

# Migration Trends of Foreign Employment in Beldandi Rural Municipality, Kanchanpur, Nepal

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## Abstract

This research study explores migration trends of foreign employment in Beldandi Rural Municipality, Kanchanpur, Nepal, focusing on the socio-economic impacts of labor migration. It assesses the current migration status, factors driving the trend, and how financial incentives, family obligations, and personal goals influence decisions to work abroad. The research also evaluates household-level changes in income, living standards, and family dynamics. A sample of 308 migrants was selected from a population of 1,543 using Raosoft's calculator, maintaining a 5% margin of error and 95% confidence level.

Findings show 76.3% of migrants are male, with 46.8% aged 25–34. Most are from Brahmin/Chettri groups (58.1%) and follow Hinduism (79.9%). Secondary education is the highest level for 64.6% of respondents. India (37.0%), Malaysia (21.8%), and the UAE (13.3%) are the top destinations. Unemployment (43.5%) and poverty (36.0%) are the main push factors, while job availability (44.5%) and better wages (37.0%) act as pull factors.

Around 37.3% earn less than NPR 25,000 per month. Remittances are mostly sent via IME (48.7%) and banks (39.9%) and used for daily expenses (36.7%) and home building (24.0%). Benefits include increased income (59.7%) and career growth (20.5%), though 65.6% face legal or visa issues, and only 30.8% received skill training.

Foreign employment has enhanced financial stability (91.9%), family relationships (69.2%), and cultural identity (67.9%). The study calls for skill training, inclusive policies, regulated migration, and effective remittance use to ensure sustainable socio-economic development.

**Key Words:** Migration, Foreign Employment, Remittance, Pull and Push Factors and Impact.

## Introduction

Migration for foreign employment is a vital component of Nepal's economy, driven by limited domestic job opportunities and low wages. It significantly influences the country's social and economic landscape, offering both benefits and challenges. A key impact is the inflow of remittances, which support household income, improve living standards, and contribute substantially to GDP. Over 4

million Nepalis work abroad, easing domestic unemployment and boosting sectors like construction and manufacturing. While it offers better financial prospects for workers, foreign employment also plays a crucial role in stabilizing the economy and fostering growth (Department of Foreign Employment, 2022).

Nepal has seen a major shift in foreign employment migration over recent decades. Initially limited to nearby countries like India, migration expanded globally due to push factors like unemployment and low wages, and pull factors such as better pay and job opportunities abroad. Since the late 20th century, many Nepalis have migrated to GCC countries, Malaysia, and South Korea for work (Adhikari, 2022; Karki, 2011). Despite these opportunities, migrant workers often face poor working conditions, exploitation, and health issues due to inadequate legal protections (Paudyal et al., 2020; Maharjan & Chaudhary, 2021).

Migration has become a major socio-economic issue in Beldandi Rural Municipality, Kanchanpur, driven by economic hardship, environmental stress, and shifting social dynamics (Bhattarai et al., 2023; Thakuri, 2022). The local economy, based on subsistence farming, cannot sustain the growing population, leading many especially young men to seek low-skilled jobs in Gulf nations and Malaysia (KC et al., 2023; Sapkota & Adhikari, 2023). Climate change has worsened agricultural productivity, intensifying migration (Gautam et al., 2022).

A range of migration theories helps explain the patterns and drivers of foreign employment from Beldandi Rural Municipality, Kanchanpur, Nepal. Human capital theory (Becker, 1964) suggests that individuals migrate to maximize returns on education and skills. Push-pull theory (Lee, 1966) attributes migration to push factors like poverty and unemployment and pull factors such as better wages and job prospects. World systems theory (Wallerstein, 1974) links migration to global inequalities, positioning Beldandi as a labor-supplying periphery. The New Economics of Labor Migration (Stark & Bloom, 1985) views migration as a household strategy for income diversification and risk reduction.

Network theory (Boyd, 1989) emphasizes how migrant networks lower the cost and risk of migration. Structural theories (Castles & Miller, 2009) highlight the role of systemic inequalities. Migration systems theory (Kritz et al., 1992) explains how historical and economic ties shape migration routes. Cumulative causation theory (Massey, 1990) sees migration as self-perpetuating through social and economic feedback loops.

