

# Labour Force and Employment Structure in Nepal

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## INTRODUCTION

Periodic censuses conducted by Central Bureau of Statistics, Employment, Income Distribution and Consumption Patterns Survey, 1977 by National Planning Commission and Multipurpose Household Budget Survey, 1987 by Nepal Rastr Bank are the main bases of the study of labour force and employment structure in Nepal. No doubt, there have been few labour market surveys conducted by Department of Labour in recent times but these studies have very limited scope.

## LABOUR FORCE

In reckoning the size of labour force (i.e. population in the working age group), the definition adopted in 1952/54, 1961, 1971, and 1981 censuses were not uniform. The 1952/54 census had collected information on economic participation for all persons including those under 15 years of age. In 1961, these particulars were obtained in respect of all those aged 15 years and above. However, the subsequent censuses i.e. 1971 and 1981, included 10 years and above and collected data reckoning it as labour force. However, there are differences in opinion among the policy planners of His Majesty's Government, whether or not to include 10-14 age group and 65 years and above in reckoning the size of labour force. One view seems to be that workers of these groups do contribute a great deal to production especially in the agricultural and service sectors and therefore cannot be left out from the size of labour force of Nepal. Therefore this paper takes into account only two censuses 1971 and 1981 and considers only those between 10 years and above as labour force.

Table 1  
Labour Force and Economically Active Population  
(10 Years and above)

Year	Total Population	Total labour force	Labour force as percentage of the total population	Economically active		
				Population	As per-centage of total labour force	As per-centage of total popula-tion
1971	11,555,983	8,178,620	70.8	4,852,524	59.3	42.0
1981	15,022,839	10,517,888	70.0	6,850,886	65.1	45.6

Source: Central Bureau of Statistics.

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Table 1 shows that 70.8 percent of the total population in 1971 census was in the age group of 10 years and above, who directly represented the labour force. But this percentage had declined to 70.0 in 1981.

In terms of the crude activity participation rate by sex (10 years and above) in 1981, it was 83.15 percent for males and 46.21 percent for females. Female participation, however, fluctuates very sharply from one period to another. For the age group of 15 years and over, it changes from the very high figure of 59 percent in 1961 to a low level of 34 percent in 1971 whereas it rose to a moderately high level of 50 percent in 1976. The sharp rise of about 47 percent in the female activity rate over a 5 years period between 1971 and 1976 was particularly bewildering.

As per the definition, the extent of the labour force utilized for economic activity has been found to be increased from 59.3 percent in 1971 to 65.1 percent in 1981. It correspondingly represents 42.0 percent and 45.6 percent of the total population in 1971 and 1981 census respectively.

#### ECONOMICALLY ACTIVE POPULATION

The economically active population is generally understood to comprise all these persons who contribute to the supply of labour for the production of goods and services for a period of 8 months (either at a single stretch or in intervals) during the last year preceding the day of census enumeration either for pay, profit or remuneration in cash or kind. (As defined by the latest census 1981 and also the earlier censuses of Nepal).

#### OCCUPATIONAL DISTRIBUTION OF ECONOMICALLY ACTIVE POPULATION

Table 2 presents data on the occupational distribution of economically active population by sex and major occupation for the census years 1971-1981.

It would be observed from Table 2 that more than 90 percent of the economically active persons were engaged in farming and related occupations both in 1971 and 1981. This finding not only confirms that the economy of Nepal has been and still agrarian but also that very limited opportunities were created outside the agricultural sector. Given very low share in the total labour force of white colour (professional, administrative, clerical, and sales), blue colour (production and related workers) and service workers, one reaches the conclusion that Nepal has a long way to go in social and economic development

Looking into the occupational structure of non-agricultural labour force as 100 percent, we observe that production related workers is largest occupational group, engaging 49 percent of labour force in 1981 (see Table 2). These are the leading sources of employment for both male and female non-agricultural labour force. It is a means of livelihood for about one half and over one third of non-agricultural labour force in 1971 and 1981 respectively.

