



**PUBLIC WORKS PROGRAMMES: HOW EFFECTIVE  
ARE PUBLIC WORKS PROGRAMMES IN  
STIMULATING LOCAL ECONOMIC  
TRANSFORMATION IN LOW- AND MIDDLE-INCOME  
COUNTRIES?  
AN EVIDENCE SUMMARY**

CONTEXTUALISATION OF REVIEW FINDINGS  
TO SOUTH ASIA AND PARTICULARLY TO NEPAL  
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## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The most common programmes implemented in South Asian countries are Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act (MGNREGA) followed by cash transfer programmes. These programmes are proven to be effective for implementing in South Asian countries by addressing the implementation issues. Synthesising the evidence from the primary studies was a major challenge due to heterogeneity in study designs. Most of the included studies did not adapt standard methodology to conduct the study. However, we found a good number of studies providing the evidence on effectiveness of MGNREGA and cash transfer programmes to South Asia and Nepal. There might be some country specific changes in certain components that have to be eliminated or incorporated in the existing programme. This document may help in identifying those components to implement the programme in South Asia and Nepal.

## ABOUT THIS SUMMARY

The document gives the information on contextualising the evidence from the review for South Asia and in particular to Nepal. The findings from the review are discussed in specific to South Asian countries and Nepal. The majority of the evidence is drawn from MGNREGA in India and cash transfer Programmes in South Asian region. This document will assist policy-makers and researchers in assessing the evidence in this field in the context of regional setting and conditions. This document presents current evidence regarding effectiveness of interventions in particular contexts which should be interpreted in the form of potential policy implications but not policy recommendations.

## APPROACH

Ecological framework was adapted for contextualising the evidence from the review for South Asia and Nepal. Baseline information on the interested outcomes for all countries of interest. contextual factors from the relevant papers on Public works programmes was extracted from 53 primary studies at different levels viz. individual, family, community and government/political system level. This contributed in understanding the interrelations between the various factors at different levels to contextualise the findings to specific regions. The factors admissible for South Asia have been included and the other information gathered may help us have an understanding of the contextualising possibilities in South Asia and Nepal.

## SUMMARY OF CONTEXTUALISATION ANALYSIS

The assumption which forms the basis of contextualisation is that an intervention that has proven to be effective in a particular setting may be effective in other places as well. It should be considered that the contextual factors are accounted for implementation of the intervention in other locations. This document is prepared to facilitate in planning and

contextualising the findings from a systematic review to South Asian region, particularly Nepal.

With contextualisation, it is essential to know the scope of the generalisability and feasibility of the intervention findings. Although South Asia is a diverse region in terms of social, political and geographical regions, we focussed on the contextual similarities existing across the South Asian region. The region has number of contextual similarities which makes the contextual factors similar across the South Asian countries. The review has included a number of studies from South Asia, few from African subcontinent and Latin America. Hence, the findings of review are applicable to South Asian context.

Given below are the PWP interventions which are widely implemented in LMICs and proven to be effective PWP programmes. This document may be helpful in understanding if these programmes are feasible to implement in South Asian countries and Nepal, and if the effectiveness of these programmes can be generalisable in South Asia and Nepal:

1. Cash transfer programmes
2. Rural employment programmes

### **Cash Transfer programmes**

There are twenty two studies describing the cash transfer programmes from low and middle income countries (LMICs). Out of which six studies are from South Asia and one among them is from Nepal. The major objectives of cash transfer programmes is to improve school attendance and reducing poverty. There is evidence from South Asia and Nepal on the feasibility of implementation of these programmes in respective settings. In South Asia, this programme impact has led to improved food security, financial and social security and improved livelihood.

A paper on Nepal concludes that implementation of cash transfers has enhanced well-being measures which contribute to poverty reduction and social inclusion namely, social cohesion, sense of equality and self-respect, more social opportunities and access to information

### **Rural employment programmes**

The evidence for this PWP intervention is arising from South Asia (India) and the rural employment programme called MGNREGA. Based on more than a decade of implementation of MGNREGA in India, the feasibility of the programme is seen in a positive light. The programme has a positive impact but implementation issues exist which may negatively affect the programme. Considering taking the steps towards resolving or minimising the implementation issues, the success of programme can be improved.

South Asian countries like Bangladesh, Myanmar and Nepal have already implemented rural employment programmes in certain provinces under indisputable circumstances like famine, agricultural lean season, for the promotion of social security and livelihood enhancement.

Nepal has introduced Karnali employment programme, some of the recommendation for the existing rural employment programme to foresee positive outcomes may be to provide employment opportunity for those who are willing to work, increase awareness of the programme, increase women participation rate, introducing skilled training programmes along with job opportunities and providing financial security for the beneficiaries of the programme.

#### STRENGTHS AND LIMITATIONS

Strengths: The contextual analysis summarises the available evidence related to effectiveness of public work programme interventions in the context of South Asian countries, specifically for Nepal. This findings may help in making decisions about the feasibility of different programme interventions by policy makers and practitioners.

Limitations: Poor methodology adapted by included papers in evaluating the effectiveness of the programmes.

## 1 BACKGROUND

### 1.1 ABOUT CONTEXTUALISATION

The design, execution and effectiveness of different public work programmes from low and middle income countries are described in the systematic review. However, the implementation and effectiveness of PWP interventions are strongly set in the economic and social settings. This report intends to contextualise the findings of the systematic review and focuses on the applicability of PWP interventions to South Asia and particularly to Nepal.