Remittance theory (Ratha, 2003) focuses on how funds sent home improve livelihoods and influence further migration. Dual labor market theory (Piore, 1979) explains how demand in low-wage sectors abroad draws migrants. Livelihood diversification theory (Ellis, 2000) frames migration as a way to enhance household resilience. Transnationalism (Basch et al., 1994) shows how migrants maintain strong cross-border ties. Gender and migration theory (Hondagneu-Sotelo, 1994) examines how gender roles shape migration patterns and outcomes.

Chain migration theory (MacDonald & MacDonald, 1964) describes how social networks sustain migration flows, while risk aversion theory (Rosenzweig & Stark, 1989) emphasizes migration as a strategy to manage economic uncertainty.

Empirical studies highlight the multifaceted impacts of foreign employment on Beldandi Rural Municipality, Nepal. Gurung and Sharma (2021) emphasize remittances as vital for household economic stability, influencing spending, education, and health. Adhikari (2022) notes that while

remittances provide financial security, migration alters family roles, increasing women's responsibilities. Bista and Tamang (2023) find that migration reduces agricultural productivity due to labor shortages. Subedi and Paudel (2021) observe rising female migration, which is reshaping gender roles and household decisions.

Ghimire and Kattel (2022) show youth view migration as a pathway to fund education or start businesses. Thapa and Neupane (2022) highlight remittances' role in funding local infrastructure and services. Khatri and Dhakal (2023) report psychological stress among families, especially women and the elderly, due to prolonged separations. Pandey and Poudel (2021) reveal that children of migrants benefit economically but face emotional challenges.

Panta and Shrestha (2022) link migration to environmental changes like deforestation from abandoned farmlands. Rana and Bhattarai (2023) find economic hardship to be a key driver of migration decisions. Lamichhane and Maharjan (2023) underscore the importance of social networks in facilitating migration.

Together, these studies provide a comprehensive view of migration's socio-economic, environmental, and psychological impacts in Beldandi, revealing both its benefits and challenges.

While remittances reduce poverty and improve access to education and healthcare, they also create dependency, deepen inequality, and disrupt traditional social systems (Thapa & Bhandari, 2023). The outmigration of working-age individuals has caused labor shortages and stalled local development. Migration has also reshaped gender roles, with women taking on more responsibilities, though the long-term sustainability of this shift remains uncertain (Thapa, 2023).

Despite these transformations, there is limited research specifically on Beldandi's migration trends. The effects of COVID-19 such as return migration and fluctuating remittances are also underexplored, leaving key knowledge gaps (Maharjan et al., 2023; KC et al., 2023).

Research on migration trends for foreign employment in Beldandi Rural Municipality reveals several critical gaps. While general data exists, detailed and current information on job types, employment conditions, and migrant challenges is lacking. The interplay between motivational factors such as economic need, education, and social influence remains underexplored. Moreover, limited studies examine how remittances and migrant absence affect household dynamics, economic stability, and social well-being. Addressing these gaps is essential for a comprehensive understanding of migration patterns and their impacts on the Beldandi community. Response to these pressing issues, this research sought to investigate the migration trends in Beldandi Rural Municipality, Kanchanpur. The study focused on understanding the drivers, socio-economic impacts, and evolving trends influenced by external factors.

This study provided insights into the migration trends of foreign employment in Beldandi Rural Municipality, Kanchanpur. Due to the lack of proper employment opportunities and various associated factors, the trend of migrating to foreign lands continued to increase in Nepal. As a result, various positive and negative impacts prevailed. Therefore, the study prioritized addressing the positive aspects of foreign employment and mitigating its negative impacts. This research offered a conclusive understanding of the socio-economic impact of foreign employment in the research area. The findings of the study were useful for planners, policymakers, project implementers, donors, and foreign employment seekers in formulating policies, strategies, and plans to guide foreign employment in Nepal.

Methodology

This study employed a mixed-methods approach, combining both quantitative and qualitative techniques, along with descriptive and analytical research designs, to explore the migration trends for foreign employment in Beldandi Rural Municipality, Kanchanpur, Nepal. This research design structured the processes for data collection and analysis, incorporating both primary and secondary data. A sample size of 308 migrants were selected from 1,543 households (total population of five wards) of Beldandi Rural Municipality using Raosoft’s calculator, maintaining a 5% margin of error and 95% confidence level (Field Survey, 2025).