Table 2  
Percentage Distribution of the Economically Active Persons (10 years and above) by Sex and Major Occupation Group, Census Years 1971-1981

Occupation	1971			1981		
	Total	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female
Total labour force*	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00
Farmers and related	94.37	92.80	98.17	91.37	88.89	96.06
Non-farmers	5.63	7.20	1.83	6.35	8.15	2.95
Unspecified	-	-	-	2.28	2.96	0.99
Non-farmers	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00
Professional tech. and related	9.27	9.43	7.73	14.74	14.64	15.27
Adm., clerical and related	17.51	18.59	7.23	12.73	14.27	4.67
Sales workers	22.02	21.40	27.92	19.61	19.95	17.86
Service workers	12.53	11.68	20.66	3.77	3.84	3.40
Production and related	38.67	38.90	36.46	49.14	47.30	58.79

Source: Population Monograph of Nepal, Central Bureau of Statistics, 1987 Table 9.16.

\*Actual labour force i.e. economically active population employed population (10 years and above).

Sales workers constitute the second largest major occupation group of non-agricultural occupations. However, the proportion of sales workers non-agricultural labour force reduced from 22.02 percent in 1971 to 19.61 percent in 1981. This decline is more apparent among females than males.

It is worthnoting that these two occupations - production related and sales accounted for nearly 61 percent and 69 percent of the non-agricultural labour force of 1971 and 1981 respectively.

Regarding professional, technical and related occupations, it emerged as the third largest group on non-agricultural occupation. The percentage of non-agricultural labour force following this occupation has tremendously increased both for male and female, replacing clerical workers, accounting for 15 percent of the non-agricultural occupation in 1981.

Between 1971 and 1981, there has been considerable increase in the proportion of non-agricultural population engaged in production and related occupations, followed by those in professional occupation. This increase is more marked in case of male while compared to female workers. The proportion of male and female workers in production and related occupations increased by 8.4 percentage points (38.90 - 47.30) and by 22.33 percentage points (36.46 - 58.79) respectively. The proportion of male and female workers engaged in professional and technical related occupations increased by 5.21 percentage points (9.43 - 14.64) and 7.54 percentage points (7.73 - 15.27) respectively. The professional and technical related persons are mostly concentrated in education, health and welfare institutions/organizations. And there has been considerable

expansion in health, education and welfare activities of the government in recent years. Expansion in these activities also coincided with the availability of a large number of professionals in the country. These factors could together explain the findings of an increasing proportion engaged in professional and production related occupations.

It is also worth noting that between the intercensal period (1971-1981), the decline of the proportion of non-agricultural population engaged in service was found the highest, followed by those in clerical and sales occupations. The proportion of those engaged in service, administrative/clerical and sales occupations declined by 8.76, 4.78 and 2.41 percentage points respectively during the last intercensal period. The decline was more apparent for females than males.

There exists no sex pattern in the distribution of non-agricultural occupations. In all but two occupations, the proportion of employed males is higher than that of females. Moreover, men more often than women tend to participate in non-agricultural activities. This is to be expected in view of the limited opportunities for women to find employment in the non-agricultural sector.

Likewise, in the Multipurpose Household Budget Survey, 1987 conducted by Nepal Rastra Bank, the labour force (10 years and above) as a percent of the total population (i.e. labour force participation rate) for Nepal was estimated as 50.4 percent (while 49.6 percent of the population were minors, students, house workers, retired or physically disabled etc.). Of the labour force, 71.7 percent was found economically active in the country. This figure for Rural and Urban Nepal was found 73.0 percent and 54.3 percent respectively. Thus, the economically active persons were found to be engaged in some type of occupation.

The estimates of the survey revealed that 79 percent of the economically active population in the country was found to be engaged in agriculture, 7.2 percent in the general labour category, 3.6 percent in production, 3.5 percent in sales, 2.1 percent in services, 1.8 percent each in "professional, technical, and administrative" and "office work" and one percent in "transport and construction."

#### EMPLOYMENT STRUCTURE

The striking characteristic of the Nepal's employment structure is the lack of specialization with more than 90 percent of the economically active population engaged in agriculture.

The country has no reliable estimates of unemployment and underemployment. This is not only due to lack of good data but also due to definitional and conceptual problems associated with the measurements of the estimates.

In this paper, an effort is made to provide the most recent estimates of unemployment and underemployment in Nepal based on census and survey data. However these estimates have to be treated with caution for the following reasons.

