is also planning to set up a process and criteria for certifying the returnee migrant workers' skills and technical capability as per nature of their work abroad. In fact, low-skilled returning workers also needs skill development training and hand holding training and support, specially returnees from India who

worked there in unskilled or low skill demanding work activities such as, security gourd across the market towns, or in hotel and restaurant in India.

CHAPTER VII:

PREFERENCES OF THE RETURNEE MIGRANTS WORKERS

We have provided preferences and interest of the respondents in terms of training, employment, income and livelihood opportunity in this chapter.

7.1 INCOME AND LIVELIHOOD PREFERENCE

A) INCOME EARNING ACTIVITIES

When we asked the respondents (returnee migrant workers) their preference for livelihood activities in Nepal, then among the 210 respondents, household traditional farming activities (31%), starting new farming business with little more new investments (25%), engage in non-agricultural employment (20%) and to start own non-agricultural business (10%) are important preference of the respondents (see Table 23). Unlike the case of earlier factors, there is less difference on preference among the respondents between the two provinces. Since, returnee migrants from both the province are much more closure to follow mentioned options for their income generating activities for livelihood.

TABLE 23: EXPECTATIONS FOR INCOME AND LIVELIHOOD PREFERENCES

Livelihood Preferences of the respondents	Province 2		Province 7		Total	
	No	%	No	%	No	%
a) Household traditional farming activities	30	29.7	36	33.0	66	31.4
b) To start new farming business with little more new investments	21	20.8	31	28.4	52	24.8
c) To engage in non-agricultural employment	16	15.8	27	24.8	43	20.5
d) To start own non-agricultural business	18	17.8	13	11.9	21	10.0
e) Do now know yet	7	6.9	2	1.8	9	4.3
f) Others	9	8.9	0	0.0	9	4.3
Total	101	100	109	100	210	100

B) CHOICE OF SUB-SECTORS WITHIN FARMING SECTORS

In COVID-19 situation, returnee migrants and also others prefer to engage in household agriculture and its related sub-sectoral work activities. Within various sub-sectors of agriculture, some 43 percent would like to engage in farming food crops, while others also like Poultry, Livestock, Agro-enterprise, Daily labor. Province-wide larger variation can be seen in the choice of sub-sectors. Among the respondents in Province 7, more

preference was for the farming of food crops and raring livestock, while in province 2 the returnees were interested more on starting agro-enterprises (15%), raising poultry (12%), and to work as a daily labor worker (12%). For the success of the national integration program, it needs to tailors the activities taking into these regional and provincial variation on preferences and choices of the individual returnee migrant workers (Table 24).

TABLE 24: RETURNEE MIGRANTS CHOICE FOR SUB-SECTORS OF FARMING SECTORS

Farming Sectors	Province 2		Province 7		Total	
	No	%	No	%	No	%
Farming – food crops	26	30.6	37	59.7	63	43
Poultry	10	11.8	7	11.3	17	11.6
Livestock	2	2.4	14	22.6	16	10.9
Agro-enterprise	13	15.3	1	1.6	14	9.5
Daily labor	10	11.8	0	0.0	10	6.8
Others	7	8.2	2	3.2	9	6.1
Do not know	0	0.0	1	1.6	1	0.7
Total	85	100.0	62	100.0	147	100.0

C) POSES BASIC SKILLS TO DO THE JOBS/BUSINESS IN NEPAL

When the respondents were asked whether they have the needed basic business skill to do the kind of their preferred jobs and work activities in Nepal, then. The results are summarized in Table 25 below. Those who wanted to engage in agriculture mentioned

they have got skill to do that job but for many other jobs, they don't have necessary skill. In overall, 70 percent respondents mentioned that they don't have skills. It is more in province 2 (88%) compare to province 7 (55%). It indicates that training for the return migrant workers is necessary.

TABLE 25: POSSESSION OF BASIC SKILL BY THE RETURNEE MIGRANTS TO DO JOBS IN NEPAL

SN	Responses by the returnee migrants	Province 2		Province 7		Total Sample	
		No	%	No	%	No	%
1	Yes, have got basic skill	11	12	48	45	59	30
2	No, have not got basic skill	82	88	58	55	140	70
	Sub-Total	93	100	106	100	199	100

7.2 ACCESS (OR POSSESSION OF) FINANCE FOR NEW BUSINESS

A) ACCESS TO BASIC FINANCE FOR INVESTMENT

In our survey, about 97 percent of the respondents mentioned that they can manage their own source of fund for doing the business that they are planning. Unlike other factors, the respondents stated that financing was not a major issues and concerns to the

for doing a small business in their locality. This is an interesting finding, and which could be due to their jobs in abroad (or India) and with some disposable cash on hand. Respondents from both the provinces have reported almost same type of responses for the access to financing related question (Table 26).

