
Rural Development in Nepal: A Historical Perspective

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Abstract

Least developed country like Nepal, the development programmes and policies are key components for the livelihood of rural poor and sustainable development. This paper is tries to carry out the historical perspectives of rural development in Nepal. The rural development policies and programmes are also essential for the national development. But the implemented policies and programmes for rural development by the governments of different time periods in Nepal are not sufficient as rural Nepal needed. It is strongly required to launch the agriculture based policies and programmes for rural Nepal. Using secondary information, the paper analyzes the major provision for the rural development in the country. Moreover, the rural development sector needs to develop some more popular and specific development policies and programmes and models of development.

Key Words: *Historical Perspectives, Rural, Development, Panchayat, programme.*

Introduction

Nepal is a rural country, more than 80 percent of the population lives in rural areas with agriculture and allied activities as the manor source of income and employment. The current theme of socio-economic development in Nepal, like in most of the less developed countries (LDCs), is alleviation of poverty. Mc Namara's address to the Board of Governors in 1973 that "reaching the poor and the poor were not significantly contributions growth" generated a great enthusiasm towards 'growth with justice' that brought about a shift in emphasis from efforts aimed at promoting simple growth to imported rural output that would benefit lower income groups in the rural areas that ultimately would narrow down the gap between' the haves and the have-nots. Since thane rural development has been assigned high priorities in the development plans of Nepal as well. " Rural development in Nepal is a complex phenomenon involving an interaction of economic, social, political and cultural factors."

More over according to Balram Acharya in daulagiri journal of Sociology ,Vol 2,"Rural development is connected with the infrastructural development, food security, creating oppurtunities and mordenization of overall society". It is the way to activate a specific group of people. The motive behind the rural development is to help the poor public who really need to get rid out of it. The group includes small scale farmers, tenants, and the landless (Chamber1983:147).

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Methods and Materials

The purposed research methodology covers the data sources, instruments of data collection, and method of data analysis has been discussed in this section. The required data for this study acquired from secondary. The secondary data were collected through review of various literatures collected from books, journals, websites, budget speech of different governments, economic surveys, different periodic plans of Nepal, manifestos of Nepali congress, policies and planning of the government of government, publication of rural development, published and non-published documents. The collected data were seriously reviewed and analyzed.

The Pre-Planning Era

While the orientation of the development strategies at the global level in the 1970s did shape Nepal's development policy and programmes in favour of rural development, the concept of rural development is not a new thinking, nor is its importance a recent realization in the country. The first significant development programme intimated in Nepal even before the implementation of the first five-year plan (1956-60) was the Village Development Programme along with the community line in 1952, with assistances form USA and India. It was a well conceived multi-sectoral programme embracing all important aspects of village community and economy (Regmi, et. al, 2007).

The Village Development Programme was implementing under the assumption that investments in physical imputes and extension of technologies would bring about development of rural areas of the country. The strategy was basically based on the community development experiences of the United Sates and India. The programme was dividing into three stages; Nucleus Development, Dhat Development, Village Development, which incorporates soil survey, propagation of scientific farming techniques, extension of health and veterinary services, cottage industries and cooperates etc. In addition, training of different levels of manpower required for the programmed is also an integral part of the intensive level of village development.

The Village Development Project initiated under the Department of Agriculture; however, after a few months, it was decided this prestigious project should be transferred to the Ministry of Planning and Development. Gradually the project began to function as a multipurpose extension organization; fielding Village Development Workers (Gram Sewak) through which His Majesty Government (HMG) departments could extend technical services at the local level. In 1955, a joint Village Development Service fund and administrative agency, separate from USOM and the Ministry of Planning and Development, was established as an offshoot of the Cooperative Services Agreement. This arrangement allowed the Village Development Srvice to develop as a separate organization, less directly influenced and disrupted by the political turmoil characterizing HMG in the 1950s. One benefit of the joint administrative design was the on the job training provided to its staff, which learned new jobs and management styles by working with American counterparts. In May 1958, following Washington's directive to shut down the cooperative agencies and pull USOM back from direct management of funds and programs, the Village Development Service was transferred back to the Ministry of Planning and Development and reorganized as the Village Development Service Department (Christa, et.al.1992).

