

**Boosting Youth Employment in High Growth Business Sectors for an
Enterprising Gulmi**

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Abstract

Youths are not only our future leaders but also the actors and foundation of our society, with a direct stake in various development processes. Young people play a crucial role in national development and, therefore, they should be involved in all of its stages. The goal of this research is to identify the high business potential sectors in Gulmi and suggest the best practices for generating youth employment. The key finding was that Gulmi has a high potential of employment for youth in agriculture and livestock. Significant number of employment opportunities can be created for youth in sectors such as coffee, vegetable farming, goat farming, buffalo/cow farming, poultry and fishery. My recommendation based on this research is to establish vocational institutes in provincial/district level, increase allocation of budget in agriculture and livestock sectors, encourage PPP model to increase youth involvement, establish forward integration industries, develop effective planning, monitoring and evaluation mechanism.

Keyword: youth employment, entrepreneurship, business sector

1. Introduction

Youth force is the change agent of political, economic and social changes and future of any country. Even though Nepal seems to be in a position where it has an opportunity to enter the golden era of affluence and development taking advantage of the youth demographic benefits, the desired level of changes could not be achieved in the economic and social sectors due to the political transition (MOYS, 2015). Youths are not only future leaders but also actors and foundation of our society, with a direct stake in various development processes. Young people play a crucial role in national development and therefore they should be involved at all of its stages (Shahi, 2018).

In the context of Nepal, the National Youth Council Act, 2072(2015) has fixed the age group of 16 to 40 years as youth age. If the age group of 16 to 40 years of Nepalese population is viewed, it seems to cover 40.35 percent of the total population. According to the International Labor Organization, the fully unemployed ratio is 19.2% whereas the semi unemployed ratio is 28.3%. The marginalized, minority, indigenous and physically challenged youth suffer from higher ratio of unemployment. Almost half of the youth labor force is still dependent on agriculture for survival (MOYS, 2015).

In Nepal, approximately 400,000 youths enter into the job market each year providing jobs to negligible number of youths. Lack of education and technical skills, slow industrial development, political instability, etc. are the basic reasons behind unemployment opportunities in Nepal. In addition to this, youths do not prefer working in farms or engaging in menial jobs once they receive education. The social norms and division of labor means that youths do not easily engage in jobs that are perceived to be menial ones even though they have to live without jobs. As a result, Nepalese youths are compelled to go abroad for foreign employment. One thing that has contributed to unemployment problem is the prevalent values taught by the traditional education system.

Unemployment and particularly youth unemployment is closely linked to the state of the economy. The ability of youth to engage in productive activities has both social and economic consequences for an economy. The ability of youth to engage in productive activities has both social and economic consequences for an economy. In developing countries, youth face not only

the challenge of obtaining productive employment, but also obtaining safe and acceptable work (Broussard et al, 2012).

Labour migration is determined by many factors such as existing job opportunities, wage levels, and working conditions. The facilitation of foreign employment is a strategy used by some developing countries for alleviating labour market pressures and increasing remittance receipts and thus household income for families left behind. On the other hand there may be negative effects of brain drain, as normally those having the capacity to leave are the more productive in the labour market (IOM, 2010)

Preparing youth for successful entrepreneurship has become increasingly important, as self employment is often the only opportunity when the private formal sector does not create enough jobs. Youth entrepreneurship is one of the ways that can be the answer to problems of youth unemployment and underemployment. Entrepreneurs do create workplaces for themselves and their employees, increase innovation and quickly adapt or even create market trends using available opportunities (Jakubczak 2015). Youth-led enterprises can trigger significant momentum for youth-led job creation, given that start-ups account for up to 50 per cent of newly created jobs, and young entrepreneurs primarily employ their peers.

