



Master's thesis

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Social remittances and rural place making
- A study of translocal migration in Nepal



Due to globalization processes, the world has gone very far. I will be the change maker for my home, I will be the reason for the change to come to my home (Birat, migrant from Namsaling)

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Front-page photos:

Rice fields from Namsaling and people overlooking Kathmandu valley.

Photos by Ditte Rasmussen Brøgger

Abstract

Contemporary migration creates translocal fields through migrant's translocal habitus and their simultaneous life in different translocal communities. By drawing on geographical and anthropological literature concerned with open and relational understandings of place, this study will show that translocal migrants contribute to the processes of place making by their exchange of social remittances. This is accomplished by drawing on a qualitative and multi-sited case study from a particular village community in Eastern Nepal and connections from here to Kathmandu, along with studies of the relationship between different forms of the multilocal lives of movers and stayers, and how migrants express the importance of their 'home'. Nepal is a relevant place to study migration and development interventions, both because migration historically has played a role, but also because Nepal is in the middle of fundamental processes of change. This study will explore alternative understandings of the migration-development nexus. The aim is to understand the relevance of the social aspects of migration and development, and to outline a social approach to place making. It will be argued, that through a translocal approach it is possible to understand, how processes from beyond affect places. Places are affected from elsewhere through exchange of social remittances. By foregrounding these relationships between places and people, this study can point to the importance of social aspects of migration and will convey a critique of an economic focus within development thinking.

Key words: Migration, Internal Migration, Migration-Development Nexus, Place making, Translocal migration, Translocal field, Translocal habitus, Translocal community, Social Remittances, Power Geometry, Eastern Nepal

Resume

Migration skaber et translokalt felt baseret på migranternes translokale habitus og deres simultane liv i forskellige translokale fællesskaber. Geografisk og antropologisk litteratur omhandler åbne og relationelle opfattelser af steder anvendes til at undersøge, hvorledes translokale migranter gennem sociale remitter påvirker de processer, der former steder. Dette undersøges gennem et kvalitativt multi-sited casestudie fra en landsby i Østnepal og relationelle forbindelser herfra til Kathmandu, studier af relationen mellem movers og stayers, forskellige multilokale livsformer og hvordan hjem har betydning for forskellige aktører. Nepal er et relevant sted at undersøge migrationens påvirkning på udviklingsinterventioner, fordi migration historisk har spillet en rolle i Nepal, og fordi Nepal er midt i en fundamental transformationsproces. Dette speciale vil udfolde en alternativ tilgang til det Migration-Development Nexus der har påvirket den aktuelle udviklingsdagsorden i det sidste årti. Målet er at forstå relevansen af sociale aspekter af migration og udvikling og anviser en social tilgang til place-making. Gennem en translokal tilgang er det muligt at forstå, hvordan processer udenfor et sted kan påvirke stedet, for steder er påvirket udefra gennem de sociale remitter. Ved at sætte fokus på forhold mellem steder og mennesker kan denne undersøgelse udpege vigtigheden af de sociale aspekter af migration og dermed udgøre en kritik af det økonomiske fokus, der har været gældende for udviklingsdagsordenen.

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Chapter 1. Introduction

Introduction

Internal migration is not a new phenomenon in Nepal; it has long been used as a strategy for making a living by the Nepalese population, and especially rural to rural migration has played a part in the Eastern Hill Region of Nepal. But the increased demand for income-generating activities and interest in education, has also initiated rural-urban migration (Subedi 2006). Urban centers across the border in India have been popular destinations, but increasing numbers are moving to Kathmandu, and the urbanization degree is escalating dramatically. Especially the increased quality of higher education in the capital area leads to increased migration, and the number of internal educational migrants are similarly on the rise (Shakya 2009).

Nepal is a relatively young country; it emerged in its present form in the late 18th century under the Shah dynasty. The nation-state Nepal was formed of various smaller kingdoms and ethnic groups. and the country is today multi-cultural. As all other nation-states, Nepal is still developing and several transformation processes are simultaneously taking place. The restoration of democracy has been going on since the end of the Nepalese civil war 'The Peoples' war' that ended in 2006. The Constitutional Assembly (CA), formed in 2008, is working on a democratic constitution (Whelpton 2005). The process is ongoing and the CA has in spring 2012 exceeded the latest deadline to form a constitution for Nepal. The political situation is relatively stable, but people are frustrated with the current situation. While at national level, Nepal is undergoing rapid cultural, social, economic and political change, these changes are far from equally distributed across space. Especially the rural areas in the mountainous country are seemingly being overlooked as a result of this uneven development. Nonetheless, a substantial degree of circulation of capitals – also to the rural areas – can be identified. The reason for this is the relatively high degree of mobility and the adaptation of communication technologies along with strong networks based in the local communities, which are the origin of the migrants (Rigg 2007b).

