

How Successful is the Land Distribution to 'Freed Bonded-laborer' (*Mukta Kamaiya*) in Nepal

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7th FIG Regional Conference

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Reviewing the Progress of the Program for Land (Re-)distribution to 'Freed Bonded-laborer' (*Mukta Kamaiya*) in Nepal

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Contents



- Introduction
 - ✓ Bonded-laborer (*Kamaiya*)
 - ✓ Freed bonded-laborer (*Mukta Kamaiya*)
- Land (re-)distribution program
- Progress of land (re-)distribution
- Analysis/Discussion
- Conclusion

Bonded laborer (*Kamaiya*): Introduction



- ✓ Long history of the system of forced/bonded labour and slavery in Nepal
- ✓ *Tharu*, an indigenous community is an example of bonded laborers exploited to work at farmlands and households
- ✓ Commonly used terms for the bonded laborer is *Kamaiya* and for the labour system is *Kamaiya system*

Bonded laborer (*Kamaiya*): Introduction ...

- ✓ Existed in five districts: *Kanchanpur*, *Kailali*, *Bardia*, *Banke* and *Dang*



Bonded laborer (*Kamaiya*): Introduction ...



- ✓ The exploitation was extensive after the eradication of Malaria in 1950s
- ✓ Hill people migrated to the region, occupied fertile lands and used the people from this indigenous community as *Kamaiya*
- ✓ The injustice with the Kamaiyas in many respect was recognised after the restoration of democracy in 1990
- ✓ However, not much progress was observed until 2000
- ✓ Finally freed/liberated on 17 July 2000

Freed bonded-laborer (*Mukta Kamaiya*): “*Kamaiya*” to “*Mukta Kamaiya*”



- ✓ After being freed/liberated on 17 July 2000, the bonded laborer (*Kamaiya*) were termed as ‘freed bonded-laborer’ (*Mukta Kamaiya*)
- ✓ The term ‘freed bonded-laborer’ is just an English translation of *Mukta Kamaiya*

Freed bonded-laborer (*Mukta Kamaiya*):

Classification: based on land holding



Class	Description	Card Type
Class 'A'	The household having no land at all and residing at the house provided by the corresponding landlord	Red
Class 'B'	The household occupying informal land with a house for living but having no registered land	Blue
Class 'C'	The household having less than 2 <i>kattha</i> ^[1] (677.26 sq. m) of registered land and having own house	Yellow
Class 'D'	The household having more than 2 <i>kattha</i> (677.26 sq. m) of registered land and having own house	White