To address youth employment challenges, countries will need an integrated approach involving different levels of government and linking with overall development and employment policy that reaches beyond the labor market and education sectors. Strong labor market information and analysis systems, which cover the informal sector and qualitative job aspects, will be necessary to inform policy, set targets, and evaluate impacts (Pieter, 2013). For young people who remain in developing countries, self-employment is often the only option for survival. Youth entrepreneurship can be encouraged through a variety of means, including special programs that facilitate access to credit. Owing to their lack of collateral and business experience, youth are considered a very high risk by lenders, making it difficult for them to gain access to credit. Programs can therefore be developed to provide small business loans to young entrepreneurs. Many youth currently rely on savings or turn to family and friends for start-up funding. Those without such alternatives have little chance of starting their own businesses unless special credit programs are set up for them. (World Youth Report, 2003)

The growing population in the country has created huge potential in agricultural sectors. Decreasing work force in agricultural sectors because of youths going for foreign employment and their families migrating to urban areas has reduced the agricultural production in the country. As an aftermath, despite of being agro-based economy, the country has to import various agricultural products worth millions of rupees from different countries. It is a challenge for the government to attract youths towards agriculture. Nepal has huge potential in if the country can focus on agricultural reforms. Thousands of employments opportunities can be created for Nepalese youths and also decrease the trade deficit of the country.

1.1 Gulmi at a Glance



Gulmi district is one of the district among 12 districts of Province no. 5, administrative headquarter of this district is Tamghas, situated in Western Development Region of Nepal. Gulmi district has an area of 1149 sq. km. It extends from latitudes 27.55' to 28.27' and longitudes 83.10' to 83.33'. Gulmi district lies between 610 and 3050 meters above the sea level.

The district borders Baglung district in the north, Pyuthan district in the west, Arghakhanchi, Palpa and Syanja districts in the south and Parbat district in the east. Gulmi has 2 municipalities and 10 rural municipalities. Total population of Gulmi district is 280,160 according to census 2068 B.S. (2011 A.D.). The population growth rate of Gulmi is negative i.e.-0.57% and population density is 190 per sq. km. The literacy rate of Gulmi is 72.56% which consists of male 81.65% and female 65.94%. Economically active population is 61.34% which becomes 113075. Unemployment rate of the district is 1.33%. Main profession of the residents in this district is agriculture. Its total agricultural land is 21,183 hectare. (DLSO, 2072)

1.2 Significance of the Study

Due to backward economy, the country is reeling under the problem of unemployment. As the government fails to provide enough jobs, a large number of youth remain outside the mainstream of national development exercise. No sector of the national economy can bring the desired level of returns unless the involvement of youths is ensured in it. Nepal's agriculture sector is currently suffering from manpower and entrepreneurship deficit because the youth force is currently directed towards foreign employment. Increased involvement of youth in agricultural activities will help reduce the problems of the ageing farm population and increasing youth unemployment. So, this research will focus on finding out the potential high growth business sectors in Gulmi and the youth employment possibility in those sectors.

2. Objectives of the study

The main focus of this study is to find out the high business potential sectors for youth employment in Gulmi. Specifically, the objectives of this study are as follows:

1. To identify the possible high business growth sectors for youth entrepreneurship
2. To find out the situations of youth and enterprises in Gulmi
3. To review the national and international youth employment policies and practices and suggest the best programs for generating youth employment

3. Limitation of the Study

- i) Time and other resources are the critical factors in conducting the study. Research information belongs to a specific period so results are limited to the period of study only.
- ii) Due to financial constraints, the detail process of data collection and field survey could not be conducted.
- iii) Data play significant role in the analysis and outcome of research. Absence of required data concerned with the agriculture production limited the detail study.

4. Review of Literature

Youths and Agriculture

The focus on youth development is essentially a focus on economic development, particularly where the youth represent a significant share of the population. While youth employment cannot be separated from overall employment issues, youth represent a particular segment of the population that merit greater focus and targeted interventions. (Haji, 2015)

