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Role of HRD in achieving MDGs in Nepal

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Introduction

At the UN Millennium Summit held in September 2000, 147 Heads of the Member States of the United Nations adopted Millennium Declaration** aiming to bring peace, security and development to all people in the globe. Millennium Development Goals (MDGs),derived from the Millennium Declaration, are ground breaking international development agenda for the 21st century to which all nations are committed (UNDP/NPC,2005). The eight goals of the MDGs draw the world community's attention to achieving significant and measurable improvements in people's lives. The MDGs emphasize world wide efforts for reduction of extreme poverty, promotion of universal primary education, environmental sustainability, better health, and empowerment of women. The MDGs have been agreed upon by the UN member states as the commonly accepted framework or benchmarks for

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** The Millennium Declaration 55/2 adopted by the General Assembly on September 8th, 2000, reaffirmed UN principles and commitments, including the quest for lasting world peace, and the contemporary challeng of ensuring that globalization become a positive force for the entire world's people. It highlighted fundamental values in international relations for the 21st century, including: freedom, equality, solidarity, tolerance, respect for nature, and shared responsibility for managing worldwide economic and social development as well as threats to peace (see http://www.un.org/millennium/declaration/ares552e.htm).

measuring development progress based on fundamental values such as freedom, equity, human rights, peace and security, solidarity, tolerance, respect for nature, and shared responsibility (SHRDC, 2005).

Nepal, through different policies, strategies and programs, has been trying to attain the targets set by MDGs. However, the level of progress is not encouraging. The prospect of successful implementation of MDGs is negatively affected by high level of poverty, increasing disparities of income, and unequal distribution of health and educational facilities. The problem is further aggravated because of rising unemployment. Those who are employed are working at low levels of productivity and wages, mainly because the work force is not properly trained in required skills. Institutional capacities to develop marketable skills through education and vocational training are weak and exposure to new technologies is severely limited. It has also been realized that implementation of MDGs in Nepal has been affected because of knowledge gap, low skills and weak institutional capacities. In order to improve the standard of living of the Nepalese people by creating income and employment opportunities through poverty reduction, Nepal has to create a critical mass of the skilled labour force that can compete in the domestic, regional and international markets. It is, therefore, important that Nepal should make concerted efforts to design, coordinate and implement policies and programmes to achieve full range of MDGs by addressing the problem of lack of trained and skilled people. Human resource development should be given the top most priority in order to develop skills as per demand of the labour markets.

This paper deals with the role of human resource development (HRD) in achieving MDGs. In this context, it highlights the HRD as an important policy tool for enhancing implementation performance of the public sector in line with MDGs. Besides, the paper highlights different dimensions of MDGs along with the status of MDGs implementation in Nepal. The paper also identifies challenges and issues, and suggests some important measures for improving the human resource base in the country for attaining MDGs. Though HRD encompasses a wide range of subjects, this paper covers mainly education and training.

Understanding MDGs

The MDGs provide people the power to claim their fundamental human rights, such as the right to food, education, health, safe drinking water, cleaner environment, shelter, and allow ordinary citizens to become active advocates for development (UNDP/NPC, 2005 and UNDP, 2006). MDGs are time-bound and quantified targets (Table 1) for addressing various dimensions of extreme poverty, namely income poverty, hunger and disease while promoting gender equality, education and environmental sustainability. Specifically, they are a set of numerical and time-bound targets that include halving income-poverty and hunger; achieving universal primary education and gender equality; reducing under-5 mortality by two-thirds and maternal mortality by three-quarters; reversing the spread of HIV/AIDS; halving the proportion of people without access to safe drinking water; and develop a global partnership for development (SHRDC, 2005 and UNDP, 2006).

The first seven goals of MDGs are mutually reinforcing and are directed at reducing poverty in all its forms. The last goal-global partnerships for development - is about the means to achieve the first seven goals. The eighth goal is important for achieving the 7 MDGs (SHRDC, 2005). Numerical targets are set for each goal and are to be monitored through 48 indicators. Such targets and indicators have been set for each of the first seven goals for over a 25-year period – between 1990 and 2015. However, for the eighth goal, no specific targets and indicators have been proposed (UNDP/NPC, 2005). The MDGs are a means to an end and they are really effective tools for promoting national and local development. Adaptation of the MDGs to fit local realities ensures that the national development goals will be achieved at both national and sub-national levels* (UNDP, 2006).

