

# Exploring the prospects of Traditional Alcohol Making as a Sustainable Rural Livelihood: A case of Burunchuli, Lalitpur

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## Abstract

Alcohol making is a predominant economic activity in Burunchuli village that constitutes a major source of income for the villagers. Because of the limited availability of economic opportunities, resources and low level of education; both male and female are involved in alcohol making. But, the production and sales of alcohol at home and selling it in market is regarded illegal in Nepal. Thus, frequent security checks and raids are the major legal obstacles in the villagers means of earning. This research, with an objective to understand the existing scenario of traditional alcohol making being practiced in Burunchuli looks into the possibility to assess their livelihood outcomes, so that area of improvement in practice can be figured out. The dangers of excess alcohol consumption and the impact it can have on personal health and family status are well known, but it is important to highlight the real potential for rural small-scale business offered by brewing activity. Achieving public health goals only, while avoiding the economic and social consequences clearly presents a paradox to the policymakers. Also, the villagers' dependency on firewood and traditional cook stove indicating their inaccessibility of clean energy technology has also been studied based upon the environment and social sustainability perspective.

## Keywords

Traditional alcohol making, Sustainable Rural Livelihood, Liquor policy, Social acceptance

## 1. Introduction

Alcohol use is a part of many cultural, religious and social practices, and provides perceived pleasure to many users. The Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) aim to provide a more equitable and sustainable future for all people by 2030, ensuring that no one is left behind. While the agenda's goals have health targets on substance abuse and addressing noncommunicable diseases, and also reducing alcohol-related harm. However, we cannot deny the fact that it (traditional alcohol) is connected with culture, livelihood, self-reliance and together with originality, so it should be organized. According to WHO Global Status Report on Alcohol 2004; "it is important for the government to gain effective control and monitor the overall informal alcohol production, marketing and distribution from the perspective of public health and welfare" (WHO, 2004). Thus, the production and selling alcohol without license is regarded illegal by Nepal Government, and there are frequent security checks and raids as the major

obstacle and there exists many loopholes in production and sales of home brewed alcohol. Due to the strict licensing policy, and limited availability of resources and low level of education villagers of most of the rural Nepal have resorted to illegally producing alcohol and selling it secretly in the village pubs as a means of earning living. Thus, the problem statement of the research is; "The inhabitants of Burunchuli are continuously looking for a resilient livelihood and they are practicing traditional alcohol making. But they are living in a dismal economic state despite being close to capital city where economic opportunities are expanding."

The study is important as it has studied the necessity to explore the constraining factors of social (socio-political, community and market) acceptance to realize traditional alcohol making practice as a means of sustainable rural livelihood. The study is also focused on the comprehensive study to understand the context specific issues and challenges to make any effective rural livelihood as a means of sustainable development. It has also explored the possible



**Figure 1:** Why home brewed liquor into the mainstream market?

intervention in the institutional mechanisms to review the policy on the strict regulation by the Nepal Government in the production and selling of home brewed liquor in Nepal. Different business models have also been targeted to study for the successful market penetration.

## 2. Study Area

Burunchuli village lies in ward-number 7 of Godawari municipality in Lalitpur District, Nepal. It is a highland village, located in the southern slope of Anandaban hills in the south-eastern part of Kathmandu valley. Its altitudinal extent varies between 1400 to 2000 meters above the main sea level. Many perennial springs originate in this highland area and flows downwards in the catchment area of Bagmati River located at a distance of around 2.8 km west. In order to restore the declining forest from rapid degradation, ‘the community forest program’ was started and different community forest consumer group was formed all over the Nepal in 1980s. Since then, the people of this village have shifted to agricultural activity as their major occupation for sustaining their livelihoods. The people are primarily farmers now. Before that the local community was mainly dependent on the forest resources of this area for their livelihoods.

Most of these highlands are covered with rocky soil unsuitable for cultivation. So, most of the highland areas are covered with shrub land and forest. However, the sloppy areas around the Burunchuli village are cultivated making terraces, where crops are grown annually. Corn, rice, millet, wheat, beans, mustard, potato, vegetables, etc. are the major crops of the village. However, this subsistence agriculture practice is not sustainable for a whole year and, also

the increasing liberalization process has made agricultural activity unsuitable for most farming households. Besides, the growing population could not be absorbed in this traditional occupation due to limited cultivable land area.