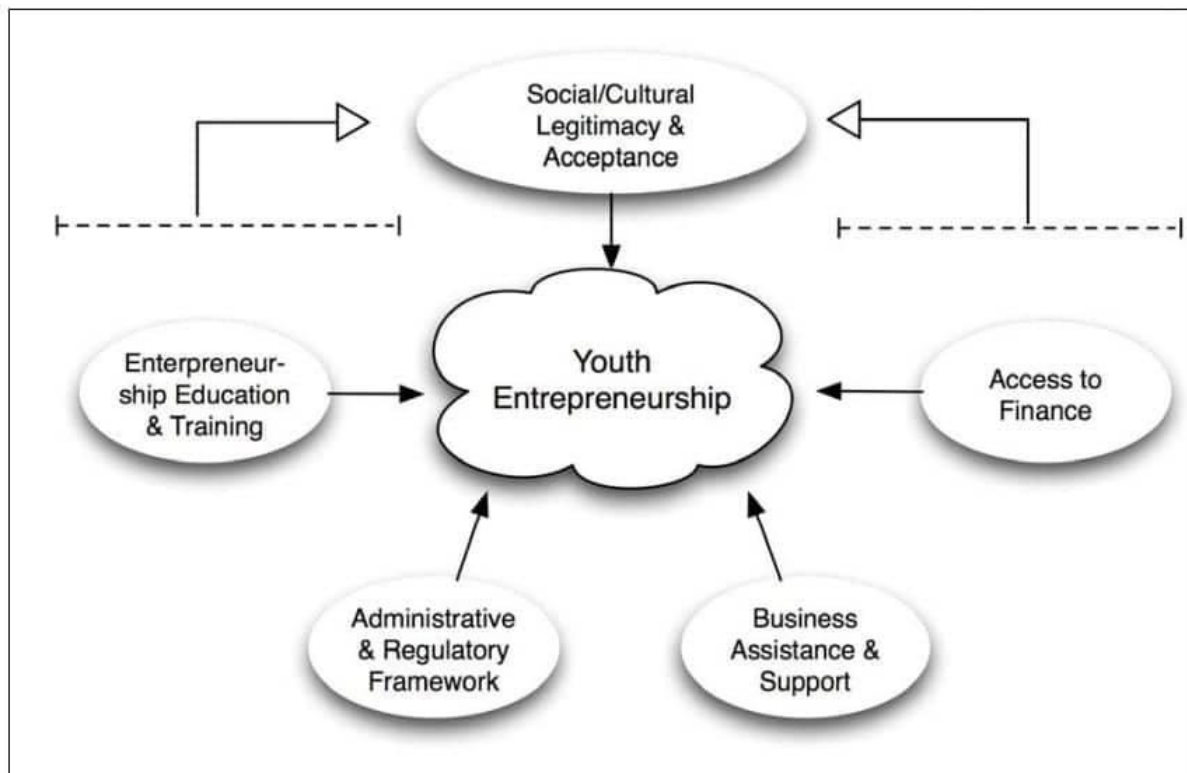
Many youths who despised agriculture as an occupation at home have ended up taking up difficult menial jobs in a harsh environment in foreign countries. A sense of attachment to one's country has finally dawned upon them, and they have started their own different ventures in different sectors. They should be encouraged. More and more youths need to be inspired to start investing their energy and entrepreneurship in agriculture to make the country self-reliant and prosperous. Many youths who have returned from the gulf countries have discovered a gap between the hostile deserts they toiled in and the fertile and hospitable land at home. Agricultural prospects are high in Nepal, provided the government adopts a policy to make it an attractive profession by retaining the youth force deviating towards migration (The Rising Nepal, 2018).

Creating and fulfilling income-generating job opportunities for young people can have direct positive consequences for poverty alleviation. It also benefits economic development by

facilitating the entry of young skilled people into the productive sectors of an economy, and enabling the economy to sustain or increase its productivity and competitiveness in the global market place. (CSD, 2007). Globalization and rapid technological development have given rise to increased labour mobility, bringing new employment opportunities as well as new uncertainties.

The employment situation of young people poses a political challenge on a global level, as young people's desires to work and build a life apart from their jobs conflict with the realities of a labor market in which they must deal with high unemployment and informality (Tinoco, 2015). The phenomenon of unemployment not only marginalizes youth, but also deprives countries of their greatest development potential and gradually erodes their social and economic fabric. (Efe, 2006)

Fig. 1: Factors that influence Youth Entrepreneurship



Source: (Schoof, 2006)

Making a leap forward on the agriculture front has been limited to slogans so far. For an agrarian economy like ours, timely reforms in farming policy and commercialization of agriculture are the need of the hour. A boost in agricultural production is vital for attaining food security, self reliance and import substitution. This will also contribute to narrowing down the big trade deficit of the country. Nepal has special areas with great agricultural potential and prospects. With due focus on high value products and their commercialization, agriculture will certainly make the country more prosperous and self-reliant.