Result and Discussion

Socio-economic Characteristics of Respondents in Study Area

Gender of Respondents

From the study, we found that the majority of migrants are male (76.3%), with women constituting only 23.7% of the respondents. This gender disparity aligns with global trends where male migration for employment is more prevalent, especially in low-skilled labor sectors.

Table 1:

Gender of the Respondents

Gender	Frequency	Percentage
Male	235	76.3
Female	73	23.7
Total	308	100

Source: Field Survey, 2025

Age of the Respondents

From the study, it was found that most of the migrants were from age category of 25-34 year 46.8% followed by 45-54 years age group 29.2%, 35-44 years age group 19.5% and the least <25-year age group 4.5%. This suggests that foreign employment is primarily sought by individuals in their prime working years, who are likely to be the primary breadwinners for their families.

Table 2:

Age of the Respondents

Gender	Frequency	Percentage
<25 years	14	4.5
25-34 years	144	46.8
35-44 years	60	19.5
45-54 years	90	29.2
Total	308	100.0

Source: Field Survey, 2025

### Ethnicity of Respondents

The study found that most respondents were Brahmin/Chettri (58.1%), followed by Dalits (28.2%) and Janjati (12.0%), reflecting Nepal's broader socio-economic stratification and unequal access to education and employment.

**Table 3:**

#### *Ethnicity of Respondents*

Education level	Frequency	Percentage
Madeshi	5	1.6
Brahmin/ Chettri	179	58.1
Janjati	37	12.0
Dalit	87	28.2
Total	308	100.0

**Source:** Field Survey, 2025

### Religion of Respondents

From the study, it was found that religious composition is predominantly Hindu (79.9%), with a smaller percentage of Christians (19.8%) and a negligible presence of Muslims (0.3%). This mirrors the religious demographics of Nepal, where Hinduism is the dominant religion.

**Table 4:**

#### *Religion of Respondents*

Religion	Frequency	Percentage
Hindu	246	79.9
Christian	61	19.8
Muslim	1	0.3
Total	308	100.0

**Source:** Field Survey, 2025

### Education level of respondent

As per study it was found that most of the migrants have Secondary level of education i.e., 64.6%, followed by Certificate level i.e., 12.0 %, Primary level and University level i.e., 14.6% and Illiterate 8.8%.

**Table 5:**

#### *Education level of Respondents*

Education	Frequency	Percentage
Primary Level	45	14.6
Secondary Level	199	64.6
Certificate level	37	12.0
University Level	27	8.8

Total	308	100.0
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**Source:** *Field Survey, 2025*

## Foreign Employment

### Number of Migrants in Family

From the study, it was found that on average, each household has 1.25 members working abroad, with a standard deviation of 0.536. This indicates that while some families have multiple members working abroad, others have only one. The presence of multiple migrants in a single household suggests a reliance on foreign employment as a primary source of income.

**Table 6:**

### *Number of Migrants in Family*

	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Standard Deviation
Number	308	1	3	1.25	0.536

**Source:** *Research's Calculations, 2025*

The data reflects a high degree of dependency on foreign employment in the study area. The presence of multiple migrants in some households is indicative of the economic importance of remittances and the role of migration in sustaining livelihoods. It also points to potential social and demographic impacts, such as changes in household structure, labor shortages in the local economy, and shifts in gender roles due to the absence of male family members. This trend underlines the need for policy attention toward the economic integration of remittances and the well-being of families left behind.

## Destination Countries

The study found India (37%) and Malaysia (21.8%) as top migration destinations due to proximity and affordability, while the UAE (13.3%) and Qatar (12.3%) attract low-skilled labor. Smaller percentages work in other Gulf nations (10.1%) and Western countries like the USA, UK, and Australia (5.5%).

**Table 7:**

### *Destination Countries of Respondents*

Country	Frequency	Percentage
India	114	37.0
Malaysia	67	21.8
UAE	41	13.3
Qatar	38	12.3
Other Gulf Countries	31	10.1
Other Countries (USA, UK, Australia etc.)	17	5.5
Total	308	100.0

**Source:** *Field Survey, 2025*

### Major Push Factors

From the study, it was found that the primary push factors driving migration include unemployment (43.5%) and poverty (36.0%). Other factors such as lack of facilities (10.1%), indebtedness (5.2%), and social/family conflicts (5.2%) also play a role. These findings align with the push-pull theory of migration, where economic hardship and lack of opportunities in the home country push individuals to seek employment abroad.