Demographically, Burunchuli is a homogeneous village of Tamang community. Majority of the people are Buddhists with some Hindus. Tamang community has a long tradition of consuming alcoholic liquors such as raksi and chyang, especially during cultural and religious festivals and social gatherings which reflects their ancestral culture, their social life style and their means of income. Tamang community people need ethnic beverage in every phase of their life; marriage ceremony, funeral rites, worshipping, cultivation, harvest season, festivals, etc. None of these rituals are complete without the use of liquors. Traditionally all the households of Burunchuli village produced these beverages for domestic purposes. Thus, this traditional alcohol production which is an influential factor of their life and culture has evolved over the ages as their livelihood skills which is still a predominant activity and a major source of income in most of the households. Naturally, it is the women who prepares those alcoholic beverages at their homes. And they have learnt this indigenous skill from the elderly women family members. Earlier brewing was totally a cultural activity. But now these alcoholic drinks are the major source of economic support in many of the poor households in this village. These alcoholic liquors produced here are considered to be good, because they are produced for their own home consumptions without using any chemicals, preservatives and additives and also, they are quite cheaper than the factory products for the locals and other low-income consumers.

## 3. Objective

The main objective of the research is to understand the existing scenario of traditional alcohol making being practiced in Burunchuli; and assess their livelihood outcomes so that area of improvement can be figured out. The specific objectives to achieve the main objectives are:

1. To identify the problems in social acceptance of the traditional alcohol making that has been hindering effective production and sales.
2. To understand the need and importance of



**Figure 2:** Sustainable development Goals(SDG)-15

traditional alcohol production as the livelihood practice among the marginalized community group.

3. To study the existing case areas of local beverages production business practices in Nepal and around the world.

And based on these objectives, the research questions are:

1. What is the existing scenario of ethnic alcohol beverages business in Nepal?
2. What are the issues and challenges existing to mainstream the traditional local alcohol in the active market along the international branded beverages?
3. How can different business model canvas be incorporated for developing traditional local alcohol making as the sustainable rural livelihood?

#### 4. Research methodology

In this research, the investigator has little control over the events of a contemporary phenomenon of home brewed liquor making practice within a real-life context of poor and marginalized Tamang community, thus the research is conducted using case study research methodology and is a social science research. The ontological stance of the study is that the current local alcohol production and sales has low economic returns and improvement on existing practice can enhance their beverage sales business to uplift the socio-economic life of the Tamang communities of Burunchuli. Direct observation, questionnaire surveys and key informant interviews has been used as methods for the data collection. The research addresses the 4 goals of the SDG-15.

#### 5. Literature Review

### 5.1 History of alcohol in Nepal

Alcohol use is closely related with the caste system of Nepal. Many people foster the use of alcohol beverage according to their social, religious and cultural traditions. The people of Mangoloid origin used alcohol for the purpose of rituals and on religious occasion, as well as for social drinking during festivals and special occasion like birth and death.

### 5.2 Types of liquor consumed in Nepal

At present the people of existing Nepali society consume three types of liquor prepared by three different techniques:

- Traditional liquors
- Local distilleries liquors
- Imported liquors

### 5.3 Tamang community and alcohol

Tamang community has a long tradition of consuming alcoholic liquors such as raksi and chyang, especially during cultural and religious festivals and social gatherings. The festivals celebrated by them are Maghe Sakranti, Chaite Dashain, Baisakh Purnima, Bada Dashain, Tihar and Loshar. They also celebrate Dewali. And the major social rituals observed by them are Births, Chhewar, marriage, Budho pasni and death rites. Tamang community people need ethnic beverage in every phase of their life; marriage ceremony, funeral rites, worshipping, cultivation, harvest season, festivals, etc. None of these rituals are complete without the use of liquors. Thus, this traditional alcohol production which is an influential factor of their life and culture has evolved over the ages as their livelihood skills which is still a predominant activity and a major source of income in most of the Tamang households. Naturally, it is the women who prepares those alcoholic beverages at their homes. And they have learnt this indigenous skill from the elderly women family members. Earlier brewing was totally a cultural activity. But now these alcoholic drinks are the major source of economic support in many of the poor households in the rural areas. These alcoholic liquors produced here are considered to be good, because they are produced for their own home consumptions without using any chemicals, preservatives and additives and also, they are quite cheaper than the factory products for the locals and other low-income consumers.