### 1.2 SOUTH ASIA: SIMILARITIES AND DISPARITIES ON DEVELOPMENTAL INDICATORS ACROSS COUNTRIES

South Asian countries include Pakistan, Afghanistan, Maldives, India, Nepal, Myanmar, Bhutan, Sri Lanka and Bangladesh. The table below (see Table 1) provides information on the economic and development indicators that show the position of South Asia in terms of poverty, income and empowerment. India has the highest population among south Asian countries and Maldives has the lowest population. Within the region, Maldives and Sri Lanka have the highest HDI value and Pakistan followed by Afghanistan has the lowest value. Maldives has the highest per capita Gross Domestic Product (GDP) in terms of Purchasing Power Parity (PPP)<sup>1</sup> followed by Sri Lanka and Nepal have the lowest per capita GDP. Afghanistan registered the highest unemployment rate followed by Pakistan among the South Asian countries.

Afghanistan and Pakistan have the lowest Gender development index as it measures gender gap in development by measuring the disparities between women and men in health knowledge and living standards. Multidimensional poverty index measures deprivations faced by people in health knowledge and living standards at the same time. Maldives has the lowest MPI measuring 0.008.

Nepal has a total population of 29,304,998 with a per capita GDP based on PPP of 2690 US dollars. Of the total population, 2.8% of the females are unemployed. The unemployment rate for males is higher than females at 3.6% of the total population. Based on the 2017

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<sup>1</sup> GDP per capita (PPP based) is gross domestic product converted to international dollars using purchasing power parity rates and divided by total population. An international dollar has the same purchasing power over GDP as a U.S. dollar has in the United States. A purchasing power parity (PPP) between two countries, A and B, is the ratio of the number of units of country A's currency needed to purchase in country A the same quantity of a specific good or service as one unit of country B's currency will purchase in country B. PPPs can be expressed in the currency of either of the countries. In practice, they are usually computed among large numbers of countries and expressed in terms of a single currency, with the U.S. dollar (US\$) most commonly used as the base or "numeracies" currency.

Human Development Index (HDI), Nepal ranks 144<sup>th</sup> out of 188 countries with a score of 0.558. There are group based disadvantages in Nepal. The highest HDI value is reported among Brahmans and Chhetris with a score of 0.538, Janajatis-0.482, Dalits-0.434 and Muslims-0.422 follows Brahmans and Chhetris. The highest inequalities reported is in education, with definite long-lasting effects on abilities.

**Table 1: Similarities and disparities of developmental indicators across South Asian countries**

Country	Population* (thousands)	HDI (2015)**	Gender Development Index (2015)**	Multi-dimensional Poverty Index**	GDP per capita (PPP) - 2016 (in US dollars)***	Unemployment (%) (2016)****	
						Female	Male
Afghanistan	34,656.03	0.479	0.609	0.293	1876.5	12.4	7.7
Bangladesh	162,951.56	0.579	0.927	0.188	3580.7	4.7	3.7
India	1,324,171.35	0.624	0.819	0.282	6572.3	3.8	3.3
Myanmar	52,885.22	0.556	NA	NA	5772.9	0.9	0.8
Nepal	28,982.77	0.558	0.925	0.116	2467.8	2.8	3.6
Pakistan	193,203.48	0.550	0.742	0.237	5249.3	10.5	4.5
Bhutan	797.76	0.607	0.900	0.128	8744.0	3.2	1.9
Maldives	417.49	0.701	0.937	0.008	13198.9	10.5	2.4
Sri Lanka	21,203.00	0.766	0.934	NA	12,316.2	8.5	3.4

NA Not Available

Sources: \* Population, total. (2017). The World Bank. Retrieved 24 October 2017, from <http://data.worldbank.org/indicator/SP.POP.TOTL>

\*\* Human Development Data (1990-2015) Human Development Reports. (2017).

Hdr.undp.org. Retrieved 24 October 2017, from <http://hdr.undp.org/en/data>

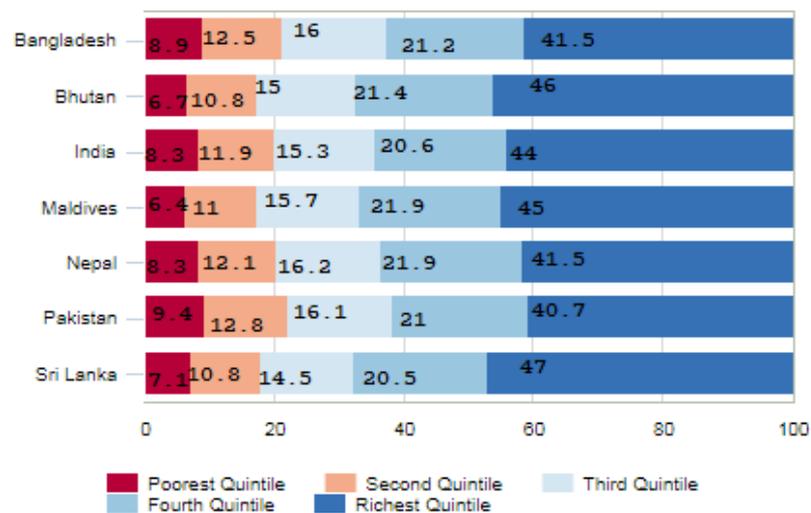
\*\*\*(PPP)- (current international dollars ) World Development Indicators Database. World Bank

\*\*\*\*Unemployment World Development Indicators Database. World Bank

Table 1 gives information about the various development indicators across South Asian countries. It can be observed from the table that countries which have a high Gender Development Index, have a low poverty index; for example Maldives and Bhutan. These countries also have high Human Development Index. Conversely, it can also be observed that a country like Afghanistan that has low GDI also reports high poverty index and in turn low Human Development Index. This data trend exhibits the importance of gender equality in the development of a nation.