TABLE 26: ACCESS TO BASIC FINANCE TO THE RETURNEE MIGRANTS FOR THE NEEDED FINANCE (INVESTMENT) FOR STARING A NEW BUSINESS

Whether	Province 2		Province 7		Total	
	No	%	No	%	No	%
Yes	86	82.7	90	88.2	176	85.4
No	3	2.9	0	0.0	3	1.5
Have little bit	5	4.8	18	17.6	23	11.2
Do not know	0	0.0	1	1.0	1	0.5
Total	104	100	102	100	206	100

B) WHETHER THEY ARE TAKING SUPPORT FROM LOCAL GOVERNMENT FOR A NEW BUSINESS AND EMPLOYMENT

In terms of taking support of the local government for their newly planned activity, entire respondents (i.e. 100%) from province 7 totally interested to take support from local/province government for their planned new business activities; while in province 2,

only 14 percent stated for such local government support for their planned business activities. Rest 44 percent respondents in province 2 were in dilemma whether they would be taking any support of the local government for their planned business/livelihood activities. Details are in Table 27.

TABLE 27: ADEQUACY OF SUPPORT FROM LOCAL GOVERNMENT FOR A NEW BUSINESS

Whether planning to take support from Local Government	Province 2		Province 7		Sample Total	
Yes	14	14.3	106	100.0	120	58.8
No	35	35.7	0	0.0	35	17.2
Yes a bit	6	6	0	0.0	6	2.9
Not sure	43	44	0	0.0	43	21.1
Total	98	100	106		204	

Local government are very important agency to provide service to returnee migrant. Local governments have foreign employment related mandate including skilling and returnee reintegration in sustainable way. It is responsible for skill development training and recommendations for loan. Interestingly, the respondents' preferences widely varied for these supports between the provinces, may be due to larger issues of institutions and governances, and quality of services provided across the municipalities involved here.

7.3 LEVEL OF UNDERSTANDING ON MARKETING OF GOODS PRODUCED AND INCOME

A) RETURNEES' UNDERSTANDING OF MARKETING SKILL AND SELLING OF PRODUCTS

The result on these factors indicates that returnee migrants from province 7 stated that they had understanding and awareness of needs of goods and services at the local markets around them. Entire (100%) respondents mentioned that their product will be sold in the local market (Table 28). In case of province 2, it is fifty-fifty of situation. Half of the respondents (54%) mentioned that they have good awareness about the needs of local market while rest of the products (i.e. 46%) is for other markets.

TABLE 28: LEVEL OF UNDERSTANDING ON MARKETING AND SELLING PRODUCTS LOCALLY

Whether their produces will be sold in the local markets? (Market awareness)	Province 2		Province 7		Total	
	No	%	No	%	No	%
Yes	49	54.4	106	100.0	155	79.1
No	41	45.6	0	0.0	41	20.9
Total	90	100.0	106	100.0	196	100.0

B) EXPECTED INCOME PER MONTH FOR ENGAGING IN DOMESTIC LABOR MARKETS

The threshold income opportunity of a worker in a local market is important factor for his/her decision to stay within a locality, in country migration to distance markets, or migrate abroad for other jobs and employment. The survey responses on this factor show that on an average, a returnee migrant expect to about Rs. 27,500 per month of income, which varies from Rs. 30,200 per

month in case of respondents from Province 2, and Rs. 18,400 from that of the province 7. This result is based upon the total 42 percent of respondents, as the response rate for this question was relatively very less than other factors. The expected per month income of the respondent varies also due to his target for destination countries for migration (opportunity of benefits forgone etc.).

TABLE 29: EXPECTED MONTHLY INCOME TO BE RECEIVED FROM THE NEW BUSINESS

Expected Monthly Income	Province 2		Province 7		Total	
	No	%	No	%	No	%
Less than 10000	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0
10000-19999	0	0.0	10	45.5	10	11.0
20000-29999	30	43.5	12	54.5	42	46.2
30000-39999	35	50.7	0	0.0	35	38.5
40000-49999	4	5.8	0	0.0	4	4.4
Total	69	100.0	22	100.0	91	100.0
Avg. monthly Income (Rs)	30,232		18,409		27,374	

C) RESPONDENTS ANY OTHER SUGGESTIONS

Towards end of the survey, we asked also for any other specific suggestions from each of the responses for creating more employment and livelihoods in their localities so that more numbers of the adult populations would not need to go abroad for employment, rather would remain engaged in the local places.

The respondents' provided suggestions from both the provinces, and their major suggestions to the local governments for training and other supports are summarized below.

In Province 2: The respondents expressed need of more of poultry training, skilled based training, school teaching related training, and other training on fishing, painting, poultry farm, sewing and furniture related training.

In Province 7: The respondents expressed need of more of training on cook, providing agricultural tools for their farm operations, provide tailoring tools, subsidy in farming and agro-enterprises related activities.

migrant Nepali labor forces. In this context, this study assesses some of the major issues and concerns of returnee migrant workers, and then we have analyzed and documented extent of adversely affected of the returnee migrants by the COVID pandemic, and towards what extent they have feeling for smooth re-integration in the domestic labor markets.

