

Agriculture and Natural Resources Development and Management Strategy

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Abstract

Envisioning food and nutrition security, livelihoods, food sovereignty, and accelerated economic growth, the Government of Nepal has launched Agriculture Development Strategy (ADS) 2015-2035. While the ADS serves as an umbrella program for agricultural development, it fails to identify key drivers of agricultural development so that resources and activities can be fully focused on these drivers for expedited agricultural transformation. Nepalese agricultural development revolves around five drivers: 1) sustainable commercialization of small-holder mixed farming system, 2) incentivized farmers, buyers, sellers, traders, and agro-entrepreneurs, 3) pro-poor market, 4) strategic public investment on infrastructure, and 5) policies, plans, strategies, rules and regulations, and trade agreements. In addition, it is critical to conserve and develop natural resources such as land, forests, and water and properly utilize climatic conditions for sustainable agricultural production. Diaspora can contribute to agriculture and natural resources development and management through higher education as instructors, thesis/dissertation committee members, visiting scholars, online instructors, short-term courses administrators, and internship cooperators. Diaspora working in academic institutions can also engage their graduate students in agricultural and natural resources research through student exchange programs, field camps, fellowships, and graduate research. In addition, tremendous potential exists in higher education for collaborative research, data collection, synthesis, and scientific publications in the field of agriculture and natural resources development and management. Nepalese diaspora, spread across the globe, can also contribute to agriculture and natural resources development through private investment, education, trade, and technology transfer. For successful agricultural and natural resources development and management, it is necessary to revise ADS to Agriculture and Natural Resources Development and Management Strategy (ANRDMS). While incorporating the five drivers of agricultural development, the ANRDMS should align clearly with the federalized governance and administrative structures, identify sound strategies for natural resources conservation and development, and strategically engage diaspora in agricultural and natural resources research and development for sustainable agriculture, environmental quality, and accelerated economic growth.

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