It can be observed from the table that Nepal, despite having low GDP per capita (PPP), has a high HDI when compared to some other countries having high PPP (Myanmar & Pakistan). Nepal, also has less female unemployment rate when compared to males and also reports high Gender Development Index. Therefore, modest focus on the public works projects can bring Nepal to a league of fast developing nations.

Figure 1 gives information on the distribution of income or consumption by quintile dividing the population into five groups. Distribution of income or consumption by quintile mirrors the inequality in the distribution of income to the total population. In all South Asian countries, the richest 20% of the population accounts for almost 50% of the consumption. The next richest 20% of the population accounts for 20% to 21% of total consumption in the economy. Income share held by the third 20% ranges from 14.5% in Sri Lanka to 16.2% in Nepal. Income share held by the second 20% ranges from 12.8% in Pakistan to 10.8% in Bhutan and Sri Lanka. The consumption of poorest 20% is 8.3% for Nepal and India, 8.9 for Bangladesh, 6.7 for Bhutan, 6.4 for Maldives, 9.4 for Pakistan and 7.1 for Sri Lanka.

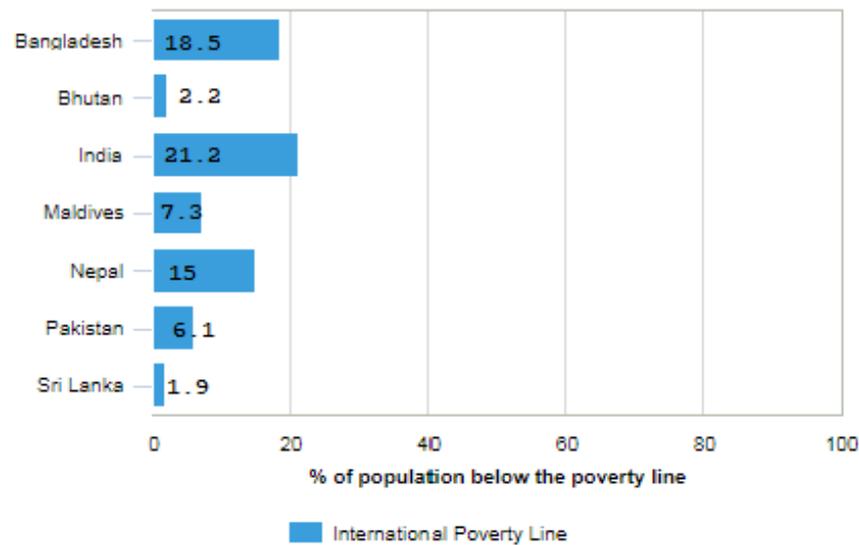


**Figure 1: Distribution of Income or Consumption by quintile**

Source: <http://povertydata.worldbank.org/poverty/region/SAS>

Figure 2 describes the poverty headcount ratio of South Asian countries at \$1.90 a day. Percentage of population living with \$1.90 a day at the 2011 international prices is counted as the Poverty headcount ratio. India followed by Bangladesh and Nepal has the highest

number people living with less than \$2 a day. Bhutan and Sri Lanka have the lowest poverty headcount ratio among South Asian countries.



**Figure 2: Poverty headcount ratio in South Asian Countries**

**Source:** <http://wdi.worldbank.org/table/1.2#>

### 1.3 IMPLEMENTING PWP IN THE CONTEXT OF NEPAL

The major factors that hinder economic growth in South Asia are similar in Afghanistan, Pakistan, Myanmar, Bangladesh and Nepal. Some of the prominent factors like predominance of agriculture, scarcity of non-agricultural job opportunities, political unrest causing economic insecurity, the dominance of rigid religious and cultural beliefs, urban-rural divide, and ethnic/caste-based discrimination, have had a prominent effect on the economic growth of Nepal. Inequality and poverty prevalent in the country have also been highlighted in The Nepal human development report published in the year 2014. The major contextual factors that need to be considered while interpreting the usefulness of public work programmes in Nepal are:

1. Federalism and federal form of governance is fairly new in Nepal, as it has been recently incorporated in the new constitution that was framed in 2015. The new system uses the 3 tier system of democracy and provides autonomy to the local governments (Iain Payne and Binayak Basnyat, 2017). Decentralisation also, has continued to be a major and an important issue in Nepal, it is needed to decrease the discrimination on the basis of caste, race and ethnicity; by aiding in equitable distribution of resources among the diverse population. The country has witnessed more than 1 people' movement demanding decentralisation. Various political parties have also supported the cause of decentralisation, especially against the royalty. However, even in the current state of federal form of governance in Nepal, complete decentralisation has not been achieved, as the fiscal autonomy has not been completely transferred to the local governments (Np.undp.org, 2017).

2. Youth under employment and unemployment are rampant in Nepal. Lack of employment opportunities is the fundamental factor for poverty in Nepal. Dependence on self-employment in the agricultural sector that accounts for more than 60% of the total labour force is also a reason for poverty. (Nepal Living Standard Survey 2011). (Subha Chakravarty et al., 2016)

3. Poverty is geographically concentrated in Nepal, making geography another exclusion vector. Karnali being a mountainous area face barriers in transportation, service delivery. Along with food insecurity the costs of goods and services are also higher there than elsewhere. Social inclusion is difficult to attain in a nation with so many exclusion vectors and so much diversity.