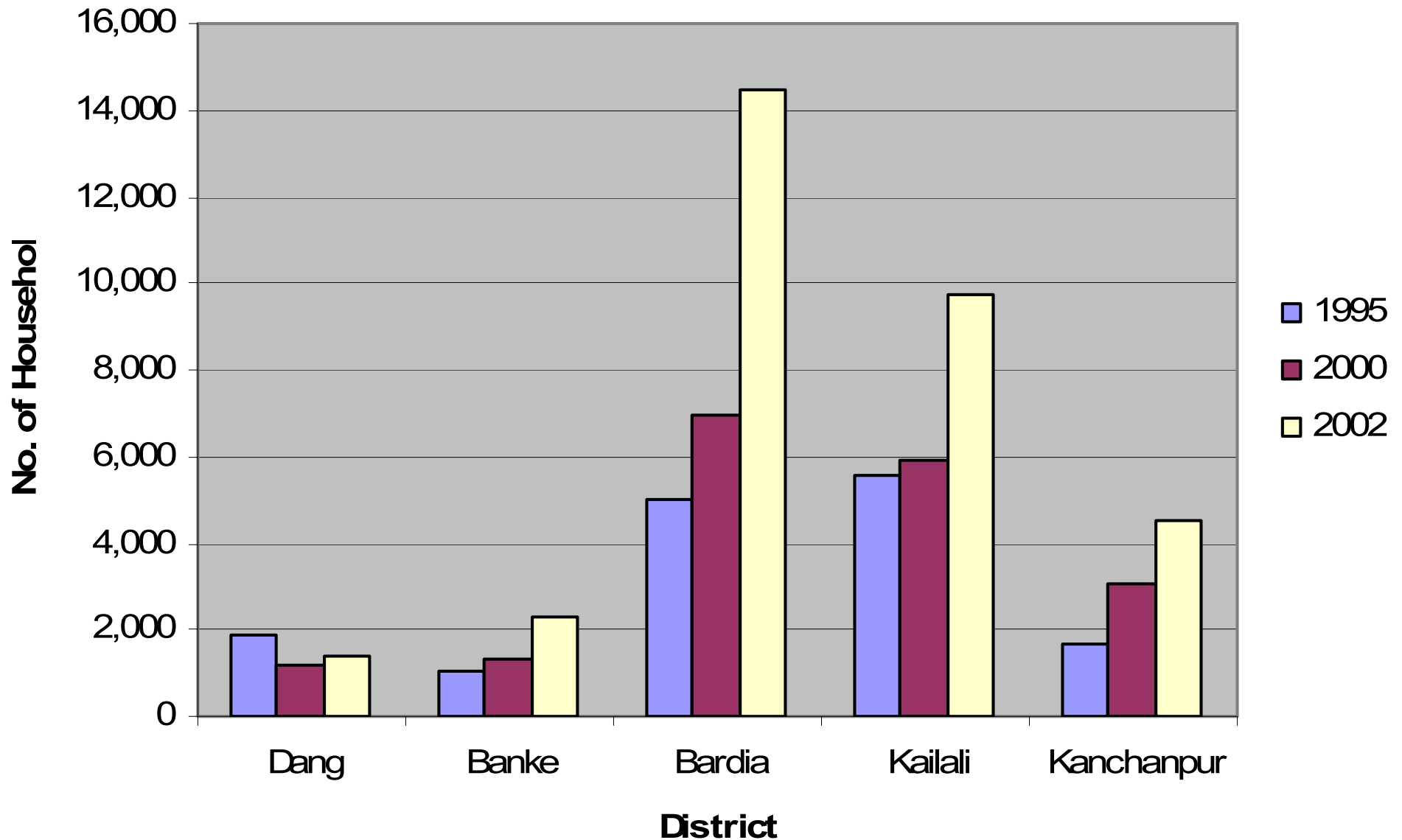
^[1] 1 *Kattha* = 338.6 sq m, (20 *Kattha* = 1 *Bigha* = 72,900 sq. ft.; 1 ft. = 3.2808 m)

Freed bonded-laborer (*Mukta Kamaiya*): Enumeration results: Increasing per enu.



Districts	Number of <i>Mukta Kamaiya</i> households (Class: 'A', 'B', 'C' & 'D')		
	1995	2000	2002
Dang	1,856	1,166	1,426
Banke	1,060	1,345	2,316
Bardia	5,037	6,949	14,499
Kailali	5,557	5,895	9,762
Kanchanpur	1,642	3,045	4,506
Total	15,152	18,400	32,509

Freed bonded-laborer (*Mukta Kamaiya*): Enumeration results ...



Land (Re-)distribution program:

Eligible class for land allocation: landless



- The households from landless classes
 - ✓ Class 'A': Having no land no house at all
 - ✓ Class 'B': Having a house on informally occupied land

Land (Re-)distribution program:

Households eligible for land allocation



District	Class A (Households)			Class B (Households)			Total Households
	2000	+ in 2002	Total	2000	+ in 2002	Total	
Dang	215	87	302	230	173	403	705
Banke	174	944	1118	776	27	803	1921
Bardia	2691	3778	6469	1310	3772	5082	11551
Kailali	2488	1270	3758	2620	2597	5217	8975
Kanchanpur	2462	1461	3923	495	0	495	4418
Total	8030	7540	15570	5431	6569	12000	27570

Land (Re-)distribution program:

Land area per household: location based



S.N o.	Location Description	Area of the land (to be) allocated per household
1.	Land within municipality or adjacent to highways	Max. 1 <i>Kattha</i> (338.63 sq. m.)
2	Land around highways	Max. 2 <i>Kattha</i> (677.26 sq. m.)
3	Land in rural areas	Max. 5 <i>Kattha</i> (1,693.15 sq. m.)