Agricultural education and training must reflect the needs of the agricultural labor market and enhance the familiarity of young women and men with the world of work, including its practical challenges and rewards. (FAO, 2014)

Rural youth tend to be less skilled and less well educated than their urban counterparts as well as likely to be more adversely affected by technological changes. The role of the public sector in generating employment in many countries is likely to contract as a result of policy reforms aimed at privatization and streamlining the public sector and the emphasis on development of the physical and social infrastructure needed to foster private sector development. In some countries, unemployment rates are higher for the more educated than for those who are less educated (Ghee, 2002).

There is a large number and wide range of good practice in generating youth employment in the region ranging from labor market interventions implemented by governments to public private sector partnerships and to self-help and self-employment initiatives (Ghee, 2002).

International Youth Employment Strategies and Practices (Manpower Group, 2012)

i) PUBLIC EMPLOYMENT STRATEGIES

Direct employment by the public sector, and direct subsidies for private employment, remain models that appeal to many governments because of their immediate and observable impacts; this sort of approach can, however, be prohibitively expensive, and there is controversy about its long-term effects.

ii) ENTREPRENEURSHIP STRATEGIES

The promotion of entrepreneurship is increasingly recognized as an important strategy that can leverage the energy of individuals and civil society to expand the creation and supply of jobs. Such programs are relevant in both the developing and developed world.

Why agriculture is High Potential sector in Nepal?

Agricultural development is the foundation for food security and sustainable economic development in Nepal because it is the major source of income and employment for most Nepalese and because of the key role it plays in the economy. As such, the government has made agricultural development a priority, recognizing the importance of agricultural commercialization for economic development. (MOAL, 2012)

One third of GDP comes from agriculture and there are numerous opportunities in agriculture mainly because of varied agro-climate prevailed in the country. Niche specific commodities that have comparative advantage could be produced in fair quantity to meet the demand of huge market of neighboring India and China as purchasing capacity of people in those countries has improved markedly mainly for quality agriculture commodities. Trade deficit, food insecurity, income generation, poverty reduction, and employment generation could be addressed by turning present status of subsistence agriculture into robust, vibrant and commercial agriculture through technology led agro-industrialization. Because of comparative advantages of micro climate, vegetables, fruits, condiments and species grown in the hills of Nepal have now been highly demanding during rainy season in far flung market of Indian subcontinents including Bangladesh and Middle East. If such opportunities could be tapped, hill agriculture could provide employment and income generation for rural youth and reducing labor migration. (Paudel, 2016)

Accordingly, coffee and cardamom are high-growth potential sectors, which have high demand for domestic consumption as well as international exports. Similarly, mushroom farming, beekeeping (apiculture), and off-season vegetable farming have been identified as potential opportunities especially for smallholder farmers and young entrepreneurs. Furthermore, with increasing urbanization and the growing middle-class, consumption and demand of meat products is on the rise. Therefore there are untapped potential in fish farming, fish breeding, poultry farming and dairy industries (Malla et al., 2017)

Livestock are a crucial component of the hill farming system in Nepal. They are enormously important not only for providing farm power, manure and animal protein, but are also among the few options available to the hill people to generate employment and to earn some household income. (Kiff et al. 2000). Livestock are a key element in the agricultural production system of Nepal as they provide nutritive products, employment and income to the growing population. Livestock production contributes about 15 per cent to the Gross Domestic Product (GDP) and 31 per cent to the Agricultural Gross Domestic Product (AGDP). Excess agricultural produce is generally sold in primary raw material form directly to consumers and traders without any processing by farmers. Agricultural processing is needed to add value, to add time utilities and to extend the storage life of many perishable agricultural commodities such as livestock products of meat, milk and other products. Agricultural entrepreneurs recognize the need for better roads, a reliable supply of electricity and appropriate technology to develop cost competitive agribusinesses with Indian counterparts. Additionally, the processing units in Nepal are so small in capacity and numerous in number that they tend to have limited economies of scale and as a result, are driven out of the market on the condition of price, quality, volume and regularity of supply. (Maharjan, 2003)