4. Despite being declared illegal in 1990, untouchability and caste-based discrimination are still prevalent in Nepal. (Drucza, 2016)

5. The decade-long insurgency in Nepal led to a forced migration of Nepali citizens and displaced approximately 200,000 people from all over the country.

6. Women and children in Nepal are vulnerable to trafficking, due to issues like poverty, livelihood generation problems and unemployment. According to the UNICEF after-effects of disasters like earthquakes can also increase the risk of child trafficking in Nepal (UN News Service Section, 2017). As per a National Human Rights Commission report of Nepal, 29,000 people were trafficked or attempted to be trafficked in Nepal in the year 2012/2013. (Unicef.org.np, 2017). Child labour is prevalent in districts that have a greater rate of poverty and lesser education.

7. The Government of Nepal has implemented certain cash transfer schemes as social protection tools to reduce poverty and for the upliftment of the people in need. Some of these schemes that are being implemented are the senior citizen allowance scheme, single women allowance scheme, full disability allowance and child protection grant (Drucza, K. (2015). Employment generation programs like the Karnali Employment Programme has also been implemented in the country to provide employment to the people of the poor households living in the marginalised areas (Opml.co.uk, 2017).

#### 1.4 PURPOSE OF THIS DOCUMENT

The contextualisation document explains the process through which the findings of the systematic review (Nair N.S. et al., 2017) are inferred within the context of South Asia and particularly for Nepal. Since there is sufficient evidence on the effectiveness of PWP interventions, contextual understanding of issues related to PWP will provide policymakers with better insights on the issues of applicability of different PWP interventions to Nepal.

## 2 METHODS

### 2.1 APPROACH OF CONTEXTUALISATION

Contextualisation is a process which is planned at the beginning of the project. The present contextualisation analyses the findings of the review in the context of Nepal and the important components of the report are as follows:

1. An ecological model was used by the team to identify the contextual factors at the level of individual, family, community and system. The various factors at different levels were mapped to understand the context of the programme at different levels. We considered the factors such as availability of public work programmes, employment opportunities, empowerment of rural population, nutrition and food security, financial and social inclusion, etc. while contextualising the findings.
2. The various levels in the framework aim at describing the effects of the programme, the governing body as the highest level because it helps in the implementation of the programmes in the country.
3. We extracted the possible contextual factors at different levels viz. individual, family, community and government system from 53 primary studies from the year 2005-2016 for MGNREGA and cash transfer programmes. The included papers had assessed the effectiveness of the above mentioned public work programmes. This contributed in understanding the interrelations between various levels of ecological system.
4. We searched the internet and available country specific reports for understanding the present situation of public work programmes and Government system in Nepal. (Interactions.eldis.org, 2017; Developmentpathways.co.uk, 2017; Opendocs.ids.ac.uk, 2017; Odi.org, 2017; Ilo.org, 2017)
5. We propose the considerations based on the applicability and effectiveness of public work programmes to South Asia, particularly to Nepal.

### 3 CONTEXTUALISATION RESULTS

#### 3.1 CASH TRANSFER PROGRAMME

Cash transfer programmes are well established methods to support individuals at times of natural calamities, famine, drought and other emergency situations. There is an increased acceptability of conditional cash transfer programme among both developed and developing countries in South Asia. There are twenty two studies describing the cash transfer programmes from LMICs. Out of which six studies are from South Asia and one among them is from Nepal. The major objectives of cash transfer programmes is to improve school attendance and reducing poverty.

The cash transfer programmes mentioned in the included studies are Oportunidades/ PROGRESA in Mexico, Familias en Accion in Colombia, Chile Solidario implemented in Chile, Bolsa familia in Brazil, Malawi social cash transfer scheme, public and private cash transfers in Vietnam, Kenya’s cash transfer for orphans and vulnerable children, Ghana’s livelihood empowerment against poverty, Red de proteccion social in Nicaragua, disability cash transfers programme in South Africa and conditional cash transfers in Paraguay, Transfer Modality Research Initiative in Bangladesh, Benazir income support policy in Pakistan , Keluarga Harapan programme in Indonesia, Bono Solidario cash transfer programme in Ecuador and Tekopora programme.

Contextualisation factors in cash transfer programme are given in the table below:

**Table 2: Contextual factors in cash transfer programmes**

Author	Country / Programme	Individual	Family	Community	Government system
Ahmed (2014)	Bangladesh / Transfer Modality Research Initiative	Food security and nutritional security	Not reported	People empowerment	Not reported
Soares (2010)	Paraguay/Conditional cash transfer Programme	Nutrition and food security	Increase in consumption	No impact on social participation	Not reported
Asfaw (2014)	Kenya/ Cash transfer Programme for Orphaned and vulnerable Programme	Savings School attendance Nutrition and food security	Consumption pattern has changed	Not reported	Not reported