1. The official censuses and surveys usually define a person as unemployed if he/she is out of work (involuntary) during the reference period and is looking for a job. This definition is unacceptable given the peculiar social and institutional aspects of the labour force prevailing in Nepal. To be more precise, in the context of joint family system, a person may be out of a job but may not report himself/herself as such because of the transfer payment accruing from the family.
2. Secondly, a person may not be looking for a job, even though he/she be unemployed, if the prospects of finding a job are bleak. For example, educated woman may tend to prefer professional occupation particularly teaching and research and there may not be any openings in those occupations. Lack of suitable jobs and social taboos may therefore prevent educated women from looking for jobs.
3. Thirdly, a person may be willing to accept a job at a certain wage level and under certain terms and conditions of employment, but if these terms and conditions are not met, he/she will be automatically pushed out of the labour market.

Thus, the above factors should be borne in mind when interpreting the estimates of unemployment and underemployment. Lack of good data and uniformity in definitions also prevent the carrying out of any meaningful analysis of trends in unemployment and underemployment.

#### UNEMPLOYMENT AND UNDEREMPLOYMENT

The estimates of unemployment obtained from the 1981 census are shown in Table 3.

Table 3  
Distribution of the Population by Rural Urban Residence and Rate of Unemployment, Nepal, 1981

Area	Sex	Economically active population	Unemployed population*	Unemployment rate**
Nepal	Males	4,479,944	85,701	1.91
	Females	2,370,942	25,159	1.06
	Both sexes	6,850,886	110,860	1.62
Urban	Males	280,144	8,391	2.99
	Females	100,396	2,317	2.30
	Both sexes	380,540	10,708	2.81
Rural	Males	4,199,800	77,310	1.84
	Females	2,270,546	22,842	1.00
	Both sexes	6,470,346	100,152	1.54

Source: Central Bureau of Statistics.

\*Unemployed here are those who had not worked for 8 months (either at single stretch or in intervals) during the (last) year preceding the day of census enumeration and also "seeking job."

\*\*Number of unemployed persons per 100 economically active persons.

The estimates in Table 3 indicate that for the country as a whole, nearly 2 percent of the labour force (economically active population) is unemployed. The unemployment level is higher among males (1.91 percent) than females (1.06 percent). Similarly, urban areas had a higher level of unemployment (2.81 percent) than rural areas (1.54 percent). But, however, the level of unemployment derived from the census data seems to be low, when compared with other estimates of unemployment in Nepal. This low estimate may be attributed among other things to the definition of "unemployed" used by the census and the "timing" when the census was conducted. The census 1981 considered a person unemployed if he/she had not worked at least for 8 months (either at a single stretch or at intervals) during the year preceding the day of census enumeration and is currently looking for a job. It is unlikely to find a person who was out of work for 8 months in subsistence economy like Nepal. Also the census was conducted in the month of June which coincides with peak agricultural season.

The other estimates of unemployment and underemployment are those based on a national surveys conducted by the National Planning Commission, 1977 and Nepal Rastra Bank, 1987.

According to Employment, Income Distribution and Consumption Patterns Survey, 1977 by National Planning Commission, 90.1 percent of the heads of the family involved in some type of occupation in Nepal. This figure for Rural and Urban Nepal was found 90 percent and 10.4 percent respectively.

In both rural and urban areas, the survey found females' involvement higher than that of males in agricultural and allied sector (farm fish workers). On the national level, the survey found 70.73 percent males engaged in this sector whereas it was 90.34 percent for females.

So far as magnitude of unemployment is concerned, the survey reported 5.62 percent of the total labour force as openly unemployed. In this survey all those persons who were in the labour force aged 10 years and above but did not participate in any main or subsidiary occupation during the reference year of 1976-77, were defined as unemployed.

Table 4  
Percentage Unemployed to Labour Force.

Area	Male	Female	Both sexes
Rural	5.47	5.68	5.57
Urban	4.52	6.02	5.98
Nepal	5.32	5.99	5.62

Source: "A Survey of Employment, Income Distribution and Consumption Patterns in Nepal" A Summary Report Vol. IV, NPC, HMG, 1978, p. 57.

It may be observed from Table 4 that female unemployment rate is higher than that male rate in both rural and urban areas. However, this sex difference in unemployment rates is more glaring in urban areas. The unemployment situation is slightly better in rural (5.6 percent) than in urban areas (6.0 percent). The pattern of unemployment by rural/urban residence reported by the survey closely correspond to those reported by the census data (see Table 3).