Almost all policy makers and decision makers in the country so far have been considered that agriculture sector will absorb all of the returning migrant workers from India and from the third countries, and they also believe that agriculture sector should do this noble cause. Then, accordingly, the greater emphasis of the government programs is being developed for generating more employment in agriculture and its allied sectors, this includes from municipality to provincial to the federal government agencies.

Moreover, it is not known definitely whether the returnee foreign migrant workers would be still interested to engage in farming sector for their employment and livelihoods, since they have left the farming long back (at least 3-5 years ago) and went abroad for employment and income? Many of the migrant workers have shifted their family from rural to urban centers and have kept spouses and close family members in the urban center or in better off localities where better schooling and health facilities are available for their children as well. Now, whether these people will again go back to the rural areas and work on farm land for growing crops and livestock or to do agricultural related other activities.

CHAPTER VIII:

CONCLUSIONS AND WAYS FORWARDS

When large numbers of Nepali foreign migrant workers return to Nepal in a short period of time in middle of 2020, it is going to have huge pressures on their rehabilitation and reintegration of them into the domestic labor markets, especially at local and provincial level labor markets. All three tiers of the governments (central government, provincial government and local governments) have already spent huge financial and other resources for smooth management of returning process of foreign

In this context, there is no clear understanding among the concerned policy makers on what policy measures and interventions to be taken in the domestic labor markets that would provide adequate employment opportunity and income generation activities and options for absorption of addition of three to four millions of labor forces in the labor markets in one-year time, which are due to effects of the COVID Pandemic and normal annual addition of the adult population as well. In this context, this study has been conducted using the framework of Knowledge Attitude and Perspectives (KAP) and analyzed issues and concern of recently returnee migrants (214 individuals) in Province 2 and province 7. The findings out of empirical assessment, though with smaller sample size study, is expected to provide good information base for making a larger and in-depth study on the topic in near future. The findings will also provide valuable information base to the government for making sound policy decisions. Set of recommendations and alternative policy measures on the topic are listed below.

WAY FORWARD/RECOMMENDATIONS

- 1) Data-base management of foreign going migrant labor forces to be strengthened, it should be managed scientifically incorporating skill type of each of the migrant workers, and a competent manpower allocated for the task at MOLESS so that the data can be analyzed regularly by the government and others interested on the topic.
- 2) There is a need of timely information sharing system to be adopted by the various tiers of the governments for their reintegration schemes in each jurisdiction.
- 3) Government focus of re-integration of program activities to be more on vulnerable groups. The vulnerable returnee migrants are landless, with large number of dependent and un-skilled labor, or from the socially disadvantage groups.
- 4) Gender and social inclusion dimensions of returnee migrant needs to be given special attentions while designing re-integration programs at local and provincial governments.
- 5) Special funding mechanisms may need to be created for creation of employments on diverse set of activities at municipality level and provincial government level, including addressing the need for vulnerable groups.
- 6) Considering the diverse landscape and socioeconomic

activities being done across the countries, demand led and strength-based livelihoods and employment opportunities needs to be created at local level. These need to include both agriculture and non-agriculture-based interventions.

7) Large numbers of these returnee migrant workers needs support in business management training and full package support that need to ensure handholding support for business development, skill development training, access to finance and linkages with the products and service markets.

8) There should be provision that the municipality and provincial government should also provide psycho-social counselling to some of the returnee migrants, who have faced traumatized events in the process of loss of income and employment due to the COVID.

9) The local support to the returnee migrant workers should focus more on employment and income security with livelihood approach, who have been mentally disturbed in foreign countries during the COVID-19 pandemic, or who have suffered adversely during the transition process.

10) The returnee groups need special economic package and rehabilitation programme for the returnee migrant workers, who lost their job abroad and were not able to repay the loans they owed to various banks, cooperatives, various other business loans.

11) Capacity of local government particularly on business counselling and Business Development Supports, management of market Information systems (MIS) need to be improved. There is need of re-integration plan to be set up in each local government that is tailored to the specific needs and requirements of the locality.

12) Coordination between three tiers of government needs to be improved in terms of implementing the income and employment generating activities, for grant supports and various other technical and institutional supports (tax breaks, etc.) for such locally supported enterprises. Roles and responsibilities of each tier of government on reintegration of foreign returnee workers needs to be clearly specified to avoid ad-huck and duplication on various efforts in this effort.

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ANNEX NOTE 1:

MAJOR ISSUES AND CONCERNS OF FOREIGN RETURNEE MIGRANTS IN THE COVID-9 PANDEMIC

Large inflow of returnee labor migrants in Nepal will pose a challenge of its reintegration into Nepal's labor force. In such situation reintegration is very effective approaches (IOM, 2015). In the COVID-19 pandemic situation the returnee will be unable to re-migrate, it will be a big challenge of reintegrating them in the national labour market (ILO, 2020e). One report shows that majority of migrants (80%) are interested in engaging in self-employment, either in agriculture or non-agriculture (Policy Institute and Migration Lab, 2020). The remaining would prefer to engage in wage-employment either in agriculture or non-agriculture sectors. Creation of suitable employment opportunities at home for them will be a great challenge for government of Nepal. Returnee migrant workers who are interested in self-employment will need entrepreneurship packages such as skill certification, skill development training, loan and market linkages of their products. Creation of wage-employment will also be a challenge.

