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CONFLICT AND INTERNAL DISPLACEMENT IN NEPAL: SOCIO-ECONOMIC QUERY

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ABSTRACT

This study investigates empirically what is conflict-induced displacement in Nepal from 1996 to 2004 after the conflict led by the Maoist rebel. We use econometric model based on Consumption Econometric Model. The econometric model estimation provides higher consumption demand than average consumption per capita of the displaced people in five development regions of Nepal. The result indicates critical living standard in urban areas because of unguaranteed non-agricultural income.

Keywords: Conflict, Conflict-induced Displacement, Econometric model, Nepal.

INTRODUCTION

Emerging destructive armed Conflict is an outcome of socio economic and political discrimination and exploitation in developing countries. In Nepal, the conflict during 1996 – 2006 was first time bitterly experienced at big scale for 10 years long. In 1996, the conflict was started by the Maoist rebel, attacking and looting of the rebel in the police stations of the rural western mid hill districts of Nepal, Rukum, Rolpa and Salyan (MoF, 1996). Despite a planned incident of the rebel, it was a small incident to the government because the government could not see a hidden war agenda of the rebel in the multiparty democracy because of a failure security administration and intelligence wing to analyze the incident.

Over 10 years long, the armed conflict between the rebel and the government has been spreading all over the country. In the conflict, the rebel was controlling rural areas of the country by establishing parallel local government instead of local government meanwhile the government was only available in the district centers particularly the urban areas. The offensive guerrilla warfare and political propaganda of the rebel were major strategy in the several attempted bloodshed wars with the Police Arm Force (PAF) and Nepal Army (NA) of the country in the rural areas.

These wars have carried huge damages of socio economic infrastructure, losses of war finance, valuable life and environment, socio-economic and political structural instability and internal displacement. Bista (2010) estimated 916 billion Nepalese Rupees economic damages in total. Out of total damage cost, INSEC (2005) reported more than 16, 000 deaths and more 0.1 million population displacement.

In fact, forced internal displacement due to the arrogance of the rebel and the conflict has been identified as a big humanitarian issue. Except internal displacement, the peace deal between Seven Alliance Parties in 2006 in Delhi addressed all issues. In the post conflict, the size, nature and characteristics of internal displacement has been a threat in the path of economic development and state building. Therefore, this is an important issue to be understood theoretically and empirically in sociology, economics and development. Internal displacement refers to the forceful displacement of nationals within the country. Deng (1998) defines internal displacement as “the person or group of persons are forced to leave their home in order to avoid the effects of armed conflict, situations of generalized violence and violations of human right”. In UN international law literatures, internal displacement concept has two core elements: the involuntary nature of the movement and such movement takes place within national borders.ⁱ Further, In 1992, the United Nations Secretary-General explained internally displaced

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persons as: "Persons or groups who have been forced to flee their homes suddenly or unexpectedly in large numbers, as a result of armed conflict, internal strife, systematic violations of human rights or natural or man-made disaster, and who are within the territory of their own country"ⁱⁱ. This definition reflected a range of circumstances in which the core characteristics of internal displacement – involuntary movement within borders could arise. There is empirical evidence of involuntary movement in the world. Global statistics on such movement uprooted by conflict and human rights violations. Million populations were obliged to leave their homes in Burma, Ethiopia and Iraq. Further, there were the forced evictions of minorities during the war in Bosnia or, more recently in the summer of 2005, in Zimbabwe with the home demolitions and forced removal of more than half a million people. Similarly, in Nepal, there were more than 16000 populations.

In Nepal, there are available substantial amount of literatures. The following literatures such as Centre for Economic and Social Development(CES)(2003), EU (2003), GTZ et al. (2003) and INSEC (2004) carried on human right and humanitarian aspects to the internal displacement by mentioning conflict, involuntary movement and violation of human right. However, no literatures examine this issue an economics perspective, although internally displaced people are sources of labor. In the post conflict, there were two critical situations. Agrarian rural village economy had a shortage of labor and unutilized thousands hectare agricultural land. The rural village economy would be badly disrupted in terms of production and resource utilization. Similarly, in urban economy, there would have a problem of overutilization of the scarce resources (infrastructure) and of pollution. Economic cost of the internal displacement is still unknown. Thus, the study is relevant to examine this dimension for effective management of internally displaced people.