**Table 8:**

#### *Major Push Factors*

Push Factor	Frequency	Percentage
Poverty	111	36.0
Unemployment	134	43.5
Lack of Facilities	31	10.1
Indebtedness	16	5.2
Social and Family Conflict	16	5.2
Total	308	100.0

**Source:** *Field Survey, 2025*

### Major Pull Factors

From the study, it was found that the main pull factors attracting migrants to foreign countries are the possibility of job opportunities (44.5%) and higher wages (37.0%). Other factors include a higher standard of living (9.1%), the search for a prosperous life (5.2%), and global demand for labor (4.2%). These findings suggest that migrants are primarily motivated by the prospect of better economic opportunities and improved living standards.

**Table 9:**

#### *Major Pull Factors*

Pull Factor	Frequency	Percentage
High Wage and Better Income	114	37.0
Possibility of Job Opportunity	137	44.5
Higher Standard of Living	28	9.1
Searching for Prosperous Life	16	5.2
Global Demand for Labor	13	4.2
Total	308	100.0

**Source:** *Field Survey, 2025*

### Monthly income Migrants

From the study, it was found that the majority of migrants earn below 25,000 NPR per month (37.3%), while 22.4% earn between 25,000-40,000 NPR, and 14.6% earn between 40,000-55,000 NPR. A

smaller percentage (12.3%) earn above 70,000 NPR. This income distribution reflects the low-skilled nature of most jobs undertaken by migrants, which typically offer modest wages.

**Table 10:**

***Monthly income of Migrants***

Income	Frequency	Percentage
Below 25000	115	37.3
25000-40000	69	22.4
40000-55000	45	14.6
55000-70000	41	13.3
Above 70000	38	12.3
Total	308	100.0

**Source:** *Field Survey, 2025*

**Source of Remittance**

As per the study, it was found that the primary sources of remittances are IME (48.7%) and banks (39.9%), with a smaller percentage sent through relatives (8.1%) and hundi (3.2%). This indicates that formal channels are the most common means of sending money back home, which is crucial for the economic stability of migrant families.

**Table 11:**

***Source of Remittance***

Remittance Source	Frequency	Percentage
Bank	123	39.9
IME	150	48.7
Hundi	10	3.2
Relatives	25	8.1
Total	308	100.0

**Source:** *Field Survey, 2025*

**Use of Remittance**

From the study, it was found that remittances are primarily used for daily consumption (36.7%), followed by building or renovating houses (24.0%), buying land (13.6%), paying loans (12.3%), and education (8.1%). This suggests that while remittances contribute to immediate household needs, they also play a role in long-term investments such as property and education.

**Table 12:**

***Use of Remittance***

Use	Frequency	Percentage
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Daily Consumption	113	36.7
Build/Renovate House	74	24.0
Pay Loan	38	12.3
Education	25	8.1
Buy Land	42	13.6
Others	16	5.2
<b>Total</b>	<b>308</b>	<b>100.0</b>

**Source:** *Field Survey, 2025*

### Skill of Migrants

From the study, it was found that only 30.8% of migrants have received skill-based training, while the majority (69.2%) have not. This lack of skills training may limit migrants' ability to secure higher-paying jobs or move into more skilled sectors, reinforcing their reliance on low-skilled labor.

**Table 13:**

#### *Skill of Migrants*

Skill	Frequency	Percentage
Yes	95	30.8
No	213	69.2
<b>Total</b>	<b>308</b>	<b>100.0</b>

**Source:** *Field Survey, 2025*

### Benefits and Challenges

#### Major Benefits

From the study, it was found that the primary benefits of foreign employment include higher income (59.7%), professional growth (20.5%), and personal development (13.3%). A smaller percentage of migrants reported benefits such as new cultural experiences (3.2%) and networking opportunities (3.2%). These findings underscore the economic advantages of foreign employment, which often outweigh the challenges.