Government of Nepal through its annual plans and policies of this year has provision of funding and employment opportunities to the returnee labor migrant. The linkage has been done the returnee workers to the PM Employment Programme, which will provide them job opportunities (MOLESS, 2020): The government is trying to create special sector-specific economic areas where the returning migrant workers' skills, knowledge, and capital will be pooled and utilized. The Foreign Employment Board has announced skill training for returning migrant workers which will be provided at the district level and National Skill Testing Board is planning to test and certify the skills of the returning migrant workers and the data shall be uploaded to the Employment Information Management System that links primarily with PM Employment Program and other employment programs as well. The soft loan program for returnee workers was launched in 2018 by the Foreign Employment Board (FEB) and Nepal Rastra Bank (NRB). However, there are many challenges in the re-integration of returnee labor migrants.

Preparation of database of returnee labor migrants and management of this information in usable form is cumbersome task which is essential for re-integration. Lack of exact facts and figures about migrant workers is important factors affecting re-integration work (Piyasiri, 2019), as Rajan Shrestha, executive director of Foreign Employment Promotion Board (FEPB) said. It is very difficult to find the compiled data of them in any institution. Local governments are said to maintain the database of them. However, the capacity of local government is limited to do this task (UNDP, 2020). The absence of information makes it difficult to provide targeted services or interventions according to the profiles of returnees and their geographical spread. There is a diversity in returnee migrant workers in terms of their work experience in host countries, skills they gain, monthly salary and remittances, education etc. Maintaining the data base and management of need and priority of returnee migrant workers will also be a challenge. There will be a need of diverse strategies and plan for effective reintegration of diverse groups among them.

Coordination among three tiers of government as well as among wide range of stakeholders will also be a problematic issue. Responsibilities for return and reintegration may be spread across several ministries and agencies in both destination and origin countries (The Himalayan Times, 2020). Constitution of Nepal provides power to local government to collect the data about unemployed person while it is not priority to create jobs for them. Employment creation and support to unemployed person is joint responsibility of federal and province government. However, major responsibility goes between federal and local government. Similarly, creation of jobs and employment needs wide range of efforts and collaboration not only among different line ministries and departments but also among private sectors and civil society sectors. In the situation of public employment services has declined in most countries, with private employment agencies such as manpower company dominating recruitment of workers and placement of workers abroad. However, the role of these agencies in the re-integration hasn't harnessed so far. Public-private partnerships can bridge these gaps by capitalizing on the private sector's propensity for economic and operational efficiency, and dovetailing that to the government's inputs in creating the jobs and employments.

Capacity of local governments is also major challenge. Nepal's post-2017 federal structure was supposed to decentralize governance of the country's migration sector because local units have closer proximity to workers aspiring to go abroad, returnees and their families. Local governments have an elaborate foreign employment related mandate including data collection of migrants, including those in India, information dissemination on safe migration procedures, skilling and returnee reintegration (Nepali Times, 2020). Section 11 of the Local Government Operation Act 2015 has set an obligation of integrating migrant workers with the local government. Local governments lack the capacity and resource to initiate such a reintegration programme for migrant workers. The government should take the pandemic as an opportunity to create a sustainable reintegration programme for migrant workers as the government has declared that creating internal employment is its priority (OHCHR, 2020).

Inclusion of returnee labor migrant from poor, excluded and marginalized community and households into the re-integration process will also be a challenge. There are variances in such returnee in terms of their livelihoods resource at the home such as land ownership, poverty, income and socio-political networks. Design and implementation of practical packages for them is essential. For example, agriculture-based activities may not be suitable for landless people. Wage based employments may be suitable for them. Neutral and common types of intervention may not be suitable for them. Implementation of such re-integration programme requires specific capacity and resources. It will also concern how the access of such people can be enhanced through information sharing mechanism and inclusion strategies in loan and capacity development activities provided through the government (The Kathmandu Post, 2020). It is also a challenge to re-integrate women returnee migrants. They need special consideration to link their skill they gain while abroad here in Nepal (UNDP, 2020). As almost all of them worked inside the home in care giving, it is difficult to find suitable jobs for them in rural area. Migrants with chronic medical conditions and COVID-19 infected people face many challenges upon and after their return to their countries of origin. Effective reintegration policy necessitates that the government develop a comprehensive policy that addresses stigmatization of returnees as carriers of virus through disseminating appropriate social messages.