#### **5.4 WHO Global Status Report on Alcohol**

According to WHO Global Status Report on Alcohol 2004; “it is important for the government to gain effective control and monitor the overall informal alcohol production, marketing and distribution from the perspective of public health and welfare” (WHO, 2004).

- Effective control and oversight over informal alcohol production and distribution.
- Licensing and inspection of production small factory or of full-scale industrial production, is an important means of eliminating adulterants
- Health benefits from replacing cottage-produced with industrially-produced alcohol in terms of the purity of the product.
- Traditionally produced alcoholic beverages may potentially carry the benefits of having a lower alcohol content,
- Providing local employment opportunities.
- Preserving values of the local culture (which may or may not promote lower levels of alcohol consumption).

Thus, the need of the technical intervention in the pre and post production of the ethnic liquors is very important and also the need of a well-established official regulation to standardize the quality of the final product based on the health and sanitation factors along with the branding and marketing strategies. Thus, for the commercialization of these ethnic based liquors into the mainstream market; scientific and technological aspects of ethnic alcohol production plays very important role.

#### **5.5 Liquor Act 2031**

The manufacture of alcoholic beverage for selling is highly regulated by the government in Nepal. Madira Act, 2031; condemns the production of local alcohol beverages for sales without license as illegal. The licensing rule extends such that it is possible to produce small quantities for own consumption but not for sale. Recently, the production of home-made liquor in the prescribed amount up to 6 times a year for personal usage in festivals, rituals and culture, is allowed in Nepal. The newly adopted rules mentions that the production of 5 liters of distilled home

brewed liquor and 10 liters of non-distilled liquors can be done.

The government is very strict with its regulation and conducts frequent home raids, confiscating and dumping large quantity of home brewed liquors. Liquor Act 2031 forbids any individuals or families to sell liquor, meaning any communities in Nepal cannot brew alcohol for the selling purpose based on the legal sanctions. The Nepal Governments policy towards brewing liquor is not favorable. However there has been frequent calls for the amendments on the policy based on the various research and income generating possibilities. The government of the Federal Democratic Republic of Nepal, has adopted a new policy to coherently and evidence-based regulate sales of alcohol products in the country of 26.8 million inhabitants.

#### **5.6 Sustainable livelihood**

In order to get the overview about the concept of sustainable rural livelihood, the article by Robert Chambers and Gordon Conway (1991) was explored which defined livelihood in terms of three main aspects; people, their capacities, and their means of living, including food, income, and assets, was read to acquire a better understanding of the notion of sustainable rural livelihood (tangible and intangible). The three main sustainability parameters are also discussed in the essay. When a livelihood promotes and preserves the local and global assets on which it depends, both now and in the future, it is termed environmentally sustainable, which has a multiplier effect on other livelihoods. Similarly, a livelihood becomes socially sustainable when it is able to avoid or absorb external stress and shocks while maintaining its livelihood.

Ian Scoones of Institute of Development Studies (IDS) has proposed the modified definition of livelihood as; “A livelihood comprises the capabilities, assets (including both material and social resources) and activities required for a means of living. A livelihood is sustainable when it can cope with and recover from stresses and shocks, maintain or enhance its capabilities and assets, while not undermining the natural resource base.” This revised definition of livelihood removes the need that a livelihood be sustainable by providing net benefits to other livelihoods. In light of these developments, the British Department for International Development (DFID) has adopted the above concept to examine rural

livelihood sustainability in terms of three elements: Institutional Processes and Organizational Structures, as well as Livelihood Resources, Livelihood Strategies, and Institutional Processes and Organizational Structures (Krantz, 2001). Similarly, one of the key discoveries of Krantz's (2001) sustainable livelihood approach gained from poverty is that the poor themselves frequently know their position and needs best, and so must be involved in the formulation of policies and projects aimed at improving their lives.

### 5.7 Sustainable livelihood approaches

The SLA has become increasingly significant in recent development projects aimed at reducing poverty and vulnerability in rural communities where certain agricultural livelihoods are the predominant source of income. Development agencies and non-governmental organizations (NGOs) use it to gain a better knowledge of the natural resource management system. By acknowledging the seasonal and cyclical complexity of livelihood strategies, the livelihood approach aims to improve rural development policy and practice. It takes a broader view of people's livelihoods, looking beyond the income-generating activities in which they participate (Mondal M., Ali, Sarma, and Alam, 2012). The three perspectives on poverty support SLA. To begin with, there is no link between economic progress and the alleviation of poverty. Second, poverty is manifested not only as a result of a low income, but also as a result of other factors such as poor health, illiteracy, a lack of social services, and vulnerability. Third, because the poor are the best informed about their position and demands, they must be included as significant players in the design of policies and development projects.