**Table 17:**

#### *Major Benefits Gained by Migrants*

Benefits	Frequency	Percentage
Professional growth	63	20.5
Higher Income	184	59.7
New Culture experiences	10	3.2

Networking opportunities	10	3.2
Personal Development	41	13.3
Total	308	100.0

**Source:** *Field Survey, 2025*

### Major Challenges Faced by Migrants

From the study, it was found that the most significant challenge reported by migrants is legal and visa issues (65.6%), followed by language barriers (10.1%), cultural differences (9.7%), discrimination (9.7%), and homesickness (4.9%). These challenges highlight the difficulties migrants face in navigating foreign legal systems, adapting to new cultures, and dealing with social isolation.

**Table 14:**

#### *Major Challenges Faced by Migrants*

Challenges	Frequency	Percentage
Language barriers	31	10.1
Cultural differences	30	9.7
Legal and visa issues	202	65.6
Homesickness	15	4.9
Discrimination	30	9.7
Total	308	100.0

**Source:** *Field Survey, 2025*

### Future Trends

#### Factor Influencing Migration

From the study, it was found that economic conditions (52.9%) and political stability (30.2%) are the most significant factors influencing future migration patterns. Technological advancements (10.1%) and education and training opportunities (6.8%) also play a role. These findings suggest that economic and political stability in both the home and host countries will continue to drive migration decisions.

**Table 15:**

#### *Factor Influencing Migration*

Factors	Frequency	Percentage
Economic conditions	163	52.9
Political stability	93	30.2
Technological advancements	31	10.1
Education and training opportunities	21	6.8
<b>Total</b>	<b>308</b>	<b>100.0</b>

**Source:** *Field Survey, 2025*

## **Impact of Foreign Employment**

### **Effect of Migration in Financial Stability**

From the study, it was found that the majority of respondents (91.9%) reported that foreign employment has significantly improved their financial stability, while a small percentage (4.9%) reported a worsening of their financial situation. This indicates that, for most migrants, foreign employment has been a positive economic decision.

**Table 16:**

#### ***Effects of Migration in Financial Stability***

<b>Effect</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
Improved significantly	283	91.9
Improved somewhat	3	1.0
No change	7	2.3
Worsened	15	4.9
Total	308	100.0

**Source:** *Field Survey, 2025*

### **Effect of Migration on Family Relationship**

From the study, it was found that foreign employment has strengthened family relationships for 69.2% of respondents, while 24.0% reported no change, and 3.6% reported strained relationships. This suggests that while remittances can improve family well-being, the physical absence of migrants can also create emotional challenges.

**Table 17:**

#### ***Effects of Migration on Family Relationship***

<b>Effects</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
Strengthened relationships	213	69.2
No change	74	24.0
Strained relationships	11	3.6
Unsure	10	3.2
Total	308	100.0

**Source:** *Field Survey, 2025*

Impacts of Migration on Cultural Identity

A majority of respondents (67.9%) reported a positive impact on their cultural identity, while 5.2% reported a negative impact, and 12.0% reported no impact. This indicates that exposure to new cultures can enrich migrants' perspectives, though it may also lead to cultural dissonance for some.

Table 18:

Impacts of Migration on Cultural Identity

Impacts	Frequency	Percentage
Yes, positively	209	67.9
Yes, negatively	16	5.2
No impact	37	12.0
Unsure	46	14.9
Total	308	100.0

Source: Field Survey, 2025

Satisfaction with Foreign Employment

As per the study, it was found that the majority of respondents (62.3%) reported being satisfied with their foreign employment, while 14.0% were neutral, and 17.5% were dissatisfied or very dissatisfied. This suggests that while foreign employment offers significant economic benefits, there are also challenges that affect overall job satisfaction.

Table 19:

Satisfaction with Foreign Employment

Satisfaction Level	Frequency	Percentage
Very satisfied	19	6.2
Satisfied	192	62.3
Neutral	43	14.0
Dissatisfied	30	9.7
Very dissatisfied	24	7.8
Total	308	100.0

Source: Field Survey, 2025

Association Between Variables

Association Between Education level of Migrants and Skill

The Pearson chi-square p-value (0.359) is greater than 0.05 indicating no statistically significant relationship between the Education level and skill of Migrants.