Identification, database preparation, and certification of skills and then finding appropriate jobs matching with the skills of returnee labor migrant is also a troublesome task. Most returning workers, including low-skilled workers, acquire new occupational and social skills while working abroad. Yet, there is no streamlined system for skills certification by employers in destination countries or by origin countries upon return. Reintegration is facilitated by skills recognition and by matching skills to labour market needs. Migrants returning from the Middle East and East Asia have diverse management and technical skills through their working experience. National Skill Testing Board under the Council for Technical Education and Vocational Training, has been collecting from all seven provinces. The government is planning to conduct free skill tests for returnee migrant workers to certify the skills they have gained while working on foreign employment. When their skills are certified, they become trained and qualified human resources for the country (The Kathmandu Post, 2019). Once they have the certificate, they can easily apply for similar jobs here and earn decent money. However, very limited people get information about the time of application. It is also difficult for them to fulfill the requirement the board need. The board has limited number of fields that is certified which doesn't cover all the field where the returnee gained skills. There is limited assessment of labour market needs or job matching systems available for returnees. They have diverse skill and need wide range of field and job providers. In addition, it is difficult how to manage low skill labors. There are many returnees who worked in unskilled work particularly in India and even in gulf and Malaysian countries. The Foreign Employment Board has been skill training for returning migrant workers which will be provided at the local level and the data are uploaded to the Employment. The board has been providing free skill training to unskilled and unemployed youths.

Re-integration financing will be a major challenge. Lack of finances as a major hindrance for self-employment of the returnee labor migrants. In this regard, shortage of finance will be a major problem. The government has launched the soft loan program for returnee workers in 2018 by the Foreign Employment Board (FEB) in collaboration with Nepal Rastra Bank (NRB). The Foreign Employment Board (FEB) through Foreign Employment Welfare Fund has a Rs1 million soft loan program already for returnees, at least seven other low interest credits are available to those who return. The Nepal Rastra Bank has made it mandatory for branches to provide at least 10 soft loans. There will be a financial shortage to provide loan to every returnee. It will be an also difficult to provide loan based on the packages of the returnee migrants. This will demand collaboration and coordination with different concerned stakeholders for financing the reintegration programme. Similarly, access to finance provided through the re-integration programme will be a major challenge. As there is diverse returnee labor migrant, they will not have equal access to these funds. How the poor and powerless people will be targeted through the mechanism will determine the effectiveness of the finance mechanism. In another part, it will also be difficult to fulfill the requirement and documentation process to have an access to the loan. For example, the bank will provide loan to the returnee who have received business development training provided through local government. there is no effective system of information dissemination about reintegration services, investment, and employment options. Commercial banks are reluctant to provide collateral free loans to returnees. It may be important to work with select financial institutions like Agriculture Development Banks and provide them with incentives to take ownership of this scheme. Therefore, beneficiaries from these loans are limited. For example, more than 18,000 workers lined up at the Board had applied for the loan last year. Only a little over 100 loans were approved (Source: Nepali Times, May 17, 2020).

Similarly, the process of loan receiving is very lengthy and troublesome. For example, Sunita Neupane worked in Israel for over a decade as a caregiver, and came back to Nepal with some savings to prepare a proposal for an agriculture project to take advantage of the government's soft loan scheme for returnee workers. The application process took a lot of time and money, but despite following up for months, she did not hear back from the Foreign Employment Board. In the last, she gave up after with no hope. (Source: Nepali Times, May 17, 2020). Some Municipalities through local self-employment schemes like Sahakarya provide soft loans of Rs100,000 which is also limited.

Coordinators under the Prime Minister's Employment Program (PMEP) have been appointed in all 753 municipalities and placed in Employment Service Centers (ESCs). The main issue is the lack of ownership by the local governments as it is still largely seen as a federal program. Employment is not usually a priority for local governments. It is largely a social protection program and the jobs offered are all low-wage and labor-intensive such as road work, cleaning, pulling weed or making canals.

Reintegration program for returnees funded by the Foreign Employment Welfare Fund to be implemented via local governments has also shortage of fund. The plan includes a menu of services to increase job and entrepreneurship opportunities, like including skills training, business development training, psychosocial support, shelter support, financial literacy, grants, in-kind kits and referrals. The budget is limited, and it needs to be supplemented with funds from other line Ministries, development partners or the private sector. Additional money is also necessary because those who did not contribute to the Fund will also be eligible for its programs, like undocumented workers, or returnees from India who need support with re-integration.

It has also been difficult to fulfill the expectations of returnee labor migrants. After living overseas for several years most migrants are unlikely to be satisfied with working environment particularly working in subsistence agriculture in their family fields (The Kathmandu Post ,2020a): They hope self-employment schemes directly linked with previous working experience, which is difficult to get in home country. They also couldn't earn as much they used to earn in foreign country. Their view is that the combination of low earnings but high living costs makes employment opportunities in Nepal less attractive.

Managing special and immediate needs as well as long term livelihoods and employment needs is also major concern in the re-integration. The poor returnee needs immediate support by which they can wait for long-term employment programme (IOM, 2015). The reintegration policy should also have provisions for social protection of migrant workers and members of their families who are severely affected by the pandemic, drawing upon contributions of the government, insurance programs and Wage Earners' Welfare Fund. There are many households in Nepal who make their daily hand to mouth through daily work. Otherwise, they will further in risk and try to go back to foreign countries. For example, three months after lockdown in Nepal nearly 400,000 Nepali workers returned from India following the Covid-19 lockdown, many of them from September headed back particularly from far-western and Karnali province because they have not been able to find jobs in their home country. In addition, longer term reintegration requires support and considerably more resources, and many countries are unable to provide this level of assistance.