To develop the agricultural sector, it is recognized that there is need for strong public-private partnerships. The public sector will focus on providing services and support to vulnerable small scale farmers, particularly in the disadvantaged areas. emphasis will be on such areas as capacity building of farmer organizations, service delivery such as extension, research and well-focused direct support in form of inputs/credit to vulnerable but viable small-scale farmers during the transitional period. The issue of gender in technology dissemination, resource allocation and service provision will be emphasized.

5. Research Design

The research is both qualitative and quantitative. According to the necessity of study; relevant primary data and secondary data has been widely used while preparing report. 2 municipalities

and 2 rural municipalities were taken for field observation on the basis of time, budget and agricultural market linkage. The study relied on a triangulation of methods. First, an extensive review of available literature and data on youth employment practices, agricultural production and sectoral and district employment trends was undertaken. The study used existing data from the CBS, MOAD, papers published in different journals, technical books and annual publications, policy review. Second, the researcher conducted field observation and wide-ranging discussions and interview with important stakeholders in government and the public sector, development partners and in the private and NGO sectors in order to gather additional information. Special attention was given to key informants at sector level such as policy makers, agricultural experts, farmers as well as experts working in the sector(s). Third, in order to complement these views and discuss preliminary results, a Focus Group Discussion was done.

6. Findings/ Outcomes

It is not that the country does not have any potential to provide jobs to its youths. Apart from sending skilled youths abroad for employment, there are enough potential within the country as well. On the basis of the data and information collected from research, it is revealed that Gulmi has very high potential on agriculture and livestock. Low productivity in agriculture, subsistence and traditional farming, non involvement of youths in agriculture, etc. have lead low agricultural production in the country which has resulted to import agricultural products worth billions of rupees in a year.

Data Analysis

Table 1: Exports and Imports by Items: F.Y. 2015/16(2072/73)

Figures in '000

Description	Export	Import	Trade Balance
Live Animals	132,554	3,052,048	-2,919,494
Meat and edible meat offal	351,940	101,243	250,697

Fish and crustaceans, mollusks and other aquatic invertebrates.	931	822,856	-821,925
Dairy produce; birds' eggs; natural honey; edible products of animal origin s	213,117	1,592,487	-1,379,370
Edible vegetables and certain roots and tubers	1,606,611	17,958,156	-16,351,545
Coffee, tea, mate and spices	8,033,250	5,275,709	2,757,541
Raw hides and skins (other than fur skin) and leather	732,038	99,952	632,086
Oil seeds and oleaginous fruits; miscellaneous grains, seeds and fruit; industrial or medicinal plants; straw and fodder.	707,506	11,284,553	-10,577,047

Source: Department of Customs, GoN F.Y. 2015/16(2072/73)

Table 1 shows the trade statistics of Nepal in terms of agricultural and livestock products. According to the data of above table, it depicts the trade deficit among many of the items except meat and meat items, tea and coffee and hide and leather products. Nepal imports agricultural products worth millions in a year.

Table 2: Major Agricultural Productions in Gulmi 2073/74 (2016/17)

Area in Hector and Production in Metric Ton

Particulars	Area(hector)	Units(metric ton)
Cereals Crops(Maize, Paddy, Wheat, Barley, Buckwheat, Millet)	45,050	99,724
Pulse crops	1,125	1,661
Oilseed	555	527
Vegetables	873	8,642
Honey	1,095	3.41
Sugarcane	97	1,949

Coffee	160	35
Fruits	1,253	3,137

Source: Statistical Information on Nepalese Agriculture, 2073/74 (2016/17)

Table 2 shows the statistics of agricultural production in Gulmi district in FY 2073/74. Majority of agricultural production in Gulmi are food crops and negligible amount of cash crops and fruits are produced too. Even though cash crops and fruits are produced in Gulmi, it is not sufficient and the deficit has to be recovered by importing from neighboring districts and even India.