A livelihood is made up of the capabilities, assets, and activities required to make a living. A livelihood is sustainable if it can withstand and recover from stresses and shocks, as well as retain or improve its capabilities and assets in the present and future, without jeopardizing the natural resource base. Five essential indicators are relevant for assessing sustainable livelihoods, according to Scoones (1998):

- a) Poverty reduction,
- b) Well-being and capabilities,
- c) Livelihood adaptation,

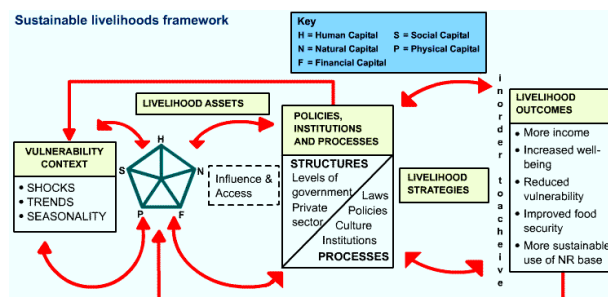


Figure 3: Sustainable Livelihood Framework, DFID (2000)

- d) Vulnerability and resilience, and
- e) Natural resource base sustainability

The sustainable livelihoods framework aids in considering the things to which the poor may be particularly vulnerable, as well as the assets and resources that enable them to thrive and survive, as well as the policies and institutions that affect their livelihoods (Mondal M., Ali, Sarma, and Alam, 2012).

### 5.8 Elements of the DFID Framework

DFID distinguishes five categories of assets (or capital) - natural, social, human, physical and financial. In aquaculture, natural assets include firewood and water sources; physical capital includes physical infrastructures, human capital includes knowledge of traditional alcohol making culture, financial capital includes income from selling these alcohols, and social capital includes the use of farmlands, forest and water resources for traditional alcohol (grains inputs, fiberwoods, water collection) by other community households. The framework provides a way of thinking through the different influences (constraints and opportunities) on livelihoods, and ensuring that important factors are not neglected. The framework shows how, in differing contexts, sustainable livelihoods are achieved through access to a range of livelihood assets which are combined in the pursuit of different livelihood strategies. Central to the framework is the analysis of the range of formal and informal organizational and institutional factors that influence sustainable livelihood outcomes (Mondal M., Ali, Sarma, and Alam, 2012).

## 6. Data Collection

## Exploring the prospects of Traditional Alcohol Making as a Sustainable Rural Livelihood: A case of Burunchuli, Lalitpur

Materials required:

Rice *kanika*, *Marcha* (Yeast), fire wood, Water.

Calculation:

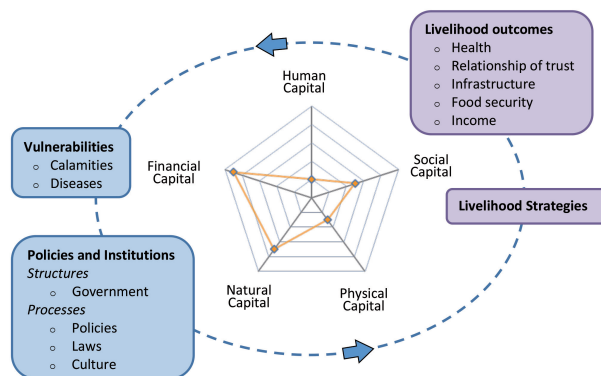
Material	Quantity	Cost
Rice Kanika	30 kg	Rs. 1250
Fire Wood	40-50 kg	Rs. 500
Yeast		Rs. 500
Water		Free
Total investment		Rs. 2250
Production	45 ltrs (75 manas)	Rs 5250 @ Rs 70 per mana

Total profit at one time = Rs 3000

Alcohol is prepared about 2-4 times a month (differs in different households)

Therefore total income in a month by making alcohol = Rs. 11,000.

