



Opinion in Lead

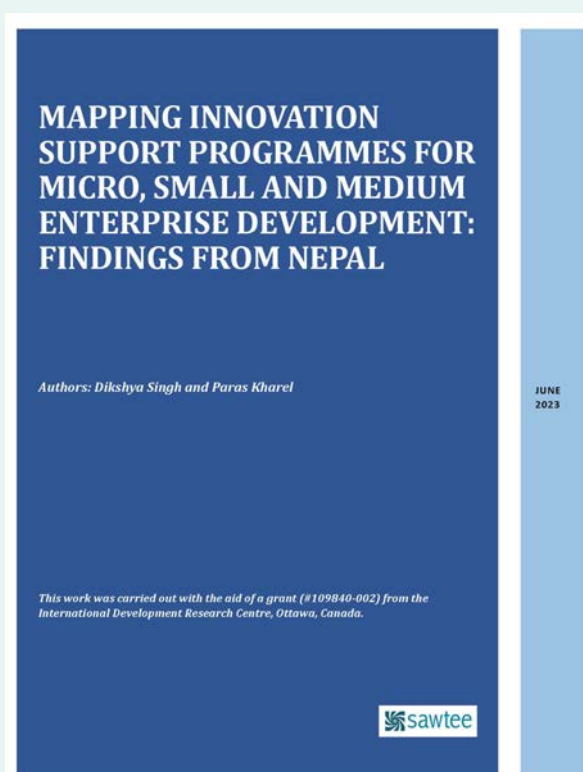
Food security remains a key challenge for South Asia

The impacts of climate change, pandemic coupled with natural and manmade disasters have South Asia struggling to ensure food security for a fifth of its population. The region that is home to one-fourth of the world's population and where agriculture contributes more than 40 percent of employment, South Asia does not seem to be on the path to meeting the zero hunger goal by 2030 as aspired under the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). The UN SDGs report 2022 highlights that around 828 million people suffered from hunger in 2021 and approximately one-third of the world population (2.3 billion people) were moderately or severely food insecure, which means they did not have regular access to adequate food. South Asia's food security situation is no different, and it is still a long way from achieving Goal 2—Zero hunger. According to a report by The State of Food Security and Nutrition in the World 2022, extreme food insecurity in South Asian countries increased from 14.4 percent to 21 percent between 2014 and 2021. In 2022, South Asian countries accounted for 45 percent of food insecurity globally and 84 percent in Asia.

In spite of experiencing significant economic growth in recent years, reports are rife chronicling the distressed state of food security in the region. South Asia has an alarming position in the Global Hunger Index (GHI), exhibiting the highest regional level of hunger at 27.4 in 2022 and the highest levels of stunting and wasting as well. Afghanistan is the worst-ranked (109) country according to GHI, followed by India (107), Pakistan (99), Bangladesh (84), Nepal (81) and Sri Lanka (64). The 2022 Global Report on Food Crises highlights that in South Asia, a total of 28.73 million individuals were classified as being in crisis or worse or its equivalent.

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Report



SAWTEE, with support from International Development Research Center, has published a report titled 'Mapping Innovation Support Programmes for Micro, Small and Medium Enterprise Development: Findings from Nepal'. This study examines the innovation support landscape in Nepal, describing existing policies and major innovation support programmes for MSMEs, presenting stakeholders' views on the same, examining the availability of credible empirical evidence on the effectiveness of these policies and programmes. The study has a special focus on the support available to growth-oriented startups and export promotion.

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News



Crisis-hit Pakistan strikes \$3bn IMF bailout deal

Crisis-hit Pakistan has reached a staff-level agreement with the International Monetary Fund (IMF) over US\$3bn of funding.

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India, US decide to end six trade disputes at WTO

India and the United States have agreed to end six trade disputes at the World Trade Organisation and New Delhi will also lift retaliatory customs duties on 28 American products.

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Nepal govt announces NTIS 2022 with the aim to boost exports

The government has enforced 'Nepal Trade Integration Strategy 2022' allocating a hefty amount to be invested in selected exportable goods although previous two similar programs had failed to yield positive outcomes in a notable value.

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Pak govt shoulders some blame for economic woes

The government has conceded that lingering political instability, import controls and tight monetary policies caused the country's prevailing economic downfall, taking the blame for the turmoil it has largely pinned on the usual suspects: the PTI and the floods.

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Bangladesh should focus living wages, progression paths of RMG workforce

The textile and garment manufacturing industry needs to focus on living wages and clearly defined career progression paths for the workforce to achieve its sustainability targets in the coming days.

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India's palm oil imports hit 27-month low

India's palm oil imports sank to a 27-month low in May as buyers cancelled expensive cargoes of the edible oil and replaced them with cheaper soyoil and sunflower oil.

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Nepal, India reach slew of agreements

Nepal and India reached a slew of agreements and launched over half a dozen projects during Prime Minister Pushpa Kamal Dahal's official visit to India to deepen economic cooperation between the two countries.

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Nepal, India sign pact for cross-border digital payment

Nepal and India signed a memorandum of understanding for cross-border digital payment, which is expected to ease digital transactions for business people, students, and tourists from both countries.

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Events

Workshop for Economic Journalists

SAWTEE in collaboration with the Society of Economic Journalists (SEJON) organized a workshop for economic journalists to build their capacity in covering issues related to balance of payments, Nepal-India trade and transit treaty, examining trade through gender lens, Nepal-Bangladesh trade, and LDC graduation. The residential workshop was held at Godavari Village Resort on 30 June -1 July 2023.

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Editor

Dikshya Singh

Contact

South Asia Watch on Trade, Economics and Environment (SAWTEE)
P.O. Box: 19366, Tukucha Marg, Kathmandu, Nepal
Tel: 977-1-4544438, 4524360 Fax: 977-1-4544570
Email: enewsletter@sawtee.org
Web: www.sawtee.org

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