Author	Country / Programme	Individual	Family	Community	Government system
Chitolina (2013)	Brazil/ Bolsa Familia conditional cash transfer Programme	School attendance has increased. Nutrition and food security. Savings has increased	Not reported	Not reported	Not reported
Soares (2010)	Brazil, Chile, Colombia/ Bolsa Família, Familias en Acción and Chile Solidario	Savings School attendance	Not reported	Not reported	Not reported
Hidrobo (2012)	Ecuador/ Bono Solidario Conditional Cash transfer Programme	Reduced domestic violence by partner	Not reported	Not reported	Not reported
Thomas (2011)	Nicaragua/Red de Proteccion	Cash transfers increases school enrolment	Not reported	Not reported	Not reported
Drucza (2015)	Nepal/Cash transfer programmes	self empowerment	Not reported	Not reported	Not reported
Nayab (2014)	Pakistan/BISP	Increased per capita food and health expenditure	Reduced poverty of participant households	Not reported	Not reported
Berg (2011)	Vietnam/ Public and Private cash transfers	Increased per capita income and expenditure.	Reduced the poverty of households.	Private transfers reduced income inequality of the population by 1%	Not reported

<b>Author</b>	<b>Country / Programme</b>	<b>Individual</b>	<b>Family</b>	<b>Community</b>	<b>Government system</b>
Attansio (2009)	Colombia/FeA	Shifted power towards women.	Increased consumption expenditure	Not reported	Not reported
Angelucci (2011)	Mexico/Oportunidades	Enabled women to control a sizable proportion of household income	Increased food consumption	Not reported	Not reported
Angelucci (2009)	Mexico/Oportunidades	Not reported	Increased food consumption	Not reported	Not reported
Attansio (2010)	Colombia/FeA	Increased school participation rate of children.	Not reported	Work participation rate decreased after programme implementation	Not reported
Ibrahim (2014)	Ghana/LEAP	Helped beneficiaries to meet their basic needs.	Reduced poverty in short run	Not reported	Not reported
Mitra (2010)	South Africa/ Disability Grant	Substitute for employment income for the disabled who are not able to work	Not reported	Absorbed workers who were out of board of labor force	Not reported
Behrman (2011)	Mexico/Oportunidades	Increased schooling attainment for both girls and boys.	Not reported	Reduced child labor among 12-14 year olds	Not reported

Author	Country / Programme	Individual	Family	Community	Government system
Gitter (2008)	Nicaragua/ Red de Proteccion	Not reported	Improved school enrollment outcome among poor households.	Not reported	Not reported
Nabi(2013)	Pakistan/ BISP	Increased per capita food and health expenditure	Reduced poverty of participant households	Not reported	Not reported
Rubalcawa/ (2015)	Mexico/ PROGRESA	Empowered women to allocate more resources within households towards investment.	Increased household income	Not Reported	Not Reported
Syukri (2010)	Indonesia/ PKH	Increased spending on health and education	Enabled households to accumulate assets for future welfare	Not Reported	Not Reported
Miller(2012)	Malawi/ SCTS	Improved school enrollment.	Increased spending on health and education	Reduced the number of kids working outside their homes	Not Reported

The table 2 given above describes the contextual factors of cash transfer programmes extracted from 22 studies published from the year 2005 to 2016. Following the ecological framework model, identification of the factors at various levels such as individual, family, community and government system. The studies at individual level describe the factors such as school enrolment and participation rates for children, food and nutrition security, women empowerment, and per-capita income and savings. At the family level, the studies described consumption and consumption expenditure, household income and poverty. At the

community level, the studies described factors such as child labour, participation rates and social participation. The factors at the Government level are not reported under cash transfer programmes.

### 3.1.1 ACCEPTABILITY OF CASH TRANSFER PROGRAMMES IN SOUTH ASIA

Large scale cash transfer programmes have been implemented in Africa, South America and South Asia. In South Asia, the programme impact has led to improved food security, financial and social security, and educational attainment. In an emergency situation, the cash transfer programmes have been introduced to improve the general conditions of the state and its people. The cash transfers have been implemented in South Asia which has improved the people's standard of living.

### 3.1.2 CASH TRANSFER PROGRAMMES IN NEPAL

From our search results, we could find one paper from Nepal entitled "Cash Transfers in Nepal: Do They Contribute to Social Inclusion?" by Kristie Druzca which describes the association between five cash transfers (The old age allowance, Disability allowance, Single women's allowance, Child grant and Endangered indigenous allowance-funded and delivered by the Nepal government) and social inclusion in Sarlahi district of Nepal. Nepal implemented these cash transfers without any external assistance, though the amounts are low they reach a large number of citizens. These cash transfers reach more than 7.9 % of the population i.e. around 2 million people. The payment of cash transfers in Sarlahi district of Nepal breaks down the invisible barriers to create a better sense of inclusion and citizenship. Findings from the study suggest that in a post-conflict nation with high social exclusion, retaining a relationship between the bottom tier of government officials and citizens and also finding ways to make the former locally accountable could have significant effects.