Table 1: MDGs and MDG Targets

Goal 1: Eradicate Extreme Poverty and Hunger
Target 1. Halve, between 1990 and 2015, the proportion of population living on less than a dollar a day
Target 2. Halve, between 1990 and 2015, the proportion of people who suffer from Hunger
Goal 2: Achieve Universal Primary Education
Target 3. Ensure that, by 2015, children everywhere, boys and girls alike, will be able to finish a full course of primary schooling
Goal 3: Promote Gender Equality and Empower Women
Target 4. Eliminate gender disparity in primary and secondary education preferable by 2005 and to all levels of education no later than 2015
Goal 4. Reduce Child Mortality
Target 5. Reduce by two thirds, between 1990 and 2015, the under-five mortality rate
Goal 5: Improve Maternal Health
Target 6. Reduce by three-quarters, between 1990 and 2015, the maternal mortality Ratio
Goal 6: Combat HIV/AIDS, Malaria and Other Diseases
Target 7. Have halted by 2015, and begun to reverse, the spread of HIV/AIDS
Target 8. Have halted by 2015, and begun to reverse, the incidence of malaria and other major diseases
Goal 7: Ensure Environmental Sustainability
Target 9. Integrate the principles of sustainable development into country policies and programmes and reverse the loss of environmental resources
Target 10. Halve, by 2015, the proportion of people without sustainable access to safe drinking water
Target 11. Have achieved, by 2020, a significant improvement in the lives of at least 100 million slum dwellers
Goal 8: Develop a Global Partnership for Development
Target 12. Develop a further an open , rule based, predictable, non-

* UNDP How-to-Guide to MDG-Based National Development Strategies, http://mdg-guide.undp.org

discriminatory trading and financial system (includes a commitment to good governance , decentralisation and poverty reduction-both nationally and internationally)
Target 13. Address the special needs of the least developed countries (includes tariff- and quota-free access for exports, enhanced programme of debt relief for and cancellation of official bilateral debt, and more generous official development assistance for countries committed to poverty reduction)
Target 14. Address the special needs of land-locked countries and small island developing states (through the Programme of Action for the Sustainable Development of Small Island Developing States and 22nd General Assembly provisions)
Target 15. Deal Comprehensively with the debt problems of developing countries through national and international measures in order to make debt sustainable in the long run
Target 16. In cooperation with developing countries, develop and implement strategies for decent and productive work for youth.
Target 17. In cooperation with pharmaceutical companies, provide access to affordable **essential** drugs in developing countries Target 18. In cooperation with the private sector, make available the benefits of new technologies, especially information and communication technologies
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Source: UNDP, 2003

The MDGs are global targets, but they need to be addressed locally at the national and sub-national level through localisation of the MDGs. Localisation of MDGs implies translation and adoption of nationally defined targets and development strategies to meet developmental needs of local communities (ibid). The process of localising the MDGs consists of dis-aggregation of nationally adjusted global goals at the sub-national and local levels along with capacity development for strategic planning, budgeting, implementation and monitoring in a systematic and integrated manner. Localizing the MDGs does not suggest the invention or reinvention of another new goal framework or targets. It is the process of aligning the existing MDG goals and targets to local contexts i.e. reshaping and restating the goals as they apply to local development contexts and relate to local development challenges. In the process of localising the MDGs, sub-national and local actors and institutions have a fundamental role to play. Besides, they have pivotal role in the successful implementation of MDGs related activities at local level.

Linkages between Human Development and MDGs

There is a linkage between human development and MDGs (Table 2). The MDGs provide a road map to accelerating human development. Despite the fact that MDGs do not cover all dimensions of human development, namely the aspects of

civil and political freedoms or the importance of people's participation, they do reflect three major capabilities for human development: the capability to live a long and healthy life, the capability for knowledge, and the capability for a decent standard of living (UNDPa, 2006). The values that guide the MDGs are the same that promote human development, namely the values of freedom, equality, solidarity, tolerance, respect for nature, and shared responsibility.

Attainments of the MDGs as well as materialising human development objective are fundamental concerns in the process of ensuring human rights of common people. While the achievement of the MDGs contributes directly to the enhancement of human capabilities, they also advance human rights. Each of the MDGs can be directly linked to economic, social and cultural rights enumerated in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and other instruments of human rights. Achieving MDGs may not be sufficient condition to ensure the full realisation of the economic, social and cultural rights of the people, but hey are an important step to that end (UNDPa, 2006).