**Figure 4:** Cost of one production unit



**Figure 5:** Sustainable livelihood approach

### 6.1 Current practice of alcohol production process

The commonly practiced alcohol making processes ingredients used and preparation area was explored through direct observation and interaction with the people involved in this activity. Mainly two types of home brewed alcoholic beverages are in practice in this Burunchuli village; distilled (raksi) and non-distilled (jaand). Mostly rice is used as main ingredients for making alcohol; however, alcohol can be made from wheat, barley, maize, and fruits as well. Production of alcohol followed long held traditions. Participants listed both personal and community benefits from the alcohol making. People consumed more alcohol at special occasions and festivals. The production of local alcohol carries a special importance for women. They put most effort and time for making alcohol.

The production process of alcohol, ingredients used and fuel type was similar in all households. Over the time some changes have occurred in material used for making alcohol like distillation vessels and yeasts, but the overall process still remains the same. In all the houses, brewing of liquor is done in the backyard of the house. Almost all the houses depend on firewood for cooking and stacks of firewood were observed in almost every house. LPG is a higher end commodity for the villagers.

### 6.2 Alcohol making cost

From the analysis based on the table, it is clearly evident that the process is profit oriented as seen from the cost benefit analysis here.

### 6.3 Elements of Rural Livelihood in Burunchuli

Different elements of Rural Livelihood present in Burunchuli was studied, explored, observed and analyzed.

5 capitals of livelihoods were also carefully studied and recorded from the case study area. Based upon those livelihood capitals different livelihood strategies were studied which had direct impact to their livelihood outcomes as shown in the figure.

### 6.4 People

Demographically, Burunchuli is a homogeneous village of Tamang community. Exposed and marginalized ethnic group. Farmland is limited. Corn, rice, millet, beans, mustard, potato, vegetables, etc. are the major crops of the village. Subsistence agriculture alone does not generate enough income. People depend on the other economic activities to sustain their livelihood. The male members of the family work (low paid jobs) either in local sweet shops in Patan or as laborer in construction sites and crusher factory or as drivers.

### 6.5 Capabilities

The traditional alcohol production which is an influential factor of their life and culture has evolved over the ages as their livelihood skills which is still a predominant activity and a major source of income in most of the households. Naturally, it is the women who prepares those alcoholic beverages at their homes. And they have learnt this indigenous skill from the elderly women family members. Earlier brewing was totally a cultural activity. But now these alcoholic drinks are the major source of economic support in many of the poor households in this village. The

village is youth less as a result of out migration trend. Most of the village youths are staying in city Centre in Kathmandu and Patan in search of employment and better amenities.

### 6.6 Assets: Tangible Resources

- It is a highland village, located in the southern slope of Anandaban hills in the south-eastern part of Kathmandu valley.
- Its altitudinal extent varies between 1400 to 2000 meters above the main sea level.
- Many perennial springs originate in this highland area and flows downwards in the catchment area of Bagmati River located at a distance of around 2.8 km west.
- Forest Resources: Ananda Ban, Deurali Pakha Danda, Jureli Danda
- Water Resources: many perennial spring rivers, water collection unit at Deurali Pakha Ban and water storage tank and ward office, Devchuli - 9

### 6.7 Assets: Intangible Resources

Claims and Access

- Manegaun village inside Burunchuli
- Religious culture and tradition of the Tamang people
- Social cohesion, livelihood practice
- Dependent economy

### 6.8 Stress

- Population growth, Illiteracy and poverty
- Inflation and globalization
- Limited farmlands
- Subsistence farming practice
- Lack of infrastructures for improved agriculture practice.
- Limited self-sufficiency economic activities.

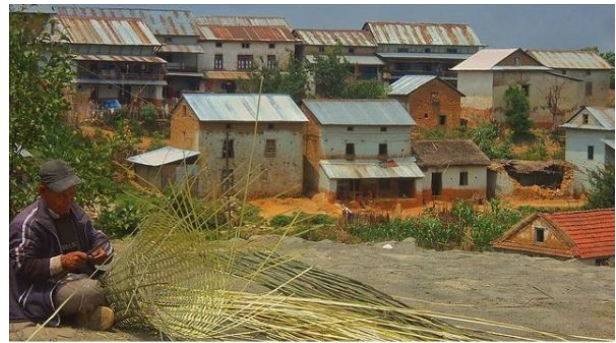


Figure 6: Burunchuli Manegaun before EQ 2015



Figure 7: Burunchuli Manegaun after EQ 2015

### 6.9 Shock

- Gorkha earthquake 2015
- National blockade
- Covid -19
- Aftermath of the lockdown

Different institutional processes, policies and projects of different Government as well as non-government organizations in Burunchuli have been studied for the identification of barriers and opportunities to a Sustainable rural livelihood. One of the major noticeable works is the Community Regrowth Program whose main objective was to rebuild permanent housing after the EQ 2015.