The combination of social and physical mobility and various other dynamic processes indicate that Nepal is on the move. This multiple field of movements, within a relatively young country, has fueled the motivation for this study of local place making in a rural community. Nepal has significant regional differences economically, culturally and socially. Furthermore the vastly differing topography with the lowlands in the south and the mountainous regions in the north, has rendered some parts of the country more accessible than others. Some remote areas can only be reached by small walking-trails, through the mountainous landscape, and travel-time can range from a few hours to several days of walk to the nearest road. These regional differences, combined with the Nepalese peoples long tradition for mobility and migration, makes Nepal an interesting case for the study of exchange and flows of capital, between rural and urban areas.

In the mid-1990's, influential human geographers like David Harvey and Doreen Massey, focused their studies on the process of place making. In these studies, they began defining places as socially constructed by processes from outside the places themselves, thereby contesting traditional ideas about places as geographically localized and bounded entities (Massey 1994, Harvey 1996). Arun Appadurai (1996) has built on these ideas about socially constructed places, and by focusing on human actions he has argued that places gain much of their identity from activities performed by the people who dwell there. People will shape the social and cultural landscape within places through different activities. Appadurai introduces the concept of Translocality, as a way to describe how communities are extended to other places, through the migration and mobility of their citizens. Several scholars in the field of migration have used this concept to assess the effects of migration on both migrants and on the migrant places. Other scholars have been focusing on migrants' exchange of capitals between places, and Levitt (1998) has expanded these studies to include more than just the economic aspects of these exchanges, and developed the concept of social remittances. This has directed a focus on the social impact of remittances, which should also be seen as a part of the rethinking of 'development' more broadly by critical development theories. A key contribution from this rethinking was an increased attention to the non-economic dimensions of development. This academic shift has however, not been reflected in development policy from international organizations and agencies that have continually focused on the economic aspects of migration.

An interest in understanding the impacts of social remittances in rural Nepal, as well as internal migrants' role in the exchange of social remittances and their potential for interacting in place making processes in their home place, has motivated this study. The aim has been to present a theoretical as well as a methodological approach that includes social and local based aspects in development processes, to go beyond the economically based migration-development paradigm that has affected recent focus on development. A multi-sited case study has been carried out in Namsaling a rural community located in Ilam province in Eastern Nepal. The case study has focused on the life-story of migrants currently living in Kathmandu, which has been the second site for the fieldwork. Based on the above the main objective for this thesis is as follows:

Objective and research questions

How do internal migrants in Nepal make their living in a translocal field, and how do they through the exchange of social remittances contribute to place making processes in their home place?

Based on this main objective, three sub-objectives have been formed to outline the structure for the research:

- The first objective is to characterize the dynamics of the livelihood patterns and migration landscape in Namsaling
- The second objective is to outline how the migrant's translocal habitus is formed through their process of making a living in a translocal community.
- The third objective is to examine how migrants contribute to their home place by exchange of social remittances

Thesis outline

These objectives give the following structure to the study: The theoretical considerations will be outlined in **chapter 2**. Theoretical considerations on place making processes and translocal aspects of places as well as migrations affect on places through exchange of social remittances within a translocal field, will provide the point of departure for this analysis. As presented in **chapter 3**, the study of Namsaling has been approached in a hermeneutical manner, where the understanding of the context continually is contested, through new findings and new understandings. The methods used for the empirical work and for the analysis are likewise described in this chapter.

The analysis is threefold and the first part in **chapter 4** introduces Namsaling as a migrant place, by assessing the dynamic socio-economic processes as well as the migration landscape. Then an in-depth analysis of the translocal field is carried out in **chapter 5**. This analysis examines the translocal field, which exists between migrants and their home place (their birthplace), through looking at the formation of translocal communities and the creation of translocal habitus. This leads to an analysis of the migrant's contribution to place making in **chapter 6**, where the potential of migrants' interaction in processes in their home place is examined by using the concept of social remittances. Finally the migrants' contribution to place making is discussed in **chapter 7**, as well as the different aspects of applying a translocal approach to the study of place making.

