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Transition in mechanization of hillside farming for gender and socially inclusive rural development: A case study of agricultural mechanization policy in Nepal

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Nepal recently endorsed its first agricultural mechanization policy in 2014 though mechanization started in late 60s in Nepal. This paper examines the transition in agricultural and rural mechanization through the gender and socially inclusive lenses in the context of hillside terrace farming in Nepal. Findings suggest that most of the previous policy such as Agriculture perspectives plan, agricultural research and development policies are biased towards flat land and are gender neutral; and hillside farming was largely neglected from the beginning. Study further reveals that flat land biased rural and agricultural mechanization policy is a biggest challenge for Nepal as half of the country's production comes from hillside farming. Recently, new mechanization policy speaks about the gender and marginalized farmers issues along with hillside terrace farming. However, how this policy change will be able to address the above mentioned challenge at implementation level is unclear as there is not any such evidences and experiences of implementing mechanization policy strategies and guidelines for its effective implementation in ground.

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