ANNEX TABLE 1:
TOTAL NUMBER OF RESPONDENT, NUMBER AND NAMES OF DISTRICT AND MUNICIPALITIES
COVERED BY THE PHONE BASED SURVEY INTERVIEWED IN SEPT-OCT. 2020

Province	District	Municipality Name	Sample Individual Responded	Remarks
7	Doti	Dipayal Silgadhi Municipality	74	
		Shikhar Municipality	10	
		Sayal Rural Municipality	14	
		Aadarsha Rural Municipality	2	
		Panchadewa Binayak Municipality	5	
	Acccham	Kamalbazar Municipality	3	
		Chaurpati Rural Municipality	1	
Subtotal	2	7	109	
	Bara	Subarna Rural Municipality	16	
		Kalaiya sub metropolitan	1	
		Mahagadhimai municipality	1	
	Dhanusha	Sabaila municipality	2	
	Mahottari	Gausala municipality	4	
	Parsa	Birganj	10	
		Baudhalmai munucipality	1	
		Bindwashini rural municipality	1	
	Rautahat	Yamuna mai gaupaliaka	1	
		Rajdevi municipality	13	
		Brindaban municipality	11	
		Gaur municipality	32	
		Ishnath municipalty	6	
		Debahi gonahi municipality	4	
		Garuda Municipality	1	
	Saptari	Rupeni gaupalika	1	
Sub-total	6	16	105	
Total (Prov. 2 & 7)	8	23	114	

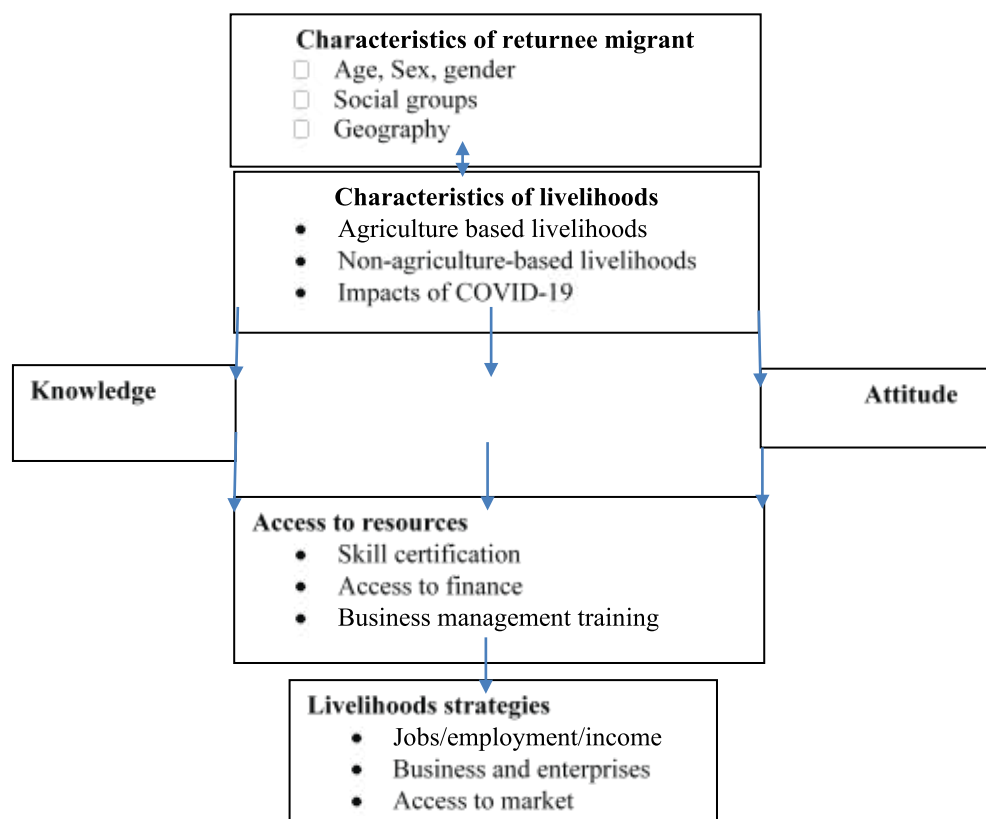
Source: Author teams' survey in late 2020

ANNEX NOTE 2

MIGRATION DECISION THROUGH FRAMEWORK OF KNOWLEDGE ATTITUDE AND PRACTICES

This study uses a comprehensive framework for analyzing migration process and its implications of COVID 19 pandemic on various aspects of migration decision of an individual and associated households' characteristics. This is done using Knowledge Attitude and Preference (KAP) framework, which takes account of interactions of various factors associated with characteristics of foreign labor returnee migrants and their jobs, employment, and livelihoods (see Annex Figure 1). This study process assumes that all of the migrant returnees in the study period were affected by COVID-19 pandemic, some were negatively and some could be positive as well.