Panchayat Era

After the political change in Nepal 1960, with the adaption of party less Panchayat System replaced the Tribhuvan Village Development Programme by Panchayat Development Programme. Again, new constitution envisaged the village and district panchayats as local institutions for development workers and administration at local level.

The strategy adopted in most of the programmes was top down. People were considered only as the beneficiary groups and not as the partners of the programmes. All the programmes for examples; co-operatives, integrated rural development programs were basically flawed. However, the programmes; like community forestry, small farmer development programme, land reform programme, farmer managed irrigation system, production credit for rural women programme have been continuing with more reforms afterwards making more effective community participation (Shrestha, 2009).

The country was divided into 14 zones and 75 districts for the institutional development. Chief district officer (CDO) was in the district and the zonal chief in the zone as a administrative body. The rural development activities of Panchayat time were divided into two parts. Area based and target based. Under this Small Farmers Development Programmes, Women Development Programmes, Praja Development Programmes were introduced (Sapkota, et.al, 2008).

In the early 1960s, two policies with far reaching consequences to social and rural development were initiated: (a) caste based untouchability was outlawed by an amendment to the Civil Code (Muluki Ain) in 1963, and the Land Reforms Programme was implemented bringing about several changes in the land tenure system, among others, placing a ceiling in the size of land ownership by an individual in 1964. In addition, in order to promote the Panchayat's project of national integration, priorities were laid on infrastructure development, e.g. building roads, communication infrastructures, and power supply (IIC-JICA, 2003).

To strengthen and popularize the sentiment of nationalism and national unity, the Back to Village Campaign was launched in 1967. Containing a 10 point programme, the campaign was designed to be a vehicle for creating social awareness in order to make rural people active in, and provide support for the implementation of many of the flagship rural development initiatives, interlaid, social reforms, land reforms, forest conservation, agriculture (production), and cottage industries. However, by 1975 the campaign was limited to nominating local government functionaries, and even this was abandoned in 1980, when direct elections were introduced (Adhikari, 2015).

Two national plans implemented in the 1970s (the Fourth (1970- 1975) and the Fifth (1975-1980) the concept of regional development was introduced and Nepal was divided into four Development Regions in order to promote a balanced regional development and national integration. By the 1970s, internationally, there had been shifts from the mere focus on the technology and resources, to local organizations and people's participation (Esman and Uphoff, 1984). In Nepal the Swiss Development Agency had been a pioneer with its Integrated Rural Development Programme (IRDP) from 1958 to 1970 in Jiri. Following their lead, the 1970s saw a steep rise in the implementation of IRDP as it was expanded to other parts of the nation with the support of international donor agencies making it one of the large development interventions until early 1980s (Adhikari, 2000). The IRDP model continued even in the 1990s with donors' support. However, this model could not produce positive results as expected due to high dependency on

the central planning and weak participatory institutional mechanism at the local level (Tanner, 2001).

The Government of Nepal in its Sixth Five Year Plan (1980-85) focused on meeting the basic needs of the people, and committed to achieve Asian standards of living by the year 2000 (World Bank, 1989). This approach also failed to fulfil its commitments and was abandoned by the end of 1980s (Devkota, 1994).

The Decentralization Act was enacted in 1982 and implemented in 1984 with two important milestones: opening up integrated rural service centers (Sewa Kendra) in every district to provide technical and other services at the local level, and implementation of small local projects, such as drinking water systems, through Users Committees. The fifth, Far-West Development Region was created with the aim to achieve equitable development outcomes. With some limited success, the decentralized programmes could not produce expected outcomes, mainly due to the lack of funding from the centre and absence of local revenues (World Bank, 1989). The Seventh Five-Year Plan (1985 -1990) continued to pursue poverty reduction as a top priority alongside the adoption of the neo-liberal measures.