Defining underemployment as the ratio of actual number of man days (i.e. total number of days utilized in farm and non-farm activities) to the potential number of man days per person per year, the Employment, Income Distribution and Consumption Patterns Survey reported 63.07 percent and 44.71 percent of the working potential number of man days were underemployed (not gainfully utilized) in rural and urban areas respectively. The potential number of man days per active person was arbitrarily assumed to be 323 days per annum. It shows that on average 181 days in urban areas were utilized gainfully per worker per year out of 323 days. But, however, these estimates of underemployment are considered somewhat exaggerated in view of the following reasons.

1. Fixing 323 days as full employment norm is unrealistic since it fails to take into consideration the seasonality of agriculture and time loss due to pregnancy, child birth, illness, festivals etc.
2. The finding of 118 days gainfully employed or 205 days remaining idle on average per worker in rural areas was untenable given the prevailing high labour force participation rate in rural Nepal. For an instance, 66 percent of the rural population (84 percent and 47 percent of rural male and female respectively) aged 10 years and above were engaged in labour force in 1981.
3. The underestimation of productive days in rural areas was mostly due to non-recognition of off-farm activities in this area.

Another study by ILO-ARTEP (International Labour Organization - Asian Regional Team for Employment Promotion) in 1982 estimated the underemployment rate as being 33 percent for Rural Nepal and 54, 37, and 21 percent for the mountain, hill and Terai respectively. In this study, the potential number of man days was assumed to be 254 days per active person per year.

A recent study Multipurpose Household Budget Survey, 1987, on Employment, Income Distribution and Consumption Patterns by Nepal Rastra Bank also provides us information on magnitude of unemployment and underemployment in Nepal

Table 5  
Percentage Unemployed to Labour Force

Area	Male	Female	Both Sexes
Rural	2.2	3.2	2.7
Urban	7.7	9.0	8.2
Nepal	2.6	3.6	3.1

Source: Multipurpose Household Budget Survey, 1987 (A Study on Income Distribution, Employment and Consumption Patterns in Nepal) NRB, 1988, p. 64.

Based on survey findings, in Nepal, the percentage of unemployed in the total labour force is estimated at 3.1 percent. The rate for the male and female labour force works out to 2.6 percent and 3.6 percent respectively.

The extent of unemployment was found higher (8.2 percent) in Urban Nepal compared to (2.7 percent) that in Rural Nepal. Likewise, 9 percent of the urban and 3.2 percent of the rural female labour force was counted as unemployed. This proportion for male labour force was 7.7 percent and 2.2 percent respectively.

Regarding magnitude of underemployment in Rural Nepal, out of a total average of 814 annual working days per family, 436 days were utilized in all types of agricultural and non-agricultural activities. Thus the underemployment rate per household works out at 378 days per year. In terms of percentage, this figure works out to 46.4 percent of all annual working days. The underemployment rate for females was 51.7 percent and for male 41.8 percent.

In Urban Nepal, out of a total of 557 annual average working days per family, a total of 370 days was found to be utilized in various activities. The underutilized days per household per annum thus works out to 187 days or 33.6 percent of all working days. Of the total annual average working days per female and male worker, 46.6 percent of the former and 23.8 percent of the latter constituted the underemployment rate.

The survey findings revealed that (a) the rate of underemployment was higher in Rural Nepal than in Urban Nepal, (b) The rate of underemployment for female workers in both Rural and Urban Nepal was higher than for male workers in these regions, and (c) Among the male workers the extent of underemployment was severer in the rural areas than in the urban areas.

Thus, to have an overview of Labour Force and Employment Structure in Nepal, it is perceived that the lack of specialization is the striking characteristic of Nepal's employment structure with more than 90 percent of the labour force (economically active population) engaged in agriculture.

Regarding unemployment and underemployment, unemployment in a developing country like Nepal might be the result of operation of various causes as follows:

1. The size of the population.
2. Gradual disappearance of handicrafts and small agro-industries.
3. Inadequate development of non-agricultural occupation.
4. Evils of the education system largely unrelated to the demands of everyday life.

Poverty is the root cause in addition to many factors, and which has been operative for a long time.

On the otherside, the emergence of underemployment, (which is a state of low labour productivity or sporadic employment) is quite significant not only in agriculture but also in the traditional segments of industrial and service sectors. In Nepal, underemployment is generally caused by four major factors.

1. Rapid population growth combined with a relatively fixed amount of arable land.
2. Low marginal productivity due to traditional production methods.
3. Lack of employment opportunities in the modern sector.
4. The low level of skills in the labour force.