The broad objective of this paper is to investigate internal displacement in Nepal. The specific objectives of this paper are to examine the socio-economic characteristics of internally displaced people, to assess the consumption cost of internally displaced people in district headquarters and to provide suggestions to policy from an economic perspective.

THE SCOPE OF THE STUDY

This study is concerned with internal displacement. Geographical diversity of Nepal has led to heterogeneous

displacements. As a result, the displacement can be merely categorized into internal and external displacement. Internally displaced people from the conflict areas (Rolpa, Rukum, Salyan and more than 60 district villages) migrated to District Headquarters of 75 districts of Nepal and in Kathmandu. This study used the published data of internal displaced people as the source of secondary. They were the Government of Nepal, Non-Government Organization and United Nations Development Program (UNDP). Total number of the internal displaced people was population of this study.

METHOD

Econometric Model: The household character of internal displaced people in new location due to the conflict was different in several respects: income, utility, labor time allocation, health expenditure, and cost of fear, waiting time and expectation of help. Household consumption (C) of displaced people (N) depends on wage labor income (Y_w) of households across age and sex, along with remittance (R) and non-food item consumption expenditure (CNF). Theory of Aggregate consumption states consumption is dependent on Income. It is as follows

$$C = f(Y, R, CNF, N) \dots \quad (1)$$

Regression Model

Where, α , β_0 , β_1 , β_2 and β_3 are parameters and e is random disturbance term (error term)

$\alpha > 1$ and $\beta_0, \beta_1, \beta_2$ and $\beta_3 < 1$

Source of Data Set: This study used secondary data sources of the internally displaced people and household. This data was collected by Informal Sector Service Center (INSEC) (2004). This study used secondary sources for supplementary data of Consumption, Income, Remittance, Non-food consumption and food consumption. This data was collected from Nepal Living Standard Survey 1996 and 2004 (CBS, 1996 and 2004). To supplement the data, secondary data was also collected from Nepal's Ministry of Finance and National Planning Commission.

Estimates:

Estimates of “ α ”, “ β_0 ”, “ β_1 ” “ β_2 ” and “ β_3 ”

In the data set of consumption econometric model, there are five variables in which total consumption per capita (C) is dependent variable and Non-Agricultural Income(wage income)(Y), Remittance(R),Non-food consumption per capita(CNF) and conflict induced

displacement (N). The consumption level and living standard of internal displacement (N) was generous question. In this study, we had focused on two questions:

- What would the consumption pattern of the conflict induced displacement people in urban areas to measure their living standard as effects of relocation?
- What would be input share of “ α ”, “ β_0 ”, “ β_1 ” “ β_2 ” and “ β_3 ” in Consumption behavior of the displaced people?

We used basic cross section data of these variables across five development regions (Eastern Development Region, Central Development Region, Far Western Development Region, Mid Far Western Development Region and Far Western Development Region) because the data sets covered the whole country. We used to answer the first question and estimate parameters from the data sets. Then, we could interpret the estimated parameters for the role of independent variables for consumption behavior of the displaced people.

STATUS, NATURE AND CHARACTERISTICS OF CONFLICT

The nature and characteristics of conflict in Nepal is unique. In 1992, the rebel contested in the parliament elections and won 9 parliament seats. In the mid poll of 1995, the rebel again contested in the parliament elections but lost all parliament seats. In 1996, the rebel dramatically decided to use weapon against the democratic government and the state. The decision was a seed of Nepal's conflict from 1996 to 2006. The conflict was escalated by caste, religion, class and geography, although State Machinery had strong security network. In the conflict, the rebel used guerilla techniques by using few weapons looted from the government security and children as major intelligent and potential sources of guerilla. The conflict looked like strategic game of the rebellion (IIDS, 1996).

