

Kathmandu: Changing Food System

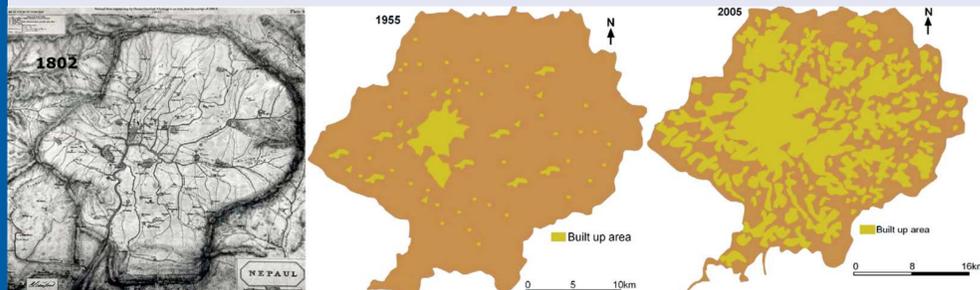


Minakshi Chhetri, Anustha Shrestha and Deebraj Rai

Institute for Social and Environmental Transition – Nepal (ISET-Nepal)

Background

Ongoing and unplanned urbanisation in Kathmandu Valley encroaches agricultural land, forest and wetlands leaving social and ecological foot prints in the peri-urban and adjoining rural areas. Since 1911 when first census of Nepal was carried out, Kathmandu's population has increased by five times. In the last twenty years alone since 1990s, it is gone up by 4.76 per cent. The figures below show change in built up area. This dynamics also influences the Valley's food system.



Built up area in 1802, 1955 and 2005 (left to right)

This study explored the changing nature of food system particularly agriculture in urban and peri-urban Kathmandu. It also examines the implications of global climate change on the Valley's food dynamics.

Findings



Photo: Urmila Dongol



Photo: Bishnu Shrestha

Sand mining

Brick kiln

- Over extraction of sand, mining of groundwater, changes in land use and degrading environment due to solid and liquid waste pollution are outcome of Kathmandu's urbanisation.
- Local production contributing to Valleys' food basket has declined as agricultural land is converted into built-up areas.
- The Valley's food system is coupled with regional and international production systems and market. These inter-linkages expose food security of Valley residents to multiple sources of vulnerability.
- Because transportation systems can be disrupted by climate-induced extreme events, food distribution is likely to become vulnerable to unanticipated shocks.

Study Sites

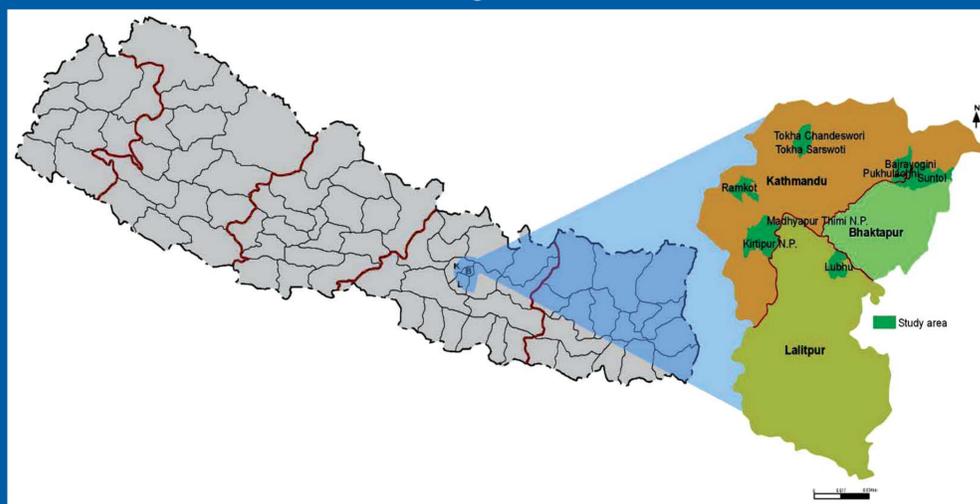


Photo: Shakuntala Neupane



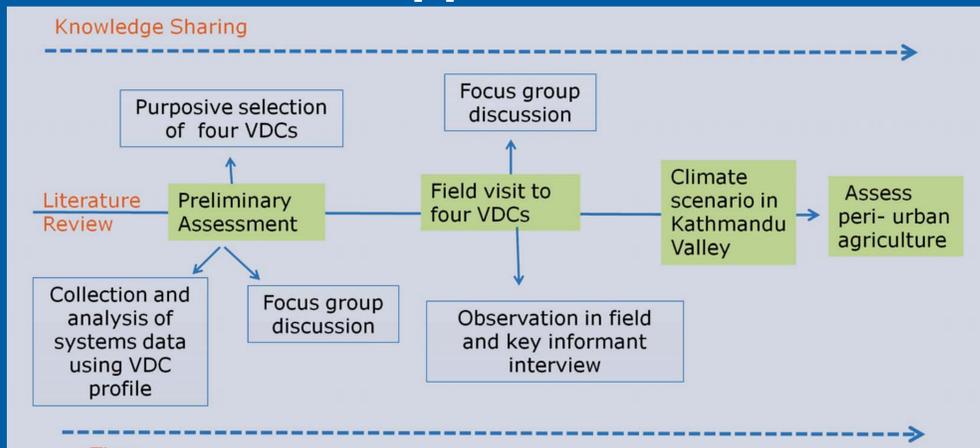
Photo: Shakuntala Neupane

Transporting vegetables

Vegetables market

- Erratic rainfall is affecting agricultural production.
- Government policies focus on food production and peri-urban agriculture is not yet considered.

Approach



Focus group discussion



Local participants

Lessons for Policy



Photo: Deebraj Rai

- Analyse food system chain to locate weak links.
- Initiate policy dialogue on benefits and challenges faced by peri-urban agriculture.
- Strengthen transport, warehousing and cold storage, marketing mechanism and communication to make food system more robust.
- Governance reforms and develops strategies to adapt to emerging stresses.