**Table 3: Eligibility criteria, benefit amount and number of beneficiaries of cash transfer in Nepal**

Cash transfer	Benefit per month	Total no. of beneficiaries in 2013-14	Eligibility
Senior Citizen Allowance	NRP500	922,741	All Dalits and Karnali residents over the age of 60; everyone over the age of 70
Single women allowance	NRP500	654,719	Single women 60 years or older; widows of all ages

Cash transfer	Benefit per month	Total no. of beneficiaries in 2013-14	Eligibility
Full disability allowance	NRP1000	25,492	Those who cannot go about daily life even with help from others, e.g. completely blind and deaf, intellectually disabled, or paralysed, who must apply for a red identity card from the district office of the ministry of women, Children and Social Welfare.
Partial disability allowance	NRP300	6863	Those who can go about daily life but need some help from others (the number of beneficiaries is subject to a quota per district based on the population size)
Endangered ethnicity allowance	NRP1000	19,223	People who belong to one of the endangered ethnic groups
Child protection grant (nutrition grant)	NRP200	537,118	Children under five years old in Karnali and poor Dalit children under five years old everywhere
Total	2,166,156		

The article concludes that in a country with severe exclusion and history of conflict, income via cash transfer can enhance well-being measures which contribute to poverty reduction and social inclusion namely, social cohesion, sense of equality and self-respect, more social opportunities and access to information. The evidence from the article shows that social protection policies alone are not sufficient to contribute substantial social inclusion but can be used as an instrument to facilitate an important step in the process of more of the poor and the excluded being included. For effective execution of cash transfers strengthening the implementation, monitoring and grievance handling mechanisms can be used as a tool.

### 3.1.3 ACCEPTABILITY OF CONDITIONAL CASH TRANSFER PROGRAMMES IN NEPAL

Introduction of conditional cash transfer programmes can have demonstrable effects on the human capital. CCTs are the most important way to bring long term effects on schooling, health and gender outcomes in developing nations. Conditional cash transfer programmes are cash transfer programmes where beneficiaries receive payments based on the fulfilment of certain conditionality's. The most common conditions are school attendance, timely vaccinations and pre-natal health check-ups. Conditional cash transfers can reduce poverty

levels by improving household income and asset accumulation. It is regarded as one of the best ways to break the poverty circle and develop human capital. Introduction of conditional cash transfers in Nepal can help the economy of the country?

### 3.2 RURAL EMPLOYMENT PROGRAMMES

Rural employment programmes have been introduced in the last decade in selected districts of Nepal. Karnali employment programme is a rural employment programme targeting at reducing unemployment in Nepal. It is currently the only initiative in Nepal having similar objectives to MGNREGA in India targeting the unemployed population. The programme provides a hundred days of employment to one person per household with employment targeted towards households without any employed members. The major areas of work under the programme are road construction, canal intakes, drinking water supply, school buildings, etc. the Karnali Employment Programme (KEP) - has been underperforming, with limited achievements in terms of employment creation, quality of outputs and the level and regularity of payments for participants (Oxford Policy Management, 2017). The participation of women in Nepal under rural employment programme is also low at 23% of the total number of employed. (Interactions.eldis.org, 2017). Contextualisation factors in rural employment programme are listed in the table in the next page:

**Table 4: Contextual factors in MGNREGA**

Author	Country /Programme	Individual	Family	Community	Government system
Rural employment Programme in India (all papers combined)	India/MGNREGA	Women empowerment Employment People empowerment Financial securities Social empowerment	Food security and nutritional security Consumption/ spending capacity Livelihood security Economic empowerment	Social cohesion and social inclusion Poverty reduction People empowerment Women empowerment Social protection Migration	Financial disparities Democratic governance Minimum wages
DEEGO PL(2016)	Nepal/Karnali employment programme	economic empowerment employment	livelihood enhancement	poverty reduction	social protection

### 3.2.1 ACCEPTABILITY OF RURAL EMPLOYMENT PROGRAMME IN SOUTH ASIA AND NEPAL

The evidence for this public work programme intervention is arising from South Asia (India) and the rural employment programme called MGNREGA. Based on more than a decade of implementation of MGNREGA in India, the feasibility of the programme is seen in a positive light. South Asian countries like Bangladesh, Myanmar and Nepal have already implemented rural employment programmes in certain provinces under indisputable circumstances like famine, agricultural lean season, for the promotion of social security and livelihood enhancement. Below points may be considered for the implementation of rural employment programme in South Asia and Nepal.

1. Rural employment programmes are one of the PWP interventions which help to alleviate the livelihood enhancement and social inclusion of communities as a whole. The intervention may help to promote community participation and social inclusion through providing employment to the eligible population.
2. The motto of the employment guarantee scheme in Nepal is 'one family, one job' and targets families with unemployed status. Instead of giving employment opportunities to one person in a family, employment opportunity can be given to those who are willing to work irrespective of the motto. This may help increase the participation rate of the vulnerable people and also women in mainstream social activities.
3. Involvement and active participation of women, reservation of job opportunities for women may reduce gender disparities and empower women and families. Barriers on the same may be addressed.
4. Increasing skilled and unskilled job opportunities eg: asset creations and introduction of skilled training programmes along with job opportunities.
5. Improving financial literacy and financial security by linking every beneficiary of the scheme to banks which may empower people, increase transparency and reduce corruption.
6. Increase in awareness of the PWPs through various means, such as media, may increase participation rate