#### EDUCATED UNEMPLOYMENT

The education system of any country should play a key role in its development by providing skilled, semi-skilled and other personnel. There are a few survey to find out educated unemployment in Nepal.

In 1972/73, the National Planning Commission undertook a sample survey of 121,955 literate persons in 16 urban areas of the country to assess the incidence of unemployment and underemployment. Of the total literates, 45,360 persons were found to be economically active. Among them 7.11 percent was allegedly underemployed and 12.4 percent were unemployed.

In another survey report on 'Graduates in Nepal' suggested that the rate of unemployment among graduates at Bachelor and Master's Level was 11 percent and 17 percent respectively.

According to a survey on Employment, Income Distribution and Consumption Patterns in Nepal, 1977 by National Planning Commission, unemployment among educated persons is found prevalent mostly in town panchayats. As will be seen from the data that of the educated labour force 10.25 percent was found unemployed. And of total educated male and female labour force, 8.75 percent male and 21.95 percent female were found unemployed. The percentage of unemployed to total educated at different levels of education being 9.56 percent male and 24.24 percent female at the SLC to certificate level equivalent 8.06 percent male and 20.0 percent female at B.A. and equivalent level and 3.57 percent male at M.A. and its equivalent level.

In a recent sample survey on university education and employment in Nepal, 1983 by Centre for Economic Development and Administration (CEDA), Tribhuvan University (TU), output at different levels of education from 1974 to 1981, it was found that out of 273 respondents i.e. 5.1 percent are self-employed, 8 respondents i.e. 2.9 percent are not seeking employment and 65 respondents i.e. 23.8 percent are unemployed.

Thus, the above sample surveys show prevalence of educated unemployment. Considering the high cost of education, the educated unemployment is a huge waste of resources. The factors responsible for this are the mismatch between the education system and the manpower needs, the lack of employment opportunities in the modern sectors of the economy, low wages and salary structure, unwillingness to accept jobs in the rural areas, cultural and social barriers to work below the given occupation and status etc.

#### EMPLOYMENT POLICIES

Employment policies as such did not receive much attention in the First Plan (1956-61) though it was accepted that the central purpose was to raise employment. The plan mentioned that production must be expanded by an equal rate of the increase of population which was estimated at 1.5 percent per year. However, the plan did not have any programmes for employment.

The Second Plan (1962-65), however, gave some importance to the employment generation programmes and estimated that economically active population was as high as 56 percent of the total population in Nepal. In consideration of the prospect of adding new entrants to the labour force, the plan sought to bring about a shift in the distribution of population. During this plan period, land reform programmes were introduced in 1964 which aimed at improving rural employment through provision of ceiling on land holding, provision of tenancy right and diversification of agricultural surplus labour to non-agricultural employment.

The Third Plan (1965-70) had one of the primary objectives to transfer labour from agriculture to other sectors. And the plan envisaged employment policies like establishment of an agency to mobilize labour, administer labour welfare measures and train workers.

The Fourth Plan (1970-75) also gave some priority to having an appropriate policy for employment. The provision of employment opportunities to unemployed people was recognized as one of the main objectives of economic planning.

Generally, in all the previous plans no specific attention was given to the unemployment situation. It was in fact for the first time in the Fifth Plan (1975-80), employment policy got one of the major priorities. The employment policy as specified in the plan was to adopt a labour intensive technique of production, discourage mechanization of agriculture except irrigation, encourage industries with low capital/labour and capital/output ratio, emphasize employing Nepalese labour, introduce vocational educational and on the job training, provide credit and incentives for more employment generating enterprises, and emphasize self-employment activities through various fiscal and monetary measures.

In the Fifth Plan, it was thought desirable to create more employment opportunities in agriculture through the following:

1. Extension of cultivable land.

2. Introduction and expansion of intensive methods of production.
3. Distribution of proper land ownership.
4. Provision of more secured tenancy rights.
5. Supply of improved agricultural inputs.
6. Efficient utilization of land and water etc.

The plan also intended to encourage the educated people to be mostly self-employed in different fields and different processes of production and distribution.

Thus, the Fifth Plan is superior to previous plans in the sense that it introduced a systemic approach on employment policy. Secondly, this plan mentioned that one of the objectives was to maximize the labour utilization. But, however, the plan could not generate marked employment opportunities. It was due to short comings in the organizational structure the plan could not undertake large scale labour intensive projects.