Chapter 2. Theoretical considerations

2.1 The Migration-development nexus

In chapter two will the theoretical considerations that are fundamental to this thesis be presented. In this initial part, will the contemporary aspects of migration and development be described in order to present the fundamental elements in the paradigm that forms the actual theoretical as well as policy directions with in the field of migration.

Since the beginning of the millennium, there has been a growing interest in international migration and its consequences in The Global South. An increasing number of scholars and policy makers have shown interest in migration's impacts on development. It has been a central focus in the development policy agenda from various policy studies from development agencies and donors. The term migration-development nexus has been use to describe the reciprocal relationship between migration and development (Sørensen 2012, de Haas 2010). The focus on migration's impact on development has become so prevalent that it has been coined as the 'New Development Mantra' (Faist 2008, Kapur 2004). A 'High Level Dialogue'¹ held by UN in September 2006 was concerned with International Migration and Development, and especially focused on the impact of migration at the global level. This accelerated the interest in the migration-development agenda, by providing an overview of the complex issues concerning the augmenting of positive outcomes of international migration (Piper 2008). The focus in the migration-development nexus has been on economic remittances and consequently, the economic aspect of migration has taken precedence in theoretical as well as policy descriptions of the developmental consequences of remittances. This economic conceptualization of the migration–development nexus, where migratory movements are understood as a way of maximizing resources and minimizing risks, has resulted in little or no attention being paid to non-monetary flows of remittances and exchanges. In this conception then, migrants themselves are seen by states and international organizations as significant development agents (de Haas 2010, Faist 2008).

According to Page & Mercer (2012) acceptance of the fundamental relationship between migration and development has evolved into a significant discourse that celebrates migrants as change agents with the aim of maximizing the developmental benefits that emerge from migration. They argue that recent literature on migration has focused on indirect aspects of economic remittances and only to a limited extent on the issue of social remittances (Page & Mercer 2012). The Human Development Report (HDR) from 2009 (UNDP 2009) with the title 'Overcoming barriers: Human mobility and development', also focuses on the relation between development and migration. The report aims to include multiple impacts of migration, and in spite of a strong focus on economic

¹ For further information on the High Level Dialog: <https://www.un.org/migration/index.html>. The next High Level Dialog on migration is to be held in October 2013.

² Carrasco use trans-nationalism, but since movement within a country can cross as many borders as international mobility, the

aspects of remittances, there are attempts, in the HDR from 2009, to incrementally move away from the economic perspectives that characterize reports from international agencies: *‘This report breaks new ground in applying a human development approach to the study of migration. It discusses who migrants are, where they come from and go to, and why they move. It looks at the multiple impacts of migration for all who are affected by it—not just those who move, but also those who stay’* (UNDP 2009:V). The HDR recognizes a multifaceted view on migration that includes the social perspective alongside the monetary. The focus has been extended to include the relation between impacts on origin and destination, along with an acceptance of the uneven option to use migration as a livelihood strategy. The concept of social remittances is used in the report and referred to as: *‘The ideas, practices, identities and social capital that flow back to families and communities at origin’* (UNDP 2009:79). The inclusion of social remittances in the report is a turn away from the one-sided economic perspective on development. However, while social remittances are examined through few briefly described studies the report does not elaborate and go into depth about core aspects of social remittances or methods to assess the complex nexus of migration and development with a social component. Thus, while the report is the first step towards a less economic approach, the understanding of the social component remains limited and the economic parameters changes are still the main focus within the migration-development paradigm. The assessments of social and local aspects of the migration-development nexus, has in many ways not been able to go beyond economic analysis because the methodological approach is yet to be developed and the economic parameters and analysis are not sufficient to assess these kinds of issues in an adequate way. There is therefore a need for widening the methodological frameworks and concepts used in the migration-development nexus in order to rethink the way of assessing social aspects as well as understanding the missing elements and linkages between the ‘local’ and the ‘global’ scales (Faist, 2008, Piper 2009, Mazzucato 2011).