The literature on the Nepal's conflict examines different reasons behind the conflict. There were socio-economic and political issues. Some African countries had caste issue. In Iraq, there was the conflict between Kurds and Iraqis. In Afghanistan, there was the intense political interest of Taliban behind the civil war. In Nepal, different literatures acknowledge feudal socio economic structure, discriminatory caste system, poverty and inequality. The rebel used the assumption of the large section of population oppressed and exploited from feudalism and discriminatory caste social system. The

socio-economic school of thought was a logical justification and propaganda tool of the rebellion for getting good sympathy and moral support from the people. This argument has no empirical evidences. Conversely, the political school of thought acknowledged political conflict of the rebel with the state. That thought based on the Maoism political ideology, interest and objectives of the rebel and political structure and function. The rebel used guerilla warfare and land captured as the process to be politically engaged and established in the state mechanism. The rebel had an equal opportunity to be engaged politically but they preferred the war fare against the state for political hegemony. In this case, there would be wrong strategic and operational treatments and policies of the government. Consequently, the state was ineffective to control the expansion of the rebellion activities in the rural areas, despite unexpectedly small size of the rebel with respect to geography and rural population. It is clear that the conflict was politically motivated but strategically misguided by the rebel (Hutt, 2004)

The rebel and the rebel's organization and behavior have interesting characteristics and contradiction. Brahmin who are social hegemony and feudal class having political and religion control are top rank of rebellion leaders. For example: Pushpa Kamal Dahal Prachanda, Baburam Battarai, Dina Nath Sharma, Prabhakar Sharma, etc. In 1996, these leaders had mission and action to eliminate the social hegemony and feudalism of Brahmin. Structure and function of the rebel were themselves contradictory. However, the rebellion army was mostly ethnic and low caste people in which the figure was dominated by the school children and girls captured from the rural government schools of Nepal. These children were ideologically motivated in the rebel's political school and strategically trained by Ex-Army personnel. This offensive front had physical risk and cost of life, meanwhile in the strategic front; there were almost central leaders as central command having less risky but higher incentive (INSEC, 2005). INSEC (2005) reported ethnic and lower caste people's death causalities in the war more than top rebellion leaders and dominated in 16 thousand. The cost of the war was the blood of the oppressed people (ethnic and lower caste).

The rebel to tackle the security circumstances of the state and the attitude of the people in general uses different major warfare weapons: Guerilla, Intelligence

and Propaganda. In Nepal, the rebel that had limited war resources and small size of the rebel adopted Mao's Guerilla warfare in the war with the state. In 1996, they quickly and vastly attacked the police office of different Village Development in hilly regions by using propaganda. In Rukum, they killed the police and captured traditional weapons and ammunition without any causality. In addition, they were able to attack Nepal army camp in 2000. Thus, the small rebellion group was able to get the expected outcomes with limited war resources (weapons and strategies)(Hutt, 2004).

It is said that intelligence and propaganda are an important composite warfare components as well as national security for collecting and analyzing categorical information for offensive and defensive planning and decisions. The propaganda is an important tool of physical war. The rebel recruited specially school students and different local peoples from different professions for guerilla warfare. In 1997, the rebel kept ambushing police vans in Mugalin road. The children were watching the police van's movement and activities for reporting to the command. In addition, every activity and movements in the target point of the police station was invisibly and unexpectedly collected before offensive guerilla action for identifying loopholes, weakness and careless of the state machinery particularly security forces (IIDS, 1997).

Expected outcomes depend on strategy preferred by players in the war or the game. In the war of Nepal (between 1996 and 2005), strategy of the rebel and the security determined whether the war would be extreme or not. The rebel played strictly dominated strategy of propaganda, which enforced the state to be defensive publicly, although the state had well-organized intelligence and security forces. In political front, the rebel divided the constitutional forces into the King and the democratic government. The democratic force was also further divided into Democratic Party and Communist party. Left human rights groups, lawyers and Journalists were organized and mobilized to make propaganda. Thus, the rebel was successful to make rural villages into the rebel's state. Subsequently, the anti-rebel group (higher caste and elite people) were easily displaced.