In their report, they have mentioned a small note about the local alcohol making as an informal business for livelihoods. Since it's an illegal business, they completely ignored that facet of the livelihood practice in the village during their project period.

## 7. Finding and Analysis



Figure 8: Burunchuli Manegaun after reconstruction



Fig. 1. The triangle of social acceptance of renewable energy innovation.

Figure 9: 3 elements of social acceptance

### 7.1 Social Acceptance of Home Brewed Traditional Liquor

Factors, that impact the social acceptance of the traditional alcohol making as a sustainable rural livelihood practice was carefully studied and analyzed from the three concepts of social acceptance.

The home brewing activity addresses gender empowerment and have direct positive social impact in the family welfare.

“SARASWATI TAMANG, A RESIDENT OF MANEGAUN, BURUNCHULI VILLAGE IS 42 YEARS OLD. SHE HAS A HUSBAND, ONE DAUGHTER AND ONE SON. HER FAMILY HAS ONLY 1.5 ROPANIS OF LAND PROPERTY SHARED IN BETWEEN 3 FAMILIES WITHIN HER HUSBAND’S SIDE. THE PRODUCTION OF THE FARMLAND IS HARDLY SUFFICIENT FOR 2 MONTHS. HER HUSBAND IS A DRUNKARD AND DOESN’T HAVE STABLE SOURCE OF FAMILY INCOME. SARASWATI TAMANG HAS DOUBLE ROLES AT THE SAME TIME IN THE HOUSEHOLD. SHE IS INVOLVED IN BOTH

HOUSEHOLD CHORES AND WAGE-EARNING ACTIVITIES. WAGE EARNING ACTIVITY DEMANDS MORE PHYSICAL STRESS THUS LATELY SHE HAS DISCARDED IT. SHE IS ALSO MAKING LIVING FROM LIQUOR BREWING ACTIVITIES IN HER OWN HOUSE. SHE MENTIONED THAT THE LIQUOR BREWING BUSINESS IS PROFITABLE AND PROVIDES HER ACCESS TO THE DIRECT HAND TO HAND CASH EARNING. SHE SPENDS THE DIRECT CASH INCOME COMING IN HER HANDS ON FAMILY WELFARE AND TO IMPROVE THEIR LIVELIHOOD SECURITY AND ALSO TO BUY PERSONAL ITEMS WITHOUT HER HUSBAND’S CONSENT. IN THE COURSE OF DISCUSSION, SHE ALSO MENTIONED THAT THE INCOME FROM THE LIQUOR BREWING HAS HELPED HER TO PROVIDE GOOD EDUCATION, GOOD NUTRITION AND GOOD CLOTHES TO HER CHILDREN. SHE SHARED THAT ALMOST ALL THE WOMEN, EXCEPT SOME HOUSEHOLDS ARE INVOLVED IN LIQUOR BREWING ACTIVITIES IN BURUNCHULI AND MAKE DIRECT CONTRIBUTION TO CASH INCOME OF THE FAMILY ECONOMY. SHE SAYS THIS BUSINESS CAN BE MADE MORE PROFITABLE PROVIDED THAT SHE COULD PRODUCE MORE QUANTITY IN REGULARITY. SHE MENTIONED THAT, SHE HERSELF WALKS INTO THE MARKET AREA OF CHAPAGAUN AND CHARGHARE FOR THE LIQUOR SUPPLY BECAUSE IT HELPS TO GAIN MORE PROFIT REMOVING MIDDLEMAN’S’ LIONS SHARE IN THE PROFIT WHICH IS THE CASE IN OTHER FELLOW VILLAGERS.