The migration-development nexus is moreover biased towards a focus on international migration. Empirical studies have shown that both in the past and the present, people who move away from their home but stay within their country of birth have significant impact on their home place. This points to the fact that we necessarily should pay attention to mobility within countries and regions rather than rigidly focusing on international migration only (Mercer et al. 2008). Indeed, as Mercer et al. have shown (2008:12) *‘you could be outside your ‘country’ without leaving your nation-state’*. The concept of ‘transnationalism’ has been a buzzword for studying cross-border relationships, movements and linkages, and it has been a key element in scholarly interest in research on globalization and global migration, combined with studies of how space has become de-territorialized in today's globalized world. But most literature on transnationalism has not focused on the impacts of space, place, and time on migrants, and fails to critically examine how migratory processes shape various localities and affects the people who live there (Hardwich 2008:170). Furthermore, studies of migration have favored a linear migration approach, where migrants move from one place, to another place and send capital back to their home. However, migration should rather be seen as a circular and multidirectional process that can accelerate flows and exchanges of various capitals within a multi-local society created by migrants themselves. Bourdieu’s (1986) term ‘capital’ is applied to show that relationships, exchanges and flows within a society not only

can be reduced to economic capitals; the exchange of money, goods etc. but have to comprise social, cultural and symbolic capitals in order to recognize their importance for the society (Thieme 2008). These exchanges are grounded in the migrants' feeling of responsibility and belonging to more than one place (Subedi 2006, de Haas 2010). Finally, the Migration-Development approaches have focused on negative aspects of migration; such as concerns about migrant's integration in and adaptation to new places; with the problems that follow when migrants leave communities and the fear of brain drain in local communities at the place of origin. These tendencies have the risk of leading to increased inequality in the migrants sending and receiving communities, but a focus only on negative consequences are not substantial and do not give a full enough analysis of the issue of migration (Sørensen 2012, de Haas 2010).

The new Human Development Report from 2013, with the title: 'The Rise of the South: Human Progress in a Diverse World' seems to mark the end of the migration-development focus in mainstream development thinking. The Report focuses on economic growth in countries in the south: '*The Report argues that the striking transformation of a large number of developing countries into dynamic major economies with growing political influence is having a significant impact on human development progress*' (UNDP 2013:iv). This shows a new more economic paradigm is once again taking center stage. Thus, after an almost decade long focus on migration within development policy and development thinking, with several attempts to include the social aspects of the impacts of migration as well as local adaptations and benefits from flows of social remittances, they have not succeeded to sufficiently include social aspects as an important element in migration's impact on development.

The above-mentioned missing focus on the social aspect of migration, the lack of interest in internal migration and circular movements of people and capital has altogether driven the interest for this thesis. In an attempt to rectify this, the research presented in this thesis seeks to apply theoretical considerations as well as adequate methods to establish a framework for assessing the aspect of social impact on internal migration in the Migration-Development Nexus.

2.2. Social construction of places – processes from beyond

The history of the concept 'place' can be approached at least three levels: 1) A classical descriptive approach to place, originally pioneered by regional geographers. This approach sees the world as a set of places, where each of them can be studied as a unique and a particular entity, through a common-sense analysis of each places' particular genealogy. 2) A social constructionist approach to place, where the underlying social processes are seen as important, without giving up the particularity of places as unique physical unities. Particularly Marxists, Feminists and Post-structuralists use this approach to explain how physical and social processes simultaneously construct places. 3) A phenomenological approach to place, which does not focus on places as particular entities and do not pay attention to particular attributes of particular places, nor is it concerned with the social processes involved in the construction of particular places. Rather it seeks to define places through human existence as most important for the construction of places.

(Creswell 2004). These three levels should not be seen as disconnected approaches, as there are various similarities between them.

The theoretical consideration on place in this thesis is founded in a social constructionist approach to place and framed by David Harvey and Doreen Massey's approaches to place. To apply a translocal lens to the study of places is the work of scholars focusing on, how actors are central in processes across scale, applied to the theoretical considerations on place making (e.g. Arun Appadurai and Arturo Escobar). The translocal point of view is phenomenological in its approach to place. By using these scholars it is possible to lead place making theory towards a spatial understanding of flows and mobility.

'Places, like space and time, are socially constructed and have to be read and understood in that way' (Harvey 1996:324) For Harvey (1996) it is not a question whether places are constructed socially or not, instead Harvey attempts to analyze the processes through which places are constructed. He argues that we should recognize the flows of capital and look into other types of flows that fluctuate along with the economic flows and have a similar importance for the construction of places. Harvey argues that social and cultural capital uses the same network as economic capital. Therefore production of places is a matter of social relations, institutions and political economic practice that circulate in ways that are similar to capitalist regimes (Harvey 1996). Massey (1994) supports this view by arguing that 'capital is not a thing, it's a process' (Massey 1994:155). She further elaborates by arguing that places should also be seen as processes. Places are conceptualized in social interactions and these interactions themselves are not motionless or static - they are processes, and these processes tie places together. (Massey 1994). 'A sense of place' can be understood as a place's 'character', which is constructed not only by the internal part of a particular place, but also the links and processual connection to places beyond. According to Massey, we need to include 'a global sense of the local' in all our analysis of places (Massey 1994).