Table 3: Vegetable Area, Production and Yield in Nepal 2073/74 (2016/17)

Year	Area (Ha.)	Prod. (Mt.)	Yield (Kg/Ha.)	Year	Area (Ha.)	Prod. (Mt.)	Yield (Kg/Ha.)
2007/08	208,108	2,538,904	12,200	2012/13	246,392	3,301,684	13,400
2008/09	225,154	2,754,406	12,233	2013/14	254,932	3,421,035	13,419
2009/10	235,098	3,003,821	12,777	2014/15	266,937	3,580,085	13,412
2010/11	244,102	3,203,563	13,124	2015/16	280,807	3,929,034	13,992
2011/12	245,037	3,298,816	13,463	2016/17	277,393	3,749,802	13,518

Source: Statistical Information on Nepalese Agriculture, 2073/74 (2016/17)

Table 3 shows the vegetable production and yield in Nepal in FY 2073/74. The data from above table depicts the increasing trend of vegetable production and yield in Nepal from 2007/2008-2016/2017. Despite of increase in vegetable production, it is not sufficient because of rapid increase in population. As a result, Nepal has to import fresh vegetables from other countries.

Table 4 : Livestock Production in Nepal 2073/74 (2016/17)

Units in number

PRODUCTS	2007/08	2008/09	2009/10	2010/11	2011/12	2012/13	2013/14	2014/15	2015/16	2016/17
MILK PRODUCTION (Mt.)	1388730	1445419	1495897	1556510	1622751	1680812	1700073	1755725	1854247	1911239
- COW MILK	400950	413919	429030	447185	468913	492379	532300	587719	643806	665285
- BUFF. MILK	987780	1031500	1066867	1109325	1153838	1188433	1167773	1168006	1210441	1245954
MEAT(NET)PRODUCTION(Mt.)	233900	241690	248573	277625	287930	295167	298244	303401	322059	332544
- BUFF	151209	156627	162213	167868	172414	175132	173906	174012	175005	180080
- MUTTON (Sheep)	2725	2711	2691	2722	2720	2721	2656	2658	2684	2714
- CHEVON	46570	48472	49851	52809	53956	55578	59053	60906	65583	67706
- PORK	16453	16992	17066	17923	18277	18709	19269	20135	23509	24535
- CHICKEN	16712	16662	16527	36085	40346	42810	43133	45458	55041	57268
- DUCK	231	226	225	218	217	217	227	232	237	241
EGG PRODUCTION (*000 No.)	631253	629940	643203	704135	801370	887240	872918	879501	1308072	1352296
- HEN EGG	617455	616312	629793	691070	788310	874194	859515	865947	1294166	1338312
- DUCK EGG	13798	13628	13410	13065	13060	13046	13403	13554	13906	13984
WOOL PRODUCTION(Kg.)	585255	583776	579631	586232	587017	587834	586848	586731	588348	594312

Source: Statistical Information on Nepalese Agriculture, 2073/74 (2016/17)

Table 4 shows the livestock production in Nepal in FY 2073/74. The data from above table depicts the increasing trend of livestock production(milk production, meat production, egg production, wool production) in Nepal from 2007/2008-2016/2017. Despite of increase in production, Nepal has to import meat and meat products from other countries.

Table 5: Annual Production of Livestock in Gulmi in FY (2071/072)

Particulars		Units
Milk	Buffalo	14,526
	Cow	4,466
	Total	18,992
Meat	Goat	900
	Buffalo	1,445

	Chicken/ duck	288
	Pork	165
	Total	2,798
Egg		4,957
Leather		105
Wool		5,277
Fishery		24,581

Source: Statistical Information on Nepalese Agriculture, 2073/74 (2016/17)

Table 4 shows the livestock production in Gulmi in FY 2071/72. The data from above table depicts that the annual production of Gulmi has nominal share of livestock production in overall country. It can be concluded that Gulmi has more prospects on livestock because of suitable topography and growing market in within and in other districts.