CONFLICT INDUCED INTERNAL DISPLACEMENT

Internal Displacement is a result of the conflict. Most conflicted countries such as Kosovo, Rwanda, Sudan and Iraq had a large number of internally displaced people.

In Nepal, there was a large number of the people displaced by the rebellion and violence. The large number of socio-economic elite and higher caste people undesirably migrated from the native villages and houses in the district headquarters to avoid insecurity, threats and violence. Teachers, to save their own life, escaped from the rebellion, as did farmers, traders, and industrialists. Farmers were used as human transport to carrying arms and weapons, foods, and dead bodies. Traders and Industrialists were threatened for money demands for their activities. Similarly, the rebellion had a strategy to recruit children in their People's Army. In order to avoid the rebellion's torture and stress, almost households involuntary moved in the district headquarters of Nepal for keeping far away the children from the conflict. Thus, there is a positive relationship between conflict and internal displacement.

The internal displacement issue has far reaching socio-economic impacts on different segments of the society and life. Theoretically and empirically, there are a large number of literatures relating socio economic effect of internal displacement. In general, almost displaced people of the conflicted rural areas had mental problem and physical damages. They needed medical expenditures. They had additional relocation cost for stranger's settlements. Sources of income in the new location were affected from their lower productivity and lack of employment opportunities.

The literatures acknowledge economic effects of internal displacement but we cannot reach conclusion for generalization in case of Nepal. Few studies have investigated economic cost of internal displaced people, the society and the country. However, there is still mystery.

INTERNAL DISPLACEMENT IN NEPAL

The internal displacement is not a new phenomenon in Nepal. This argument has strong empirical evidence supported by Centre Bureau of Statistics (CBS). CBS (2011) shows annual internal displacement due to natural disasters such as flooding and earth-quakes. This type of displacement is generally accepted and prepared by the government of Nepal.

So far concerning internal displacement due to violence and conflict, Nepal and the Nepalese had got new experience. There was a confusion to perceive that issue for making perspectives of the state. Human right literature considers it humanitarian crisis and human rights issue. Political literatures commented it political

issue. Very few literatures talked about economic issues. There was no clear understanding about these issues so that there were unresponsive policy decisions and institutional behaviors problem.

Institutional and Policy to understand and manage CIDP issue are required. Surprisingly, Nepal had not the relevant institutional and policy deal from 1996 to 2006 because of a lack of policy perspective. In central level, there was not proper agency meanwhile village level; there was administration of the state such as police and Village Development Committee. Human rights NGOs and INGOs had been working in that regard at local and national levels during the conflict. However, the state had established the state institution and policy in the post peace deal but still, there was not rehabilitation of village level unit of police and local administration. There was identified the operational mechanism gap. Its consequence was ineffective policy and program efforts to address CIDP (MOF, 2011). So, the positive and effective policy implication would be a big issue.

There are issues of validity and reliability of information and data sets of conflict induced internal displaced people (CIDP). Institutional constraints limit the institutional tracking CIDP. A fraction of internally displaced people voluntarily reported their information in the district administration office for getting financial support. The remaining fraction was rigid and silent in that regard, despite need of financial support. In addition, the other fraction of displaced people who had information but did not have high needs had not recorded their information. Data of CIDP if was not cross-checked and properly tracked, there would be a problem of reliability and validity. Different studies of CBS, CSWC and INSEC found data inconsistent. For example, the Asian Development Bank (2004) estimated the highest number of displaced people at 2.4 million, 0.35-0.4 million in CSWC (2004) and 0.3-0.6 million estimated by Finance Ministry of Nepal (2005). ILO/CWIN (2005) estimated 40000 internal displaced people followed by 50000-70000 of IDP group (2008) and 50000 in INSEC (2004).