Land (Re-)distribution program:

Source of land: mostly state land



- ✓ Surplus land received from land ceiling
- ✓ River banks, lands reclaimed from the changed course of river, stream etc
- ✓ The land registered in the name of the government agencies and suitable for distribution
- ✓ Purchased by the government during previous efforts
- ✓ Forest land with little or no forest cover
- ✓ Land gained from the eviction of informal settlers or illegal encroachment

Progress Report:

Latest statistics of land distribution: 75%

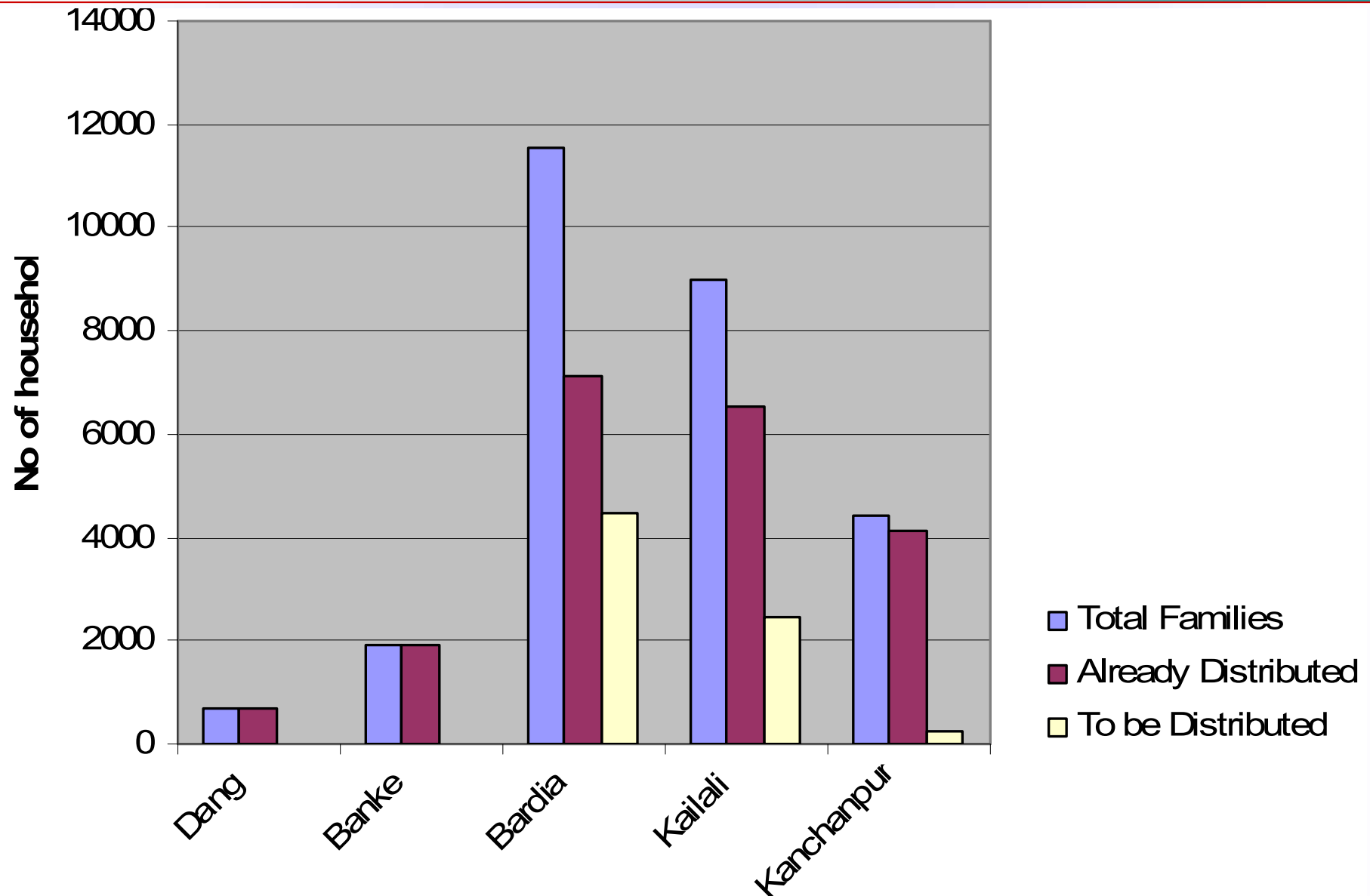


District	Total households	Already Distributed	To be distributed
Dang	705	705	0
Banke	1921	1921	0
Bardia	11551	4831/7100	6720/4451
Kailali	8975	5567/6526	3408/2449
Kanchanpur	4418	4150	268
Total	27570	17174/20402	10396/7168

The figure in blue colour is the latest data

Progress Report:

Latest statistics of land distribution ...



Progress Report:

Miscellaneous



- Total area of land distributed:
 - ✓ 2,796.7 ha (4,129-06-11 *Bigha*)
- Cash support for housing
 - ✓ 110,294,000 NRs (about 1.5 Million US \$) (11,786 households)
- Timber distribution for housing
 - ✓ 90,408 Cu. Ft. (8,400 cu. m.) (2,728 households)
- Various programs for capacity building and employment
- NGOs/INGOs have played major role in capacity building

Progress Report:

Difficulties realized by the government



- ✓ No suitable land available for distribution
- ✓ Obstruction in the allocation of forest land by forest officials and communities
- ✓ Informally settled landless people (mostly hill migrants) also want equal treatment
- ✓ Complexity in privatizing the land registered in the name of some government affiliated organisation
- ✓ Demand of allocating the land on the public lands reserved for important public affairs
- ✓ Land banking was refused by *Mukta Kamaiyas*

Analysis/Discussion

Points of concern



- Pace of the progress
 - ✓ Slow: a decade is about to be over and 25% of households still waiting