After Democracy

The 1990 people's movement overthrew the 30 years old Panchayat System, replacing the local Panchayats with the Village and District Development Committees. In the liberal environment, the number of NGOs had increased exponentially and became the partners in rural and community development. Different types of NGOs have received direct funding from the donors and worked as the intermediary facilitators, in many cases, replacing both the international organizations and government agencies. Local Government laws were revised in 1992 and 1999, giving relatively more autonomy to the local governments units (LGU) for self-governance and local development (Shakya, 2008).

One of the major change in the 1990s was that the LGUs started receiving resources from the central government with the encouraging results of the flagship programmes Self-help Programme and Let Us Build Our Village Ourselves. They also have received more power to manage local development affairs. As a result, substantial infrastructures, such as rural roads have been built. The funding that the LGUs receive has increased over time, now reaching between 1.5 and 3 million per Village Development Committee (Inlogos, 2009). In the absence of accountable elected local governments for the past 12 years, these funds are considered to be prone to abuse as corruption has become a common and widespread phenomenon (Thapa and Rijal, 2015).

Under the Village Development and Self-help Program in 1996, the government had implemented some popular activities in rural development which are: Strengthening the portfolio of VDCs by increasing VDCs block grant to NRs. 500000, Granting authority to collect revenue locally and retain 75% of the land revenue, Developing human resources, maintaining 25% of the grant could be kept to increase village level expert like agriculture extension workers, village health workers, village technicians and teachers etc, Providing prize and penalty for good performing and bad performing VDCs (Shrestha, 2009).

Likewise, Built Our Village Ourselves programme was started in 1995 nationwide. With the aim of the programme was: to strengthen the village local government with authorities and resources, to reduce dependency of the village on the center for small development activities, and to regenerate the feeling of the self-reliance to the local communities. It was a major policy breakthrough in the history of rural community development. Each year government was providing an equal block grant of 300000 for all the VDCs and Municipalities and those local institutions had given authority to implement development programmes with active participation from the local communities (Shrestha, 2009).

Nepal's local development process was interrupted due to the 10 year long civil war. With the ongoing transition of the post conflict peace process, donors' priorities have been geared towards the empowerment of disadvantaged groups, and to mitigating inequalities in terms of caste/ethnicity, gender, and region. The global movement for indigenous peoples' rights has also had profound effects in Nepal's current development policies. The centrality of the ethnicity agenda in restructuring the country triggered fierce debates and produced disagreements, eventually preventing an agreement on a constitution in 2012, and substantially delaying the formulation of federal constitution. Though no serious debate has taken place regarding the structure of local government, it can be expected that the new model will entail devolution of more power at the local level, reshaping the rural and community development policy (Adhikari, 2015).

The growth axis view of development, which led to a strategy which uneasily combined liberal economics and conventional geographical planning through state intervention did not materialize in specific interventions or in any reduction in inter regional differences and disparities the importance of which has been pointed out by several commentators (Bhattarai, 2003). The first four Plans emphasized infrastructure development, like roads, electricity and communications. There was little in the way of a theoretical basis for the development strategy adopted, although the implicit premise was that a combination of state intervention and private enterprise was required, with the state playing a leading role (RRN/CECI-Nepal, 2006). For the first time in the history of development plans, the concept of regional development, specialization and integration were brought during the years of 1975-80 to meet the goal of regional balance in development and strengthening national unity (Srivastava, 2008). Nepal was divided into four development regions (eastern, central, western and far western) each having its own headquarters. The scheme was to integrate each region along with Terai, Hills and Mountains by constructing main and sub highways for north-south axes. To have the maximum and better

Poverty alleviation became one of the major objectives of Eighth Plan, which was formulated following the restoration of multi-party democracy in 1990 (NPC, 1992) and in light of the World Bank's own emphasis on poverty in its World Development Report for that year 1990 and in its Country Review for Nepal (1990). The 1990 Constitution aimed to provide social, economic and political justice to all citizen of Nepal through equitable distribution of resources and focused on decentralization. Poverty alleviation continued as a concern in the Ninth Plan (1997-2002). The Tenth Plan was formulated and implemented in a conflict setting. It explicitly recognized that conflict is intimately related to poverty, discrimination, and social exclusion. The Tenth Plan also provided for the setting up of a Poverty Alleviation Fund for implementing targeted programs for people of weaker sections and regions, otherwise unable to join the mainstream development (NPC, 2002).