Nature and Characteristics of Internal Displaced People: The nature and characteristics of internal displaced people are heterogeneous. ICDP data of INSEC (2004) can be found four fractions of ICDP. The rebel categorized the first fraction of ICDP into their first foe (higher caste, rich people, educated people, civil servant family and the follower of democratic forces). They dealt

this fraction as intelligence of the state. They threatened often these people for extortion, killing and abduction. For security and safety life, these people disappeared from their own places by leaving fixed assets to district centers. Uninterested ethnic groups and low caste in the rebellion activities, the second fraction silently disappeared from the rural areas with their family and children to avoid the possible insecurity of the rebellion. In the third fraction, the supporters of the rebellion who had a fear of the security personal disappeared from their home village to new location because the security personal threaten them badly by saying spying of the rebellion without categorical information Human Right (INSEC,2004). In the fourth fraction, those people who were victims of the conflict between the security and the rebellion because of location moved out from the village because of psychological fear. Heterogeneous CIDP had reached a uniform decision of relocation from the village for maximizing peace and family life cycle in the constraint of strange place, network and market (INSEC, 2004).

The people who are internally displaced have many responsible variables. There are strong empirical evidences. Some literatures have listed some responsible variables. For example, Human Rights Report (2004) has identified five major variables from violence, such as direct effects of the violence, effects caused by the behavior of the warring parties, the difficulties caused by the war strategies and the difficulties created in maintaining daily life. In sum, we can get large number of control variables to internal displacement such as: violence, threat, extortion, abduction, and risk of victim, torture, fear, destruction of house, no work environment and social security.

The internal displaced peoples have heterogeneous reasons to relocate themselves with respect to different in wealth, literacy, household size, number of children and age factors. It is supported by empirical evidences. For example, the Case of Rebellion and Security Cross fire associates at Jate Secondary School of Morang district where there was an incident of armed conflict between security and rebellion and school children were victims of the violence in which more than six students were injured and three students were killed. Such kinds of violence were the cause behind the internal displacement (Naya Patrika, 2010). The case of physical threat and torture relates with school teacher of Saraswati Primary School, Salari in Rukum where the

hand of teacher Narjit Basneyat was cut down by rebellion against his denial to be supporter of the rebellion in 1996. It controls his displacement decision and behavior (Naya Patrika, 2010). The case of rebellion tax on the local business men, entrepreneurs, teachers and civil servants relates to the rebellion strong hold places, so called base area and the rebellion's government. Then, this group of people left the village for security, safety and life. In accordance with Human Right (2004), the family of Basanta Shrestha had quit his village at 11 in the night upon failing to submit a sum of Rs 150,000 as demanded by the rebellion and fearing physical actions against him. In addition, the rebellion ordered the villagers to send one person for their rebellion militia. Then, many families had moved away from these rebellion holding areas, despite the native place.

Naturally, violence controls relocation decision and behavior, along with other variables. Table No-1 provides major drivers behind the internal displacement. In column one, there are indicators such as violence, threat, torture, extortion, abduction, risk of victim, fear and destruction. In second column, probability of these individual reasons behind in the internal displacement decision, although it is hard to reach in decision to the family and households. In third column, there is preference of households in which violence, threat, torture, extortion and abduction receive more preference in rank as direct effect from the conflict.