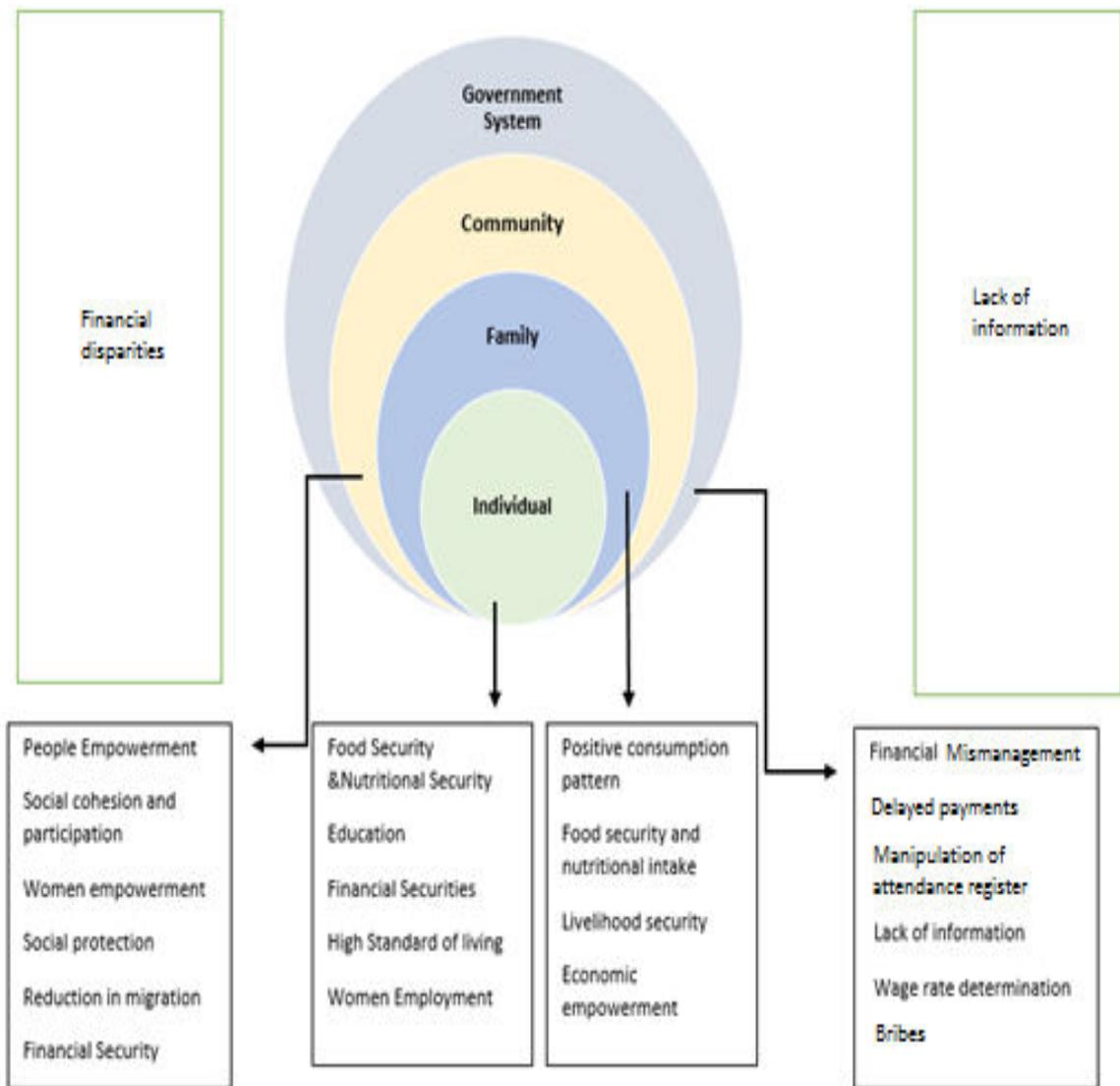


Figure 3: Ecological Framework for PWP

The review report aims to contextualise the findings to South Asia, particularly to Nepal. Contextualisation process involves determining applicability and feasibility of intervention. Most of the available literature are from South Asia, especially from India (few studies from Sub-Saharan Africa and Latin America). The findings of the review are applicable to South Asian context. We used the ecological framework model (refer appendix 3) to identify contextual factors at different levels such as individual, family, community and government systems. Literature search was done to understand the different public works programmes in Nepal and South Asia. Based on the available contextual information, applicability of different PWP interventions to South Asia in general and in particular to Nepal are discussed in this contextualisation report.

Cash transfer programmes are one of the main PWP interventions. The individual level factors for effectiveness of cash transfer programmes are increased food nutrition security, education affordability, financial security, etc. The family level factors in cash transfers are increased overall consumption expenditure, consumption pattern, etc. The social cohesion and relationships are community level factors associated with cash transfer programmes. Cash transfer programmes have already been implemented in Nepal and South Asian region which shows the feasibility of programmes in the region. In the event of planning for implementation of cash transfer programmes in Nepal, it will increase the social and financial inclusion, food security and enhanced livelihood can be achieved.

The rural employment programme is an important PWP intervention. The most important programme from the review was MGNREGA from India. The main aim of MGNREGA gives 100 days guaranteed employment in rural areas to those who are willing to work. At the individual level, the factors were women empowerment through increased female participation, employment generation at the individual level. People empowerment in terms of increased self-confidence in women, financial empowerment for individuals by providing financial security for women. At the family level, food security and nutritional security has increased, along with consumption and spending habits, livelihood enhancement, economic empowerment, etc. The community level factors are increase in social cohesion and social participation, poverty reduction, women empowerment, social protection, reduction in intra region migration, etc. The Government system level factors are financial mismanagement by the authorities, delayed payments, bribes, manipulations in the attendance roles, lack of information, determination of wage rates, etc. At the level of implementation, the drawbacks reduce the effectiveness of the intervention, but the overall performance of the programme accelerates the growth of rural economy. However, there are implementation challenges in MGNREGA, which need to be addressed to gain the desired results.