The Maoist-led government officially abolished the Haliya system of bonded labour that survived in the more remote parts of Nepal. The Haliyas largely belong to three categories: the traditional ones, born into Haliya families; Haliyas who spend their lives trying to pay off debt inherited from their forefathers; and those who till their masters' land. A majority belong to the second category. Haliya predominantly affects the Dalit untouchable Hindu caste of western Nepal. But since abolition, the government has provided no infrastructure to replace the former means of subsistence, leaving the 'Haliyas' and their dependents with no means of support (Manandher, 2011).

Planned development in Nepal

The First Five Year Plan

The First Five-Year Plan (1956-61) was implemented in 1956. The Plan recognized the importance of rural development for comprehensive national development and thus pursued the village development programme with high priority. The government had attached great significance and had accorded high priority to the village development programme because it was through such programme that the nation would prosper with rapid improvement in the economic condition of the majority of the population. The plan emphasized the need for a collective development through cooperatives and institutional development for systematic implementation of the village development programme. Accordingly, the country was divided into 150 development blocks, averaging 200 villages each. The Block Development Officer (BDO) who headed a team of experts representing all development oriented-bodies was the key figure for the implementation of the programme. The village development workers acted as grass root level agents of the BDOs. The plan sought to implement local development works in each block and the Dehat (rural) and launched Village Development Programme in 32 blocks and 16 blocks Dehat respectively. The progress during the plan period was unsatisfactory in terms both actual, financial outlays and physical output (NPC, 1956). However, considered in the context of the situation then prevailing with formidable constraint in transport and communication, and extremely limited administrative a technical manpower, the programme was both conceptually and operationally a great success (Regmi, et. al, 2007).

The Second Plan

The Second Plan (1962-65), while acknowledging the fulfillment of a variety of targets under the Village Development Programme. The plan adopted a different approach to rural development. It conceived rural development to be synonymous with agricultural development. Therefore, there was a shift in emphasis from the programme oriented area approach to the sectoral approach of rural development (NPC, 1962). In order to bring about rapid agricultural development it was recognized that a change in the pattern of feudal landownership was a significant step and accordingly, the Land Act, 1964 was implemented during the plan period, with provisions such as ceiling on landholdings, granting of tenancy right, and fixation of rent and introduction of a Compulsory Saving Scheme for credit operation in the rural area, among the others. But the benefits of the land reform programme have not gone to the rural poor and landless peasants although some official claim otherwise (Bista, 2014).

The Third Plan

The Third Five-year Plan (1965-70) was implemented in 1965. It took into consideration the objectives and principles of social policy as laid down in the constitution along with the policy of decentralization of power and wider participation of the masses at all level of the Panchayat. Thus, the plan upgraded the Panchayat Programme to a full-fledged sector, distinct from the public and the private sector. The principal behind the Panchayat sector was such that it would encourage people's participation in local development and help in mobilizing local resources. The need for decentralization was recognized in the plan for the development of the Panchayat sector. The objectives of decentralization were: (I) mobilization of local resources for economic development, (ii) growth of local leadership, and (iii) democratization of administration. Thus, the Panchayat sector conceptualizes development form below. It was expected to be economically sound and socially just.

However, the Plan did not make an explicit mention of rural development, but accorded high priority to the agricultural sector and sought to increase agricultural productivity through the diffusion of improved technology. It realized the need to adjust production on the basis of geographical regions. Accordingly, emphasis was put to increasing cereal and cash crops in the southern plain lands called terai, horticultural development in the hills, and promotion of animal husbandry in the mountains (NPC, 1965).