ANNEX FIGURE 1: MIGRATION DECISION THROUGH KNOWLEDGE ATTITUDE AND PRACTICES



(Adapted from Meijer et al., 2015)

This study assumes that there is differentiation among the returnees in terms of age, caste, gender and access to land. They have worked in varieties of sectors and gained various types of skills and knowhow while working in foreign countries. After returning in Nepal, they adopt different kinds of livelihoods strategies covering both agriculture and non-agriculture-based income strategies. This study assesses their KAP, implications on livelihoods, and their access to government re-integration programme in the situation of COVID-19 pandemic.

ANNEX NOTE 3:

CASE STUDIES RELATED TO RETURNEE MIGRANT WORKERS

A) PROVINCE NUMBER 2

1) COVID-19 CAUSED TO SELL AGRICULTURE LAND OF RETURNEE MIGRANT

Mr. Saroj Kumar Yadav, age of 25 years, residences of Bahudarmai municipality ward no. 2 Sisiyari Bairiya of Parsa district of province two lost his transportation business due to lockdown enforced against COVID-19. As he is from very poor family, he had gone to Malaysia with peer friends in 2019. He had worked in packing of chips. After four months working period, he suffered from health problem; returns back to Nepal and treated in Nepal. After recovery, he bought tempo with 6 lakh loan from bank.

His income was good and he paid loan through EMI timely. But, due to covid-19 pandemic and lockdown he couldn't run tempo regularly. His income reduced and he couldn't pay EMI monthly. At the last, he forced to sell his agriculture land to pay EMI hoping that he can run his business in the future.

2) ADDITIONAL LIVELIHOOD SUPPORT IS NEEDED IN COVID-19 SITUATION.

Mr. phekan Yadav, age of 48 years, of sabaila municipality ward no. 10 Simradhigadhi of Dhanusha district of province two sold his tractor to cope with COVID-19 pandemic situation. He lived in Malaysia for nine years and then in Qatar for two years. He returned from Qatar in 2017 due to health problem. He had worked as labor in building construction and he was suffering from backbone pain. After returning from Qatar, he bought a tractor by taking six lakh loan from bank. He had no skills to drive a tractor. So, he appointed a driver to drive a tractor. A man death during driving by a tractor driver after 6-7 months of bought tractor.

After some times of worldwide spreading of covid-19, lock down is going on, all the works are closed. His income decreased and he has no any income sources to pay loan. Finally, he sold the tractor to pay partially loan. Nowadays, his economic condition is decreasing day by day. He believed that it was better if there was provision of driving and other business training to him. He also suggested that it was sustainable for him if income generating business like tractor can be done with additional external support from NGO/INGO or government.

3) BUSINESS FAILURE FORCED TO GO BACK TO FOREIGN COUNTRY

Mr. Shyamnath Sharma, age of 36 years, of Sabaila municipality ward no 10 Simradhigadhi of Danusha district of province two is trying to re-migrate. He had worked in Kuwait in bridge construction project for three years. He came in Nepal after 3yrs, he bought a tempu and opened the Hotel in own village by investing from own two lakh saving and four lakh bank loan. But he needed near about total 6 lakhs money for buying a tempo and starting a hotel. He drove a tempu himself in a day time and earns money Rs.1500 to 2000 daily. He also worked in their own hotel at morning and evening time. He maintained EMI payment and hare and care of his family members with the sources of that income. His economic condition was very progressive with the help of a tempu and a hotel.

Because of spreading of covid-19 pandemic situation and lockdown his income generating sources are closed. Now he totally depends on his little farming field. As he can't fully pay the loan, he sold his tempo and closed the hotel. He has a plan to go foreign country again to earn money to improving the economic condition of family, because there is no any employee opportunity available.

4) POULTRY FIRM IMPROVED INCOME OF RETURNEE LABOR MIGRANT

Mr. Shekh Rahim, age of 55 years, residence of Gaur municipality wards no 9 of Rautahat district of province two has successful business. He went to Saudi Arab and worked as a labor in a company. After five years, he returned to Nepal and started a poultry farm and farming. He started agroforestry farming. He bought electric pump motor and built poultry farm. A man kept for help in poultry farm in part time. The stool of chicken was used to make compost forming as manure and it was used in land as a fertilizer to increase the productivity of plants in land field. For example, this compost helped to increase the growing of maize, lentils, paddy rice and vegetables etc.

Now, he earns 15000 NPR net profit per months. His economic condition is improving. He says that he collected money by working in Saudi and invested in the firm. People should go to foreign country to earn money. But after returning, people need to start a business in their own place. Now, he is living happily with two children i.e. one son and one daughter.