From the Table 2 it can be inferred that key capabilities for human development correspond to different goals ranging from goal 1 to 6.Besides, essential conditions for human development correspond goal 3, goal 7 and goal 8. Goals 4, 5 and 6 (reducing child mortality, improving maternal health, and combating major diseases and HIV/AIDS) contribute to the first capability, i.e., living a long and healthy life. Goal 2 and 3 (achieving universal primary education, and promoting gender equality and empowerment of women) enhance the capability related to knowledge. Goal 1 (eradicating extreme poverty and hunger) relates to enhancing the capability for a decent standard of living. The essential conditions for human development namely, environmental sustainability, equity (more particularly, gender equity), and enabling global economic environment are addressed by Goal 7 (ensuring environmental sustainability), Goal 3 (promoting gender equity), and Goal 8 (developing global partnership for development). The progress towards the MDGs, therefore, helps improve the human development situation in developing countries (ibid).

Table 2: Analytical Linkage between human development and the MDGs

Key capabilities for human development	***Corresponding MDGs***
Living a long and healthy life	Goals 4,5 and 6 (Child mortality, HIV/AIDS)
Being educated	Goals 2 and 3 (Universal Primary Education, Empowering Women)
Having a decent standard of living	Goal 1 (extreme poverty and hunger)
Enjoying political and civil freedoms to participate in the life of one's community	Important objective in the Millennium Declaration
Essential conditions for human	***Corresponding MDGs***

development	
Environmental sustainability	Goal 7 (Environmental sustainability)
Equity- specially gender equity	Goal 3 (gender equality and empowering women)
Enabling global economic environment	Goal 8 (partnership between rich and poor countries)

Source: UNDP 2003 cited in UNDPa 2006.

Relationship between HRD and MDGs

HRD is the process of increasing knowledge, skills, and capacities of all the people in a society. In any economic activity it is the human element that commands, directs, organizes, controls and maximizes the factors of production. The process of HRD unlocks the door to modernization (Harbison and Myers, 1964). Economic prosperity in any country largely depends on the quality of human capital available in that country. Though HRD is a wider term, it should emphasize training and education sectors as education is the core element in developing a knowledge-based society. The benefits of education are large. Private returns of education and training produce substantial benefits to the individuals in terms of access to employment and life-cycle earnings (Grubb and Ryan, 1999). According to the World Bank (1999), primary education is the single largest contributor to growth and development in developing countries. A farmer with four year's schooling is much more productive than one who has had no education. Poverty in Nepal is increasingly rural phenomenon. Increasing access to education of farmers and unskilled workers in the non-farm sector and of girls and women, besides poverty reduction will bring fundamental changes in the values of society in the country. Therefore, in one way or the other there is a linkage between HRD and the areas covered by MDGs.

Importance of HRD in achieving MDGs is mainly because of the emergence of knowledge work, technological advances and the demand for information and their relationship to globalization. However, developing human resources in Nepal in the context of attaining MDGs is a major challenge faced by Nepalese government as the government's implementation capacity is largely depend on the knowledge, skills and personal attributes of the people who work for the government (Shakya, 2006).

Attainment of MDGs requires infrastructural facilities, financial resources and human resources. While infrastructure development and financial resources are vital to initiate service delivery and make accessible the social services such as education, health, and nutrition and population control, the agents of delivery of services are human resources (ILO, 1997). If we analyse the MDGs and associated targets, one of the prerequisites for the successful implementation is to have a critical mass of educated and trained people. To create such people, education and training should be easily accessible to common people. Moreover, training and skills are desirable for self employment. Besides, knowledge and skills along with employment opportunities help in the empowerment of women.

The relationship between HRD and MDGs can be understood by the fact that education and training provide personnel for mother and child health services. Besides, parental awareness on the issues of child health, awareness about diseases, and well thought-out use of environmental resources are possible only through education and training. Besides, they impart knowledge to prevent resource degradation and contamination, techniques of environmental friendly production processes and use of inputs. Moreover, education and training help understand trade parameters and consequences on exports, and produce workforce that is employable and that satisfies the needs of the employers (SHRDC a, 2005).