The Fourth Plan

In 1970 the Fourth-five Year plan (1970-75) was implemented. It did not make any specific mention of rural development; in fact it accorded low priority to local development in terms of investment in the overall allocation of development fund. It was just 0.8 percent of the total public sector outlay. It, however, recognized that disparities existed between different regions of the country economically as well as in the availability of natural, human and capital resources. Moreover, it acknowledged the fact that considerable imbalances in resources allocation among the regions must be narrowed down. Thus, the plan accepted regional planning as an essential tool to doing away with the regional disparities. The plan stated, it is essential that attempts should be made to create a balance between natural and regional development but proper utilization of resources and the extension of benefits of development work to as for the development grant by classifying the districts into three categories: (i) Himalayan region, (ii) Mountain region, and (iii) Terai region.

There was an important institutional development towards the end of the plan. In conformity with the policy of decentralization the District Administration Plan (DAP) was introduced in 1957. With its focus on development, the DAP constitutes the comprehensive move towards decentralization of development function. It poached the responsibility for preparation and implantation of the district and village level plans on the district political institution and administration (NPC, 1970).

The Fifth Plan

The fifth Five Year Plan (1975-80) was a turning point in the development process of Nepal because it was an attempt to spread growth beyond the narrow and privileged confines of the Kathmandu valley. And to mobilize the rural people for local development schemes (World-Bank, 1979).

Physical infrastructure, that dominated the earlier four plans, emphasized agricultural and social sectors receiving the first and second priority in investment allocation. People oriented production on the one hand and the maximum utilization manpower in the other are the twin objectives of the Plan. The plan laid emphasis on output maximization. The Panchayat sector was thus expanded and entrusted to formulate and implement various rural development programmes that include the newly initiated Rasuwa - Nuwakot Integrate Rural Development Project. It continued to stress the regional development concept which emerged during the fourth Plan. The country's limited resource however, dictated a revision of regional policy and therefore, it conceived Small Area Development Programme (SADP) at selected points along the 'development corridor rather than trying to carry development activity along the whole corridor fact, the SADP was based on the concept of integrated development.

The Fifth plan selected 20 such small areas in differ regions of the country. During the implementation stage programme suffered from lack of proper coordination at different district level, sectoral agencies of the government. The virtually came to an end in 1978/79 before it could have significant impact on the lives of the people (NPC, 1975).

The Sixth Five-Year Plan

Nepal implemented its sixth Five Year Plan (1980-85) in 1980. It primarily aimed at fulfilling the basic needs of the people. The plan had placed special emphasis on local development promoting people's participation. The prime objective of the plan was to rise the living standard of the people who were below poverty line by providing maximum employment opportunities with all development programmes and other are; to increase production at a faster rate, to increase productive employment opportunities, to meet the minimum needs of the people (NPC, 1980).

To realize such an objective, the plan accorded high priority to agricultural development with main emphasis on increasing food grain production. It recognized the importance of effective implementation of land reform programme as an incentive to increasing agricultural productivity. At the same time, it stressed the need to promote cottage and small-scale industries as a means of providing increased employment opportunities to the lower-income people.

Development strategies:-The following development strategies were adopted to achieve the objectives laid down by the Sixth Plan namely to increase production, to widen the employment scope and to enable the low-income group of peoples to enjoy the fruits of development.

- To accord priority to agricultural development,
- To lay stress in the development of cottage and small industries,
- To lay stress on export trade and tourism development,

- To lay stress on the conservation of natural resources and wealth and development of water resources, and
- To emphasize full utilization of infrastructure already credited, to control population growth (NPC, 1980).

It adopted the IRD approach as a major strategy of rural development. On the other hand, a key role had been assigned to local Panchayat and cooperatives in the implementation of IRD projects. Within the framework of IRD, the plan aimed to provide minimum basic needs of the majority of population.