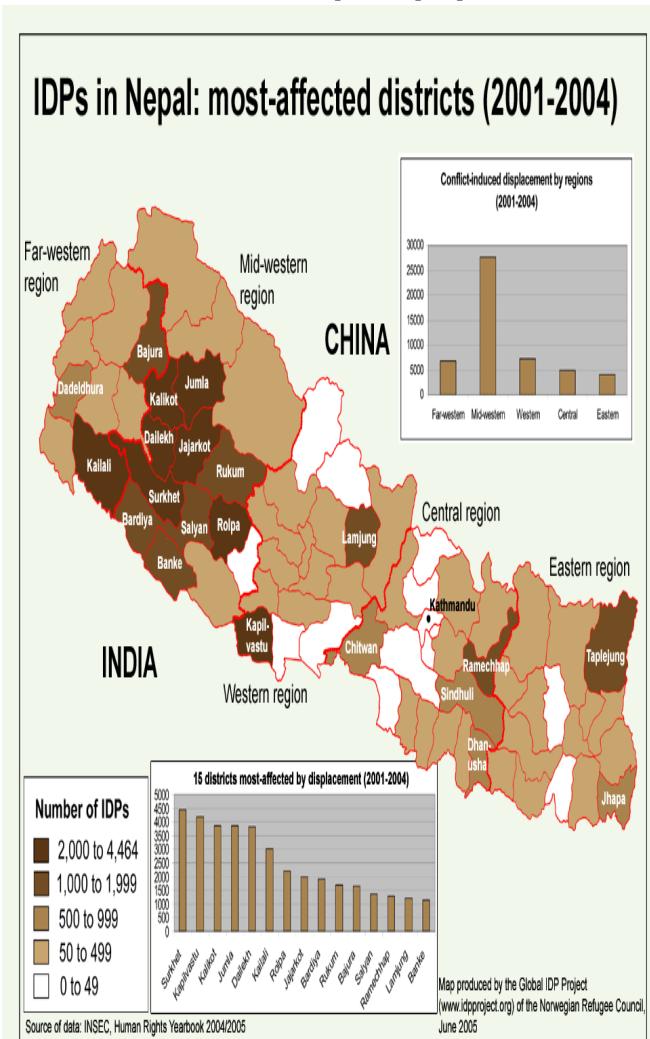
Table 1. Reasons and Preferences.

Indicators	Probability (%)	Preference
Violence	31	I
Threat	17	II
Torture	14	III
Extortion	10	IV
Abduction	7	V
Risk of victim	7	VI
No Environment	7	VII
Fear	3	VIII
Destruction	3	IX

Source: compiled from the conflict data of INSEC (2004).

Flow of Internal Displaced people: The internal displaced people and households behave rationally on risk aversion and move towards a strange location where they can adverse risk from their identity through risk aversion (secrecy of identity, location and household characters). Such behavior can be found in

the flow of the displaced people in Nepal. The internal displaced people hid their identity and location to the security and the rebellion for peace, security, safety and free from all these conflict variables. Assuming that rural areas were risk of conflict, this rational behavior was controlled by location, size of population, opportunity and security. There were left only district headquarters, Terai Urban areas and Kathmandu. We can find in this regard of risk aversion behavior of the displaced people despite ignorance of distance and cost of risk aversion. We can find its overall picture of the displaced people flow and concentration of displaced people.



Displacement Origin Scenario: The picture (IDMC, 2009) provides origin of this displaced family and household in Nepal. It reveals the whole Nepal's origin places of the displaced family, which also indicate intensity of the conflict in Nepal. In development region wise, Nepal can be seen five development regions unit in

which Mid-Western Development Region is the origin of the displaced people. In development regions, there are district units. In the map, there are four colors: brown dark, brown, light brown and white color. Brown dark is major source followed by brown and light brown district units; meanwhile white color is minor sources. This concentration of displaced people origin provides intensity of the conflict because they have mutual exclusive relationship.

Destination of Internal Displacement: Destination is a risk aversion behavior of the displaced people. In Nepal, they preferred several destinations such as Kathmandu, Lalitpur, Sunsari, Banke, Kanchanpur, Morang, Kailai, Kaverpalanchowk, Rolpa, Kalikot, Jhapa, lamjung, Rukum and Surkhet. These destinations can be categorized into two groups on the basis of distances from the origin places: far destination (Kathmandu and Lalitpur) and near destination (Sunsari, Banke, Kanchanpur, Morang,

Table 2. Mean and Standard Deviations: Econometric Model.