Key findings of youth involvement in agriculture

Weak entrepreneurial mindset among youths is rampant among youths in Gulmi. Educated youth do not prefer to adopt agriculture as occupation because of social and traditional mindset. The problem of foreign employment is also a big issue among youths in Gulmi. Proper transportation linkages in the district has hindered in agricultural market development. In addition to this, lack of skills and capital for entrepreneurship has also discouraged youths to involve in agriculture. As a consequence of political instability and weak functioning of government, improper planning and plan implementation resulted to decrease in agricultural production. Lacking in budget allocation, skill and capacity development training, inappropriate plan formulation, distribution of grants and financial assistance, weak monitoring and evaluation of programs by the authority hampered agricultural development. These are the factors that hindered youth employment in agriculture.

From the interview and focus group discussion with stakeholders, following ideas was retrieved:

- **High potential in Agriculture and Livestock**

1) Agriculture

-Coffee, Vegetable farming, Fruits, Maize super zone

Coffee is the highest business potential sector in Gulmi. Since, coffee farming was started from Gulmi, Gulmi district is renowned for coffee. Most of the regions of Gulmi are suitable for coffee farming because of topography and climate. 11 are cooperatives involved in coffee production with annual production of 35 metric ton. According to MoF, Nepalese tea and coffee worth Rs. 8,033,250 was exported to foreign countries as these products are regarded as specialty products. The production and export of coffee could be enhanced if special programs for coffee development were developed. At present after the local election, local government has been launching several programs to encourage and increase the coffee production.

Market potential of local vegetables and fruits is very charming in Gulmi. Field observation revealed the fact that vegetables and fruits are imported from other places such as Butwal, Palpa, etc. in Gulmi. If the production of vegetables and fruits are increased, it will substitute import as well as it can also be exported to neighboring districts. Also, the possibility of forward integrating agro based industries could be established in case of insufficient market.

Maize is the staple food crops in the hilly region. Due to favorable climate and topography, Government has declared maize super zone in Gulmi and launched several programs.

2) Livestock

- Goat farming, Buffalo/Cow farming, Poultry, Fishery,

With the increasing demand of meat and dairy products, the opportunity of goat farming, Buffalo/cow farming, poultry and fishery is massive in Gulmi district. The local government has declared super zones for different livestock according to their possibility. In the present time, the municipalities and rural municipalities with good transport network has focused on poultry for meat and buffalo/cow farming for dairy items whereas rural municipalities with no proper road facilities have focused on goat farming. In addition to this, commercial fishery has been practiced in river banks.

7. Conclusion

Even though there are several problems in agriculture, Gulmi has good potential of agricultural development. Economic development and prosperity through trade surplus can be achieved with the help of agricultural development in Nepal. In this context, agriculture sector can be the best measure for encountering trade deficit. Nepal imports agricultural products worth millions of rupees in a year which has increased the trade deficit. If these potential can be addressed properly, it could minimize trade deficit, generate significant number of employment for youths and solve the problem of foreign employment.

8. Recommendation and Interventions

- Establishment of vocational institute in provincial level/ district level to produce skilled human resources

Due to lack of skills and technical knowledge among youths in Gulmi, it has increased the unemployment rate. To counter with this issue, well equipped vocational and technical institute should be established at provincial or district level.

- Increase in allocation of budget in agriculture and livestock sector

Budget allocation on youth employment issues and agricultural development programs is negligible by the local government in Gulmi. So, significant portion of budget should be allocated for these programs.

- Encourage PPP model for increasing youth involvement(grants/ trainings/ market development)

To enhance collaboration among local government, citizen and private organizations regarding grants distribution, skills and technical trainings and market development, effective PPP model and mechanism should be developed.

- Establishment of forward integrating industries

For solving market linkage problem due to lack of transportation, the local government should encourage and support for potential forward integrating industries for processing and value addition of local agricultural products.

- Effective Planning, M&E mechanism

While plan formulation, the local agency should focus on the requirement of the youths, outcome oriented plans. Also, effective monitoring and evaluation mechanism should be developed in regards to plan implementation to achieve as per the goals of the plans.

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