The Seventh Plan

The completion of the Sixth Plan period marks the end of the chapter on the history of nearly three decades of planned development of the country. When the country first embarked upon the process of a planned development in the fiscal year 1956/57, inadequate development of infrastructures was the major constraint. Past efforts in the process of planned development have brought about substantial and significant achievements in the development of physical and social infrastructures. Based on these achievements, a new chapter was added in the history of development, which led to the inclusion of far-reaching objectives such as fulfilling minimum basic needs of the people (NPC, 1986).

Objectives of the Seventh Plan were; to increase production at a higher rate, to increase opportunities for productive employment, to fulfill the minimum basic needs of the people. basic development strategies of seventh plan were; to accord overall priority to the development of agricultural sector, to put stress on the development of forest resources and the soil conservation, to put emphasis on development of water resources, to emphasize the development of industries, to emphasize the promotion of export trade, to emphasize tourism development, to curb the population growth rate.

There is an urgent need to check the population growth, which is taking place at such a rate that can hardly be sustained by the country's economy. For this purpose, the policies and programmes already devised would be carried out with greater vigour and on a wider scale as well as in a coordinated manner. Concrete steps would also be taken to stem the flow of immigration. Along these strategies; to consolidate the foundations of national economic integration, to improve management of the economy by decentralizing decision- making and execution processes, government-owned corporations, were taken as strategies for the Seventh Plan (NPC, 1986).

The Eight Plan

The Eighth Plan (1992-1997) is the first plan of the democratic government formed through popular elections following the restoration of democracy brought about by the historic people's movement of 1990. The perspectives of this plan are based on two principal contradictory factors. These factors consist of, on the one hand, the positive aspects of the new aspirations and enthusiasm among the general public and, on the other, the negative aspects of the legacy of economic depravity left behind by the Panchayat Regime. The present challenge of the plan is to

strike and effective balance between the ever growing needs and rising expectations of the rapidly increasing population and the limited available financial and natural resources. This challenge has been further compounded by the degradation of natural resources and environment. These circumstances naturally call for political discipline, thrift and economic sacrifices. Under these trying conditions, too, the great expectations and enthusiasm obtaining among the people can serve as a primary source of energy for the process of economic modernization (NPC, 1992).

The broad objective of the Eighth Plan was to give definite direction to the social and economic upliftment of the citizens of the country by tackling the challenges of economic stagnation, increasing poverty, structural anomalies, environmental degradation and rapid population growth. A single five year plan could not find a remedy to all these problems but it is imperative to take concrete steps in that direction. The plan would make all possible efforts in this regard (NPC, 1992).

The Ninth Plan

The Ninth Plan (1997-2002), this plan emphasis on agriculture, poverty alleviation and economic growth, acceleration of industrial development reduction of economic and social inequality, liberal and market oriented economic policies, enabling local institution through decentralization, placing priority on the development of backward regions, developing human resources for sustainable and high economic growth.

Objectives

The Ninth Plan has adopted poverty alleviation as its main objective so as to lessen poverty confronting the whole nation. In doing so, a consistency would be maintained with the development concept of the 20-year perspective planning. In the Ninth Plan, a clear and concrete implementation strategy would be formulated for meeting the target of poverty alleviation, and thereby improvement would be brought about in the living standard of the poor community. For reducing poverty effectively in the long run, poverty focused sectoral and targeted programmes would be launched in a coordinated, integrated and effective way (NPC, 1997).

With the limited economic, human, and institutional resources of the country, all activities cannot be carried forward simultaneously. The long term objective of development and the geographical priorities set accordingly were; agriculture and forestry, human resource and social development, industrialization, tourism development and international trade, physical infrastructure,

The Tenth Plan

The Tenth Plan (2002-2007), government has emphasized on poverty reduction employing the policy of greater participation of private parties in development programs. To serve this purpose rural industrialization based on community organization and community technology has been prioritized. Macro saving projects, micro credit projects, cooperatives, rural electrification, farming (fishery, piggyery, cattle, goat, bee, off season vegetable, cash crop farming), cottage industries, conservation of forest and pasture, transport and communication, wind, solar energy,

bio-gas plants, community forestry are supporting factors and bases for sustainable rural development. The strategies of the Tenth Plan can mainly be grouped into four categories:

a) high, sustainable and broader economic growth, b) social sectors and rural infrastructures development, c) targeted programs, d) good governance.