Status of MDGs Implementation in Nepal

Nepalese government has embraced the spirit of the Millennium Declaration and is committed to the MDGs to promote human development The Tenth Plan/Poverty Reduction strategy Paper (2002/2003-2006/2007) has incorporated the MDGs into its strategic framework as the primary medium-term strategy and implementation plan for reaching the MDGs (UNDP/NPC, 2005). Besides, the Nepalese government has initiated a number of programs in several areas to achieve the targets. However, the review of the progress achieved so far reveals a mixed status (Shakya et. al, 2005). The review of the status of implementation unveils the fact that implementation of MDGs related programs in Nepal have remained slow and it has to scale-up its efforts for implementation if MDGs are to be achieved. The weak implementation of policies and programs continues to remain a major issue. Weak human resource base in the public sector is one of the factors responsible for low implementation capacity. Hence, in the area of HRD, activities need to be implemented with additional vigor and effectiveness. Besides, the review of the status of implementation suggests that in some areas, reform process needs to be carried forward with additional efforts, in some cases new but innovative measures are required while still in others, existing measures are required to be modified in the light of the experiences gained so far in their implementation (ibid). Nepal has made remarkable progress over the last 15 years in reducing poverty, improving access to education, health services, and drinking water, and promoting biodiversity conservation and alternative energy. However, inequality and exclusion are hindering in the equitable distribution of the results of development efforts across all geographical regions and social groups. In order to sustain the achievements made so far, specialized and focused development programmes are required for the marginalized, poor and deprived. Besides, improvements in governance as well as launching of conflict- sensitive programmes are precondition for enhancing delivery (UNDP/NPC, 2005).

Table 3 shows the implementation status of MDGs in Nepal. According to the table, out of the 11 targets under the first 7 goals, excluding "develop global partnership for development", four are "likely" to be achieved, five are "potentially" likely to be achieved and the rest two are "unlikely" to be achieved. Those goals which are likely to be achieved are: goal 1, goal 3, goal 4 and major components of goal 6. The status of supportive environment is "strong" for two, and "fair" for six, "weak but improving" for three (NPC/UNDP, 2005). The Table

has also ironically shown the inability of the government to implement policies and programs despite having favorable environment. For example, the goal of achieving universal primary education in unlikely to be achieved despite having strong supportive environment.

Table 3: Status of MDGs Implementation

Goals	Will development goal be reached				Status of supportive environment			
1.A Extreme poverty Halve the proportion of people living below the national poverty line by 2015	***Likely***	Potentially	Unlikely	Lack of data	Strong	***Fair***	Weak but improving	Weak
1 B Hunger Halve the proportion of people who suffer from hunger between 1990 and 2015	Likely	***Potentially***	Unlikely	Lack of data	Strong	***Fair***	Weak but improving	Weak
2 Universal Primary Education Ensure that by 2015 children everywhere, boys and girls alike. will be able to complete a full course of primary schooling	Likely	Potentially	***Unlikely***	Lack of data	***Strong***	Fair	Weak but improving	Weak
3. Gender and Equality Achieve equal access for boys and girls to primary and secondary education by 2005 and to all level of education no later than 2015.	Likely	***Potentially***	Unlikely	Lack of data	Strong	***Fair***	Weak but improving	Weak
4. Child Mortality Reduce under –five mortality by two- thirds by 2015	***Likely***	Potentially	Unlikely	Lack of data	***Strong***	Fair	Weak but improving	Weak
5 Maternal Health Reduce maternal mortality ration by three quarters by 2015.	Likely	***Potentially***	Unlikely	Lack of data	Strong	Fair	***Weak but improving***	Weak
6 A HIV/ AIDS Halt and reverse the spread of HIV/AIDS by 2015	Likely	Potentially	***Unlikely***	Lack of data	Strong	Fair	***Weak but improving***	Weak
6.B Malaria and other Major Disease Halt and reverse the incidence of malaria and other disease by 2015	Likely	***Potentially***	Unlikely	Lack of data	Strong	Fair	***Weak but improving***	Weak
6 C. Tuberculosis Halt and reverse the incidence of tuberculosis by 2015	***Likely***	Potentially	Unlikely	Lack of data	Strong	***Fair***	Weak but improving	Weak
7 A Environ mental Sustainability Reverse loss of environmental resources	Likely	***Potentially***	Unlikely	Lack of data	Strong	***Fair***	Weak but improving	Weak
7 B Access to Safe Drinking Water Halve the proportion of people without access to safe drinking water	***Likely***	Potentially	Unlikely	Lack of data	Strong	***Fair***	Weak but improving	Weak

Source: *Nepal Millennium Development Goals*, NPC/UNDP, Kathmandu, 2005, p.7.

Two things can be inferred from above interpretation. First, there should be concerted efforts for the accelerated implementation of MDGs programs that are already at different stages of implementation. Next, MDGs friendly enabling environment should be created (Shakya, 2006). So far, a period of fifteen years is already over in terms of implementing MDGs. The plan of action for accelerating the implementation would have to be for a period of a remaining decade. This decade would have to be the decade of implementation and hence is crucial, if the MDGs are to be attained (Shakya et. al,2005).