 - ✓ Recurrence of landless households before getting distribution over
- Impact on state land
 - ✓ State land has been only the source of land distribution
 - ✓ The contribution of purchased land is only 14.5 ha
- Impact on Socio economic condition
 - ✓ No any latest study on socio-economic condition

Analysis/Discussion

Weaknesses



- ✓ Government does not have record of land available for redistribution
- ✓ Declaration of freeing was done without any preparation of rehabilitations
- ✓ State land has always remained the source of land redistribution
- ✓ Impacts on forest land: distribution of forest land plus timber for housing

Analysis/Discussion

Weaknesses ...



- Equality aspects has not been well taken care
 - ✓ Household is the unit of land allocation, no matter how many members one household has
 - ✓ The quality and monetary value of land has not been scientifically evaluated before allocating land on the basis of its location
 - ✓ No any concern has been seen towards the households of Class 'C' having less than 2 kattha of land

Analysis/Discussion

Strong points



- ✓ Equality in terms of gender issues is well maintained through registration
- ✓ Programs for capacity building are being undertaken
- ✓ Some opportunities for labour class employment are being explored/generated
- ✓ Restriction for selling the land within ten years of registration

Conclusion



- ✓ Still 25% of the households are waiting for a piece of land. An effective and efficient approach is required.
- ✓ Alternative sources, rather than relying on state land, for distribution should be explored
- ✓ The impacts of land distribution on socio-economic aspects has not been studied lately. Proper measures should be taken to improve their livelihood
- ✓ Proper preparation in advance and a good land information system will improve the efficiency and effectiveness of such programs in the future



‘THANK YOU’
very much for your kind attention
!!!