Variables	Mean	Std. Deviation	N
Total Consumption (C)	19313.42	9804.51	5
Non Ag. Income	7047.40	608.61	5
Remittance	1688.24	761.75	5
Nonfood consumption	7093.68	3141.12	5
Displacement	10071.20	9881.06	5

Table-3 presents the results of multiple regression econometric model estimations of dependent variable total consumption per capita(C) on five independent variables, Y, R, C_{nf} and N. In the model there are four parameters such as

Table 3. Results of Regression of C, Y, R, C_{nf} and N

Dependent variable: Total Consumption per capita (C)					
Repressor	1	2	3	4	5
Constant	17914.6(0.0)				
Non Ag. Income		0.148(0.0)			
Remittance			0.20(0.0)		
Nonfood consumption				0.907(0.0)	
Displacement					-0.006(0.0)

DISCUSSIONS AND RESULT

From above results of multiple regression model estimation, there are sufficient and necessary evidences on consumption pattern and livelihood situation of the displaced people across five development regions of Nepal. Initial consumption expenditure of the displaced people needs Rs 17,914.6 per capita, when they migrate to new and strange location particularly in district headquarters cost. It means possible declining utility of food consumption leading critical livelihood in the requirement

Kailai, Kaverpalanchowk, Rolpa, Kalikot, Jhapa, lamjung, Rukum and Surkhet). Empirical literatures and statistics show first strong and strict choice and preference of risk aversion of the displaced people to Kathmandu in comparison with near destinations, although cost of this far and long distance risk aversion to the displaced people is higher (IDMC, 2009).

RESULTS AND FINDINGS

Mean and standard deviation of key variables (Table-2) are in econometric model estimation. In column 1, there are presented five key variables such as Total Consumption(c) as dependent variable and Non Agricultural Income(Y), Remittance(R), Nonfood consumption (C_{nf}) and Displacement (N) as Independent variables. Standard Deviation of these variables from mean can be seen but it represents this cross section data.

“ β_0 ” (marginal change of nonagricultural income), “ β_1 ” (marginal change in remittance), “ β_2 ” (marginal change in Nonfood consumption) and “ β_3 ” (marginal change in displacement people).

and Kathmandu City. This consumption expenditure is quiet higher than average national per capita consumption of 2004 in accordance with Nepal Living Standard Survey 1996 and 2004. Its reasons may be increasing more nonfood consumption expenditure for health maintenance of the displaced people instead change in food consumption and costlier nonfood consumption items such as health expenditure, room rent, travel cost and other basic utilities of per capita consumption expenditure and changing consumption pattern. How much critical living standard is

a query but it requires further study for rehabilitation and assistance policy implication.

In the results of econometric models, R^2 , regression coefficient is 0.993, which means consumption per capita of the displaced people is explained by independent variables Y, R, C_{NF} and N. Consumption of the displaced people will increase 1 when marginal change in non-food consumption is 0.907. To meet 1 consumption level, the displaced people's non-agricultural wage (labor wage) and remittance are needed at 0.148 and 0.20 marginal change. In case of displaced people, its marginal change is not significant. This study raises a question about expectation of non-wage income because literature provides evidence of huge cost of strange and new location, cost of employment information access, cost of travel and waiting time. It is quiet difficult to access non-wage income. In the urban labor market, there is dominance of skilled and qualified labor but these internal displaced people are rural and farmer. It is certain that inferior labor quality of the internal displaced people doesn't have significant shares in urban market labor. There is a question of non-agricultural income in urban labor market. In addition, the conflict induced displacement people have problems with fear and physical problem, which motivate them for exploring and getting non-agricultural employment. Besides, they are also old age issue who cannot work like as young.

Remittances have also contributed to the consumption of the displaced people. If not in some fraction of displaced people, living in new location and strange place indicates critical situation from several respects. This needs further study what is actual critical situation of displaced life.

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ⁱ Convention Relating to the Status of Refugees (28 July 1951), Article 1.

ⁱⁱ United Nations Commission on Human Rights, *Analytical Report of the Secretary-General on Internally Displaced Persons*, UN Doc. E/CN.4/1992/23 (14 February 1992), para. 17.