SHE SAYS SHE KNOWS ABOUT THE INDOOR AIR POLLUTION, DRUDGERY AND HEALTH HAZARDS OF SMOKE FROM THE USAGE OF FIREWOOD AS FUEL FOR LIQUOR BREWING. BUT IS RELUCTANT TO ADAPT CHANGE IN THE USE OF TRADITIONAL COOK STOVE INTO IMPROVED COOKS STOVE DUE TO LIMITED SPACE AVAILABLE WITHIN HER BACKYARD. WHEN ASKED, IF BETTER EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITIES WERE PRESENTED WOULD SHE STILL CONTINUE TO BREW LIQUOR IN HOUSEHOLD; SHE RESPONDED TO LIMIT THE LIQUOR BREWING BATCHES IF BETTER INCOME GENERATING ACTIVITIES WERE AVAILABLE.”

Lately, there has been hint of changes in the policy with some policy makers coming forward and actively advocating for the inclusion of home brewed liquor making practice as a small-scale industry and



subsequently into the mainstream commercial market. She is Mrs. Sashi Kala Rai; Law maker and the representative of parliament who continuously put forward her agenda on “BANNED vs BRAND” to bridge the gap in-between the lower, middle and higher class of the people in the economy pyramid and also, as an aggressive tool to reduce the Trade Deficit within the country.

There are lots of successful national case stories that addresses the question about the market acceptance and successful market penetration and their linkage of indigenous liquor drinks with Heritage Tourism Industry. Some of the examples where traditional home brewed liquor has got been specially recognized is; New Lahana, Thambahal, Kirtipur. It is a community based conservation program. It has become source of income to 73 family. It serves Newari food with aila being its major attraction. Live demonstration of traditional way of living. It has attempt to make better livelihood of community by using their skills, potential and resources.

## 8. Conclusion and Recommendation

Nepal has a long history of preparing and consuming of various types of indigenous local alcoholic drinks based on the various agro-plants, depending on the varying agro-climatic conditions of the regions of that ethnic group. Alcohol is used as a part of many cultural, religious and social practices in many of the Nepalese society. Some of indigenous traditional alcohols found and consumed locally in Nepal are: Chhynag / Thon, Aeylaa / Raksi, Tongba, JhaiKatte, etc. among which some have gained international recognition beyond the producing region; such as Sake, Moutai and Tequila. When used in a rational way, the production of traditional beverages can help to increase the value of raw materials and generate income as a means of livelihood also it helps to preserve and promote the food heritage and tradition. This can contribute to the economic development of the producing regions, considering different aspects of industrial production in order to develop sustainable production systems.

The major constraint in the home brewed liquor production economy is the existing Governments policy and its subsequent unfair and unequal social justice practice. Achieving public health goals only, while avoiding the economic and social consequences clearly presents a paradox to the policymakers. The

dangers of excess alcohol consumption and the impact it can have on personal health and family status are well known, but it is important to highlight the real potential for rural small-scale business offered by brewing activity. Important aspect of the brewing activity is that it is totally controlled by the women (as evident from the case story from the case area), thus it has significant role in gender empowerment. The direct cash income coming in the hands of women tends to be spent on family welfare and to improve their livelihood security. The direct income input leads into the positive results in the family economy which helps to achieve the social change quickly within the family. Female controlled household money can entirely change the future of next generation within the family. In the absence of alternative income generating activities, they are not going to give away this business in the near future. The government and concerned authorities have not done any notable work to provide them employment opportunities to lead a sustainable livelihood. Thus, it is not justifiable to snatch their traditional means of livelihood by declaring it an illegal activity. The legalization of home brewed liquor market into the mainstream liquor market is more advantageous from social perspective, economic perspective and environmental perspective as it doesn't contribute further to the worsening of the social evils as it is already existent. And also, because it causes less environmental damage and also because it brings about considerable positive change within the family economy. Government, NGOs and donor agencies should not ignore and under value the significance of liquor brewing and come forward with necessary plans, policies and programs for the timely improvement of the home brewing activity. Instead of introducing a new livelihood to the villagers by the Government, NGOs and donor agencies for their economic upliftment; market guarantee and amendments in the National liquor Production and distribution policy to accommodate the traditional liquor brewing as a small-scale industry based on the technical and technological interventions could be the way forward. The indigenous skills of home brewed alcohol making practice is a key to successful livelihood diversification of the poor and marginal community. Owing to the hint of changes in governments policy, it might soon become legal to produce and sale the home brewed alcohol provided the government can come up with the strategies to control its usage among youngsters as it gives poor

and marginal individuals and households more options to improve livelihood security and to raise their living standards.

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