Several scholars have misused Doreen Massey, especially her famous article from 1991 'A Global Sense of Place' (Massey 1991), to argue in favor of a 'flat world', where place is annihilated and everything is in flow (Massey et al. 2009). This was however never her intention; her intention was rather to see places as open and unbound meeting points of flows. Place is where social processes meet and form something, that make the given locality spatial (Massey et al. 2009). She does not state that place does not exist, but rather calls for an approach where places can be re-thought, re-imagined and re-conceptualized (Creswell 2004). By moving away from an understanding of places, as entities that can be bordered by a line, Massey takes a substantial step away from the notion of 'us' and 'them', and she sees places as connected to the rest of the world (Massey et al. 2009). She argues that all places are related to other places and social processes beyond the place itself: 'you can sense the simultaneous presence of everywhere in the place where you are standing' (Massey 1994:162). She names these global processes that are essential in the place making as: 'a progressive sense of place', and a 'global sense of place'. Places are more like routes than they are fixed roots (Massey 1994) and the inclusion of social processes as a part of place making is a way to see places as open. Therefore, the on-going challenge is to define where place begins and ends, in

order to keep a geographically based place-approach. (Harvey 1996). To understand the way places are constructed and experienced, it is important to recognize the intertwined networks of social processes and social constructions, in which the actors are playing crucial roles. ‘To say something is socially constructed is to say that it is within human power to change it’ (Creswell 2004:30). That creates an argument for putting actors first in an analysis of place making. Further theoretical considerations on human impact on place making will be elaborated below, through a focus on translocal processes within a translocal field.

2.3. Translocal approach to places

In Appadurai’s book ‘Modernity At Large’ (1996), translocality is a central concept. The concept of Translocality refers to people’s ability to experience and relate to several places and their social relations, from the one place where they currently are staying. This notion means that places are extended localities, through their connections to the wider world. (Gielis 2009). Appadurai argues that translocality is the main concept characterizing the ‘Placial Turn’ (Appadurai 1996). The Placial Turn is a direction in Human Geography and Anthropology in the 1990s, where open and relational ideas of place were developed. It resulted in the understanding of place making processes as the creation of local life in local places, by including processes from beyond the local (Gielis 2009). As Arturo Escobar has argued ‘places gather things, thoughts, and memories in particular configurations’ (Escobar 2001:143). Culture no longer lies in specific places, but is hybrid and dynamic. This shows how places can be seen as an event or a plurality of coinciding events, rather than a fixed ontological element rooted in authentic understandings of existing things and processes. ‘Places-as-event(s)’ is a processual perspective on place, that shows them as open and able to change rather than bounded and with a fixed permanence (Escobar 2001:143). The anthropological angle to place making creates a foundation for the inclusion of a human angle in the place making processes and expands the ability to analyze the role of translocal subjects within the new placial and discursively constructed world. This gives new possibilities of cultural analysis within an actor based perspective. This adds an extra layer of understanding to Massey’s view of places constructed both internally and externally rather than just from dynamics inside a place (Creswell 2004).

The following three parts will elaborate on the translocal approach to place, by unfolding the translocal field, formed by migrants, mobile individuals and flows of capitals. Translocal communities are shaped within the translocal fields where individual’s way of living affects their habitus and forms what will be termed a translocal habitus. These following three parts concerning translocal field, translocal community and translocal habitus will form a framework for understanding translocal places.

Translocal fields – constructed by migration and translocal flows

To assess the social aspects of the migration-development nexus it becomes relevant to assess, what can be called the translocal social field (Schiller 2007). By using Bourdieu’s concept of field it becomes possible to assess the social genesis of the social world as an entirely constructed of arrangements of symbolic capital (language, histories, memories, myths etc.), objective structures,

and the will and action of actors (Bourdieu 1988). Translocal approaches make it possible to study the culture of globalization and to move away from a narrow focus on flows of capital and analysis of economic development. In a world with a growing amount of activity taking place at global scale, local development is increasingly played out in a matrix of links that connect people and places across space - this is referred to as the translocal field. Thus, globalization creates landscapes of translocalities, where people and places are distant in space but nonetheless linked in such ways that they are deeply interconnected and constantly influencing one another (Zoomers & van Westen 2011). By using a translocal approach, social scientists can analyze changes that occur in the local, but can also be sensitive to connections to global or national processes (Vertovec 2004).

Mobility is a main component to construct a translocal