The Sixth Plan (1980-85) stated, "The problem of underemployment is becoming serious with the increase in population. Hence with an objective of maximum utilization of surplus labour, extensive irrigation for other input facilities will be expanded and suitable land reform measures will be taken."

The Sixth Plan further stated that in view of the limited availability of land in relation to labour, supplementary jobs suitable to local conditions would be created both within and outside the agricultural sector. Small scale industries based on rural skill, craftsmanship and experience would be established by providing credit, equipment, raw materials and marketing facilities. The plan also envisaged that all investment programmes whether it is private or public or the panchayat sector would be made employment cum production oriented to the greater extent possible. The plan further stated the on going small farmers development projects/programmes would be implemented in a more extensive and more effective manner, and special programmes would be launched for improving employment and income opportunities of persons like rickshaw pullers, cart drivers and others. And lastly, the plan envisaged that mechanization which is not consistent with the factor endowment of the country and which is labour substituting would be generally restricted and measures would also be taken to improve the usefulness of indigenous labourers through skill oriented training programme.

On the whole the general objectives/policies of the Sixth Plan were excellent and progressive but the sectoral-employment generation targets seem neither realistic nor attainable.

To increase employment opportunities for the growing labour force, the previous plans emphasized on the provision of necessary inputs to small farmers including irrigation facilities in the agricultural sector. Along with resettlement schemes, efforts were made to create employment

opportunities in the non-farm sector like industry, construction and services. However, because of the increase in population, the number of unemployed and underemployed has risen with adverse impact on the national economy. The number of educated unemployed has also gone up.

The census of 1981 records an additional 2 million economically active population in Nepal in the inter-census decade (1971-81), as a large percentage of population in the age group 10 to 14 years were actively employed in gainful employment. As a result, the labour force participation rate increased from 59.3 percent in 1971 to 65.1 percent in 1981.

During the Seventh Plan (1985-90), it is estimated that 1,268,000 people will be added in the labour market and the new employment opportunities need to be created accordingly. It is therefore the plan recognizes "Increase Productive Employment opportunity" as the second objective of the plan. To achieve this objective the policies visualized are implementation of employment generating activities in agricultural sector, expansion of cottage industries to create rural employment opportunities, emphasis on labour intensive technology and hiring Nepalese labour in the industrial operations, reduction of unemployment and underemployment by direct regional development policies, formulation and execution of sectoral plans to generate new employment opportunities, reduction of educated unemployment by giving priority to their involvement in various professional fields, conduction of appropriate programmes to remove unemployment and underemployment among women both in rural and the urban areas, extension of technical and vocational skills training and also the enrollment of women into them, setting up of small and medium agro-based industries in resettlement areas to increase employment opportunities in the non-farm sector, conduction of trainings by all the industrial agencies to develop skills of Nepalese labourers, provision of institutional arrangement to conduct technical and vocational trainings, and conduction of regular surveys on labour force and employment conditions and maintenance of up-to-date record of foreign workers.

#### SOME SUGGESTIONS

National resources are necessary but not sufficient for social and economic development. A country may be endowed with rich and varied natural resources but what is more essential, firstly, for a viable process of development in a country is the quality of its labour force which depends on the social institutions and attitudes, education, training, nutrition and a number of other non-quantifiable variables.

Secondly, there should be a system of periodic data collection on various social and economic variables including those which indicate changes in the components of the level of living, distribution of income, unemployment and underemployment.

Thirdly, there should be close coordination between various departments and agencies responsible for the execution of the programmes connected with employment policy. No duplication of efforts should be there at the national level which results in a wastage of resources that a developing country like Nepal can ill afford.

Finally, Nepal as well as South Asian countries are facing a serious problem of population explosion on the one hand and the problem of under-utilized labour force on the other. Therefore, employment generation has been one of the most important tasks in these countries. SAARC (South Asian Association of Regional Cooperation) for the development of human resources, population planning and manpower and employment planning has to play a great role for alleviating masspoverty and finding viable and acceptable solution to common problems. It is, therefore, SAARC through regional cooperation endeavours should not only cooperate to control their population but also should find out viable means for effective utilization of available manpower through appropriate manpower development strategies and generation of employment opportunities on a regional basis.

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