Financial aspects of MDGs implementation

A detail assessment conducted jointly by National Planning Commission and United Nations Development Program (UNDP) fount that total public investment requirement for Nepal in order to achieve MDGs for the period 2005-2015 is US $ 12.6 billion. The assessment underlined that half of that money needs to be invested to reduce hunger, improve education and rural infrastructure (TKP, 2006). Out of US $12.6 billion, US $ 4.8 billion is to be met by domestic resources of the government and for the remaining US $ 7.9 billion, Nepal will have to rely on external assistance. According to the assessment report, hunger and education are the major sectors expected to face severe financial crunch in the coming decade. The financial gap in achieving MDGs related to hunger is around Rs. 183 billion followed by Rs. 130 billion and Rs. 18 billion for education and health sectors respectively. The total resource allocation for hunger-reduction activities in 2005 should have been about 30 percent higher than current public investments (ibid). However, there is no particular idea regarding the extent of investment required for HRD in each of these areas. Nonetheless, it is certain that the failure to finance investment gaps would hit increasing allocations to address the needs of HRD, training and development, capacity building and institutional development and other related areas. It is, therefore, important to seek ways and means to meet financing gaps of this magnitude.

For the attainment of the MDGs, international assistance must also be well aligned with these needs. For the successful implementation of MDGs, the OECD countries must allocate their resources equal to 0.7 percent of their GNP as per their commitment to assist least developed countries like Nepal (SHRDC, 2005).However, violence and political instability in Nepal have been hampering the effective utilization of aid. Restoring peace and democracy in the country, therefore, is of utmost priority to put development efforts back on track and attain sustainable human development through the achievement of the MDGs (UNDP/NPC, 2005). Nepal being both a land locked and least developed country, the critical role of faster and deeper debt relief and enhanced official development assistance (ODA) complemented by a development friendly trade regime can not be over-emphasized (ibid).

The assessment report stated that public sector investment in the health sector is grossly inadequate compared to the requirement to meet MDGs needs. Expressing concern over the low level of attention given to the drinking water sector in terms of allocation of resources, the assessment pointed out that much needs to be done to

attain MDGs in drinking water and sanitation. The report also emphasized on rural road network and suggested to increase resource allocation for rural roads development significantly as it has the most powerful impact on achieving other MDGs like hunger reduction. The assessment also expressed concern over the low penetration of electricity in Nepal and said that majority of Nepalese are still deprived of electricity. Investment in expanding the coverage of electricity in rural areas needs massive expansion.

Challenges in the implementation of MDGs from HRD perspective

Successful implementation of MDGs warrants massive investment in the areas indicated by the MDGs. Such investment can be prudently utilized if there are strong institutions responsible for implementation, monitoring and evaluation. To run such institutions, highly qualified and skilled personnel are required. However, there is a weak human resource base in the public service of Nepalese government, which is overwhelmingly responsible in the implementation of MDGs. Moreover, there is a wide gap in access to education between males and females, disadvantaged castes/ ethnic groups and other groups.

Nepal still does not have a public sector HRD plan at the national level based on a long –term vision of the future public service that has to perform in changing social, economic and political environments. Efforts need to be undertaken to formulate a comprehensive HRD plan, encompassing all areas of MDGs, based on the holistic and pluralistic approaches. HRD policy has to be a key element of such a long-term comprehensive plan (Shakya, 2006). In this process, careful analysis of the existing conditions affecting achievement of MDGs, particularly of those organizations directly related to MDGs, need to be undertaken. At the same time, an analysis of changes that need to be initiated in future for the fulfillment of MDGs is also required. For example, two of the targets-"boys and girls alike will be able to complete a full course of primary schooling"; and "halt and reverse the spread of HIV/AIDS"- are reported to have been "Unlikely" to be achieved targets. These areas demand more intensification of interventions at the centre and local levels. The absence of HRD plan has acted as an impediment towards the realization of these MDGs targets (Shakya, 2006). In addition, a need assessment of training and education is urgently required to identify gaps in the demand and supply situation of skilled manpower. This would suggest the areas and the scale of intervention for introducing public-private partnership in the delivery of services at the central and at the district levels along with the potentiality of contracting out of services (ibid).Moreover, training polices should contain not only the analysis of the present need of the organization but also the future skills requirement , at least till the period of 2015.