Eleventh Three Year Interim Plan

The Eleventh Interim Plan (2007-2010), was implemented with the vision of to build a prosperous, modern, and just Nepal. The gap between the rich and the poor would have been reduced. The relationship and behavior between the people to people, community and State would improve. All Nepalese would have received equal rights according to legal, economic and social opportunities, to enable them to use their potential, changes in the conditions of the people in the overall context including social, cultural, educational, economic and fiscal, inspired by the modernization mindset, improvement in behavior and appropriate technology and innovations would be absorbed and used, all types of discrimination and inequalities including legal, social, cultural, lingual, religious, caste, gender, physical and geographical, would end, there would be a situation where people experience social justice, basic human rights and good governance.

The main goal of this Interim Plan was to lay a foundation for economic and social transformation to build a Prosperous, Modern and Just Nepal. And the main objective of this Plan was to generate an experience of a direct feeling of change in the lives of the general public by supporting in the establishment of peace and reducing the existing unemployment, poverty and inequality in the country.

Twelfth Three Year Interim Plan

The Twelfth Interim Plan (2068-2070), was implemented with the vision of transforming Nepal from a least developed country into a developing nation within a two-decade period. In this situation, people living below the poverty line would be at minimum level through the achievement of high economic growth and Nepal would be developed in the state of a prosperous modern nation. There would be peace and good governance in all spheres of the country. All Nepalese people would avail equal opportunities to ensure their future. All forms of discriminations and inequalities (legal, social, cultural, linguistic, religious, economic, ethnic, physical, gender and regional) would be ended from the society.

The goal of the Plan was to improve the living standards of all Nepalese people, reduce poverty to 21 percent, and achieve MDGs by 2015 through sustainable economic growth, generating dignified and gainful employment opportunities, reducing economic inequalities, achieving regional balances, and eliminating social exclusions.

The main objective of the plan was to enable people to feel change in their livelihood and quality of life by supporting poverty alleviation and establishment of sustainable peace through employment centric, inclusive and equitable economic growth.

The Thirteenth Interim Plan

The Thirteenth Three Year Interim Plan (2070/71-2072/73), was implemented with the vision of attaining the millennium and SAARC development goals; promoting sustainable development, human rights and adaptation to climate change; alleviating poverty by promoting a green economy; and addressing regional and international commitments.

long-term vision of the plan was to upgrade Nepal from a least developed to a developing country by 2022. And the objective was to bring about a direct positive change in the living standards of the general public by reducing the economic and human poverty prevalent in the nation.

The main goal was to decrease the proportion of the population living below the poverty line to 18 percent. And the priorities of the thirteenth plan were; Developing hydropower and other energies, increasing the productivity, diversification and commercialization of the agricultural sector, developing the basic education, health, drinking water, and sanitation sectors, promoting good governance, developing roads and other physical infrastructure, developing the tourism, industrial, and trade sectors, and protecting natural resources and the environment (NPC, 2071).

Conclusion

For the rural country like Nepal, rural development is inevitable for the sustainable development of the country. Then only it is possible to ensure local participation and envoke local enthusiasm. Not only this but also helps make local distribution of resources available, which is not possible without rural development. There are many rural development policies and programmes implemented by the different governments in historical perspectives. Some most popular programmes before planned development were noticeable.

During the Panchayat era the great efforts were made for the rural development. The Panchayat focused on agriculture, rural industries, rural infrastructure etc. At the time of planned development the especially the government after democracy 2046 B.S. focused on rural development. But on the other hand, the adopted efforts of rural development in Nepal did not address the needs of poor people. So, it is basically need to improve the rural development efforts in Nepal.

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