5) FURNITURE ENTERPRISE IMPROVED INCOME OF RETURNEE LABOR MIGRANT

Mr. Ram Babu Thakur, age of 23 years, residence of Kalaiya sub-metropolitan city ward no.3 Baidhyanathpur of Bara district of province two needed market linkage support. He worked in Saudi Arab for eight years in a building construction company. After returning to Nepal, he got married and opened the saw mills (wood cutting machine) to make furniture. He kept some carpenter and started to make different type of furniture. He advertised about the furniture with the scheme. Now his business of furniture is good and economic condition is also good. Recently, before lockdown he made double floored house for living through the income of furniture enterprise.

Due to spreading of covid-19 and lockdown; his saw mill and industries are closed and all the working of furniture business is hampering. Once lockdown lifted, he will open his business. He has a plan to open a showroom of furniture in kalaiya market. But he needs loan and training on market linkages. So, he will take loan from bank and then starts a showroom.

6) AUTO BUSINESS IMPROVED INCOME

Mr. Dipendra Kushwaha, age of 29 years, residence of Bindawashini rural municipality ward no 4, Jhauwa of Parsa district of province two has integrated auto business. He worked in Qatar for 6 years as carpenter, labor and bricklayer worker.

After returning to Nepal, he completed his house building with that income of foreign employee during living in Qatar. By his saving of 2.5 lakhs and three lakh loan from bank he purchased an auto riksaw. As he had no skill to drive but he developed the skill self. He also collaborated with school to carry students as a driver of van. He drives two time in school daily during on and off time of school. In remaining time, he spends in driving own auto to earn money. He paid all loan by doing hard work. Before lockdown he earned Rs. 2000/2500 per day. Nowadays, the source of income is stopped due to lockdown. He has some land for growing food materials like paddy, wheat, maize, lentils, vegetable etc. where he works now. Once the lockdown lifted, he will start his business.

B) PROVINCE NUMBER 2: CASE STUDIES OF FAR-WEST PROVINCE

1) DIVERSIFICATION OF LIVELIHOODS AFTER RETURNING TO NEPAL

Mr. Bal Bahadur Kathyat, age of 42 years, residence of Ward No 03 of Shikhar municipality of Doti district of far-western province started his business of tea shop and vegetable farming. He worked in Bangalore, India for 20 years as helper in hotels and returned to Nepal in 2076 BS. Since staying long-time outside of Nepal, he had come with idea to do something in Nepal. Then, he started vegetable farming from 2 years and tea/snack shop operated from last eight months. His family received training on tunnel farming, including off-seasonal vegetable farming. But the tea/snack shop operated by his past experience.

He invested 80 thousand by his own saving for operating tea/snack shop to buy raw materials and build temporary house for operating shop. He collaborated with local NGOs for vegetable farming. Now, he earns about 1.5 Lakh-2 Lakh annually. He is very satisfied with his business and said income is bigger than staying and earning India. Now, he has plan to expand tea/snack shop with more varieties as well as plan to produce high value crops. In this regard, the Government need to support him skill, technology and loan in subsidy.

2) POULTRY FARM IMPROVED THE INCOME OF RETURNEE

Mr. Ganesh BK, age of 28 years, residence of Ward No 03 of Shikhar municipality of Doti district of far-western province started his business of poultry farming. He worked in Gujrat, India for 10 years as cooking chef in hotels and returned to Nepal in 2075 BS.

After returning to Nepal, he started poultry farming from the suggestions of friends and family. He invested 50 thousand NPR by his own saving. After 2 months of starting, he started to derive income. In the time of lockdown there was a problem for him of marketing and to arrange grains/foods to hatchling/chicken. However, he managed from local community though which was not nutritious food to hatchling. Till the date, 6 lots sold. One lot gives income about 50 thousand profit. So far, he earned three lakh NPR.

He started this business without his own past experience. He couldn't get business counselling training and facility. He couldn't get linkages with the service providers. He has a plan to establish meat shop in the village center. He said that if the Government and NGOs can support him skill, technology and subsidy, he can improve his income and living standard.

3) RETURNEE LABOUR MIGRANT NEEDS BUSINESS COUNSELLING

Mr. Krishna Bahadur Sonar, age 35 years, of Punjabis municipality ward number 11 of Kanchanpur district of province two faced lots of hurdles and trouble after returning from India and then started pig farming as well as daily wages in his locality. He worked in Bangalore, India for 12 years as cooking chef in hotels and returned to Nepal in 2076 BS.

After returning to Nepal, he thought to not to go India again but he couldn't get any good suggestions about what to do in Nepal. He had faced lots of hurdles. Then, he had seen/observed website and YouTube about various business/ profession. By which he decided to establish pig farming firm as well as do wage labour in free time in nearby Dhangadhi market.

He invested about 20,000 NPR cash and about 30,000 NPR kinds to make kid house/pig house. He has just started to sold. A kid normally sells in 5,000 NPR. He started this business without his own past experience. He couldn't get business counselling training and facility. He couldn't get linkages with the service providers. He said that if the Government and NGOs can support him skill, technology and subsidy, he can improve his income and living standard.