Capacity development is one of the challenge areas to be considered seriously when we talk of attaining MDGs through HRD. At the micro level, it constitutes the system under which civil servants will be able to involve in a continuous process of learning. This requires a comprehensive human resource planning, development and management in all the MDGs related ministries. Capacity development at the meso level is required to ensure that the institutional capacity exists to design,

implement, monitor and evaluate program/projects related to MDGs. Finally, capacity development at the macro level is required to evolve and maintain a more responsive bureaucracy that responds to the needs of the general people and improves and modernizes itself based on the feed back that it receives from the people.

Capacity development depends on many factors, one of which is training and academic background. Training and appropriate educational background are necessary among the public sector employees. However, Nepal has not been able to optimize the gains from the training programs the public sector employees undergo (Shakya et. al, 2005). Several ministries that are directly related to MDGs are equipped with training centers, but these training centers do not offer training programs in MDGs areas. Besides, there is less amount of understanding about MDGs among the trainers and training institutions. Their curricula have yet to be modified in line with the MDGs requirement (MOGA, 2002). There is, therefore, a need to design MDGs related training programs and accordingly conduct training courses. In this context, training institutions such as Nepal Administrative Staff College and other training institutions running under different sectoral ministries can play pivotal role in creating environment for the transfer of knowledge and experiences in MDGs related areas to the institutions/individuals both in the public and private sectors at the central and local levels. They can further provide such training facilities to the clients depending upon their demands. Moreover, available training resources need to be used in favor of creating conducive environment for attaining the MDGs.

Concluding remarks

Considering the financial and institutional arrangement and level of implementation capacity of the Nepalese government, one can not be optimistic in full realization of the MDGs in Nepal by 2015. Therefore, the Nepalese government should have multi-pronged approaches including broad-based economic growth, creation of job opportunities, capacity building through training and skills, investment in anti-poverty programmes, adequate and effective service delivery and adequate investment in health and education sectors. Besides, there is a need of huge investment in the rural infrastructure. Though insurgency made it difficult to conduct rural infrastructure activities, serious efforts should be made in the area now. Moreover, attention should be made to promoting education particularly among girls and for that investment should be made on school related infrastructures. There is also need of an investment plan in order to attract domestic investment because a useful foreign investment is not possible without domestic investment. Nepal's accession to the WTO in 2004 offers significant scope for the country's effective integration into the global economy. However, in order to expand trade, facilitate competition, and manage knowledge to create opportunities for growth and to achieve full range of MDGs, Nepal requires further policy reforms, effective institutions and improved infrastructure.

Most importantly, without any delay the Nepalese government should initiate the process of formulating a comprehensive HRD plan encompassing all areas of

MDGs based on holistic and integrated approach. In this context, all the ministries/agencies related to the MDGs should come up with policies and strategies that need to be undertaken from the HRD perspective for the successful implementation of MDGs. Above all, the government should give the topmost priority to the MDGs to turn this decade as the decade of implementation.

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National Initiatives for Development of Women's Entrepreneurship

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Introduction

Entrepreneurship contributes in various ways to economic development and job creation. Promoting the entrepreneurial dynamic of a country should be an integral element of any government attempt to boost economic prosperity. Women's entrepreneurship is expanding around the world. Until 1970s, entrepreneurship had been an unknown and unheard territory for women in Nepal. Few women, who dared to come out of the four walls of their home, sought jobs as teachers in schools, clerks in the government offices and banks. However, the 1980s proved to be an important decade in the history of women entrepreneurship as a few enterprising women stepped into the world of entrepreneurship. Women saw the new avenue in the field of economic empowerment through entrepreneurship apart from working in other wage earning jobs. Meanwhile, establishment of women focused entrepreneurship organizations like Women Entrepreneurs' Association of Nepal (WEAN) Women Entrepreneurship Development Committee, Mahaguthi, Sana Hastakala , Association of Craft Producers etc became some of the milestones for women entrepreneurship development in Nepal.

Situation of Women in Nepal

As per the Census, 2001 women constitute more than half of the population. They constitute more than 48 percent of the labor force, 73 percent in agriculture and 27 percent in the non-agriculture sectors. Women's proportion has increased almost in all occupations to some extent. But their greater concentration in agriculture is visible. A positive trend is also visible in their empowerment as reflected in their increasing proportion among the professionals and technicians and also in administration and management.

Development of major export industries, such as carpet, garment, and woolen goods, has opened new avenues of formal employment for women. Increased

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