In the light of the above evidence the MGNREGA intervention seems to be applicable in South Asia and Nepal. Karnali employment programme which is implemented in Nepal has a motto of 'One family, one job'. Employment opportunity can be given to those who are willing to work and increase the participation of women; increasing skilled and unskilled job

opportunities along with skilled training programmes; improving financial literacy and financial security to increase transparency and reduce corruption are some of the recommendations for implementation of rural employment programme in Nepal.

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## APPENDIX

### APPENDIX 1: AUTHORSHIP OF THIS REPORT

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#### **Conflicts of interest**

None declared

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APPENDIX 2: CONTEXTUALISATION FACTORS OF MGNREGS IN DETAIL

Author	Country/ Programme	Individual	Family	Community	Government institution
Liu (2013)	India/MGN REGA	Female participation	Higher nutritional intake	Not reported	Not reported
Liu (2014)	India/MGN REGA	Not reported	Not reported	Social cohesion and participation has increased	Not reported
Dilip (2013)	India/MGN REGA	Not reported	Food security and nutrition	Not reported	Not reported
Banerje e (2015)	India/MGN REGA	Not reported	Not reported	Not reported	Financial mismanagem ent by the authority
Kumar (2013)	India/MGN REGA	Employment	Protein intake and food security	Poverty reduction	Not reported
Camfiel d (2016)	India/MGN REGA	Not reported	Not reported	Not reported	Crop insurance
Afridi (2012)	India/MGN REGA	Not reported	Not reported	Participation of women has increased People empowerment in terms of education	Not reported
Chakra borty (2014)	India/MGN REGA	Not reported	Not reported	Not reported	N Employment generation ot reported
Bhat (2016)	India/MGN REGA	Increased self confidence in women	Not reported	People empowerment	Not reported

<b>Author</b>	<b>Country/ Programme</b>	<b>Individual</b>	<b>Family</b>	<b>Community</b>	<b>Government institution</b>
Bohra (2014)	India/MGN REGA	Not reported	Not reported	Not reported	Delayed payments, Bribes Manipulation in attendance role
Bose(20 13)	India/MGN REGA	Not reported	Consumption increased	Not reported	Increased wage rate
Komal (2014)	India/MGN REGA	Not reported	Not reported	Not reported	Lack of worksites amenities
Devi (2011)	India/MGN REGA	Not reported	Not reported	Not reported	Increased wage rate Increase off- seasonal employment
Kaushal (2016)	India/MGN REGA	Not reported	Impact on livelihood security	Social protection	Democratic governance
Konch (2013)	India/MGN REGA	Increased women's employment	Economic empowerme nt	Not reported	Not reported
Kumar Rakesh (2014)	India/MGN REGA	Increased employment Lack of information	Not reported	Not reported	Not reported
Mahesh wari (2011)	India/MGN REGA	Not reported	Not reported	Reduced migration	Not reported
Naraya namoor thy (2013)	India/MGN REGA	Financial security for the women	Economic empowerme nt	Not reported	Not reported

Author	Country/ Programme	Individual	Family	Community	Government institution
Gnana (2015)	India/MGN REGA	Women participation	Not reported	High participation of backward classes Reduced migration	Not reported
Padma (2015)	India/MGN REGA	Not reported	Not reported	Social security	Not reported
Priyadh arshini( 2014)	India/MGN REGA	Women empowermen t both financial and social	Standard of living Savings	Not reported	Not reported
Alexon (2013)	India/MGN REGA	Higher female participation Increased affordability for education	Financial empowerme nt Increased health care Increased standard of living	Not reported	Not reported
Sahoo (2014)	India/MGN REGA	Not reported	Not reported	Women empowerment Employment generation	Not reported
Sarkar (2011)	India/MGN REGA	Income increment	Not reported	Not reported	Wage rate
Sridhar (2016)	India/MGN REGA	Social empowermen t	Not reported	Not reported	Reservation wages
Sharma (2015)	India/MGN REGA	Economic independenc e to women	Livelihood security has increased. Poverty reduction	Not reported	Not reported

<b>Author</b>	<b>Country/ Programme</b>	<b>Individual</b>	<b>Family</b>	<b>Community</b>	<b>Government institution</b>
Subba(2015)	India/MGN REGA	Not reported	Economic empowerment	Not reported	Not reported
Thadathil (2012)	India/MGN REGA	Increased self-worth	Not reported	Women empowerment due to equal wages	Increased wages
Vanitha (2011)	India/MGN REGA	Increased average person days of employment	Increased annual income Increase in decision making by women	Not reported	Not reported
Velmurugan(2015)	India/MGN REGA	Not reported	Not reported	Reduced migration	Not reported
Xavier (2014)	India/MGN REGA	Increase in women's earnings	Increased household consumption	Not reported	Not reported

## ABBREVIATIONS

AGMs: Advisory group members

AHRQ: Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality

CASP: Critical Appraisal Skills Programme

CBA: Controlled before and after study

DFID: Department for International Development, UK

EPPI-Centre: Evidence for Policy and Practice Information and Co-ordinating Centre, UK

GRADE: Grades of Recommendation, Assessment, Development and Evaluation

HDI: Human Development Index

LMICs: Low and Middle Income Countries

MGNREGS/ A: Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme/ Act

MMAT: Mixed Methods Appraisal Tool

MPI: Multidimensional Poverty Index

NGOs: Non-Governmental Organisations

NIH: National Institutes of Health

PwC: PricewaterhouseCoopers Pvt. Ltd.

PPP: Purchasing Power Parity

PWP: Public works programme

PWPs: Public works programmes

WTO: World Trade Organisation