Chi Square Test	Value	d.f	P-value
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Pearson Chi-Square	3.222 <sup>a</sup>	3	0.359
Likelihood Ratio	3.267	3	0.352
No of Valid Cases	308		

**Source:** Research's Calculation, 2025

## Interpretation of Results

### Statistical Significance (P-value Interpretation):

The Pearson Chi-Square p-value is 0.359, which is greater than the conventional threshold of 0.05. This implies that there is no statistically significant association between the education level of migrants and their skill status. In other words, education level and skill do not appear to be related in a meaningful way in this dataset.

### Degrees of Freedom (df = 3):

This suggests that both variables (education level and skill) were categorized into 4 groups each. The chi-square test considers how the observed frequencies in each category differ from what we would expect if the variables were independent.

## Possible Implications

### Mismatch Between Education and Skill:

Many individuals may be working in skill-based jobs that do not require formal education (e.g., construction, agriculture, hospitality). Conversely, educated migrants might also be working in unskilled jobs due to lack of opportunities or recognition of qualifications abroad.

### Nature of Foreign Employment Opportunities:

The foreign job market often does not differentiate strongly by education level, especially in the case of Nepali labor migrants. Employment may be based more on availability, demand, or pre-existing social networks than on formal education or training.

### Lack of Skill Development Programs:

It could indicate that vocational or skill-based training is not systematically aligned with education levels, or that migrants are not receiving skill training based on their education.

### Policy Implication:

There may be a need for tailored skill development programs that align with migrants' educational backgrounds. Government or NGOs could provide job-specific training before migration to improve both employment outcomes and the effective use of human capital. Over all, the analysis does not support a significant association between education and skill among migrants in Beldandi Rural Municipality. This suggests that educational attainment does not predict the skill level of employment migrants end up with. Further qualitative studies may help explore why this mismatch exists—whether due to market constraints, skill recognition issues, or lack of informed migration planning.

## Conclusion and Implication

This study comprehensively explored the migration trends for foreign employment in Beldandi Rural Municipality, Kanchanpur. The findings highlight that foreign employment continues to be a significant livelihood strategy, especially for males within the 25–34 age group, predominantly from the Brahmin/Chettri community. India, Malaysia, and Gulf countries remain the major destinations, driven mainly by unemployment and poverty, while higher wages and job opportunities serve as strong pull factors.

Socio-economic impacts of migration have been largely positive, with remittances being a vital source for daily consumption, housing, and loan repayment. Most migrants have reported improved financial stability, strengthened family ties, and positive shifts in cultural identity. However, challenges such as legal and visa issues, limited skill training, and cultural adaptation barriers persist. Importantly, there was no statistically significant relationship between education level and skill training, indicating a gap in effective human capital development.

Thus, while foreign employment contributes significantly to household welfare and community resilience, it is not without its shortcomings and vulnerabilities. The evidence calls for integrated support mechanisms that ensure safer migration, targeted skills enhancement, and sustainable reintegration processes for returnees.

The outcomes of this research carry significant implications for policymakers, development agencies, and other stakeholders engaged in labor migration. The insights gained can assist both local and national governments in designing migration-supportive policies that tackle the root causes of migration, particularly unemployment and poverty. Additionally, the finding that a small proportion of migrants have received skill-based training underscores the urgent need for pre-departure training initiatives aimed at improving employability and safeguarding migrant workers' rights in destination countries. Enhancing migrant protection is equally vital, requiring attention to legal and visa-related issues, workplace discrimination, and cultural adaptation through strengthened bilateral labor agreements and accessible support systems abroad.

Furthermore, since remittances are largely spent on consumption and housing, there is a critical need to introduce programs that promote their productive use—such as in small businesses, farming, or entrepreneurship to support sustainable economic growth. Equally important are reintegration plans to help returning migrants effectively apply their earnings and skills in their communities, thereby reducing repeated cycles of migration. Future research should also delve deeper into the long-term socio-cultural effects of migration, the unique experiences of female migrants, and the viability of remittance-dependent households.

In summary, although foreign employment continues to play a vital role in improving the economic conditions of families in Beldandi, a more targeted, skill-focused, and inclusive policy framework is essential to maximize its advantages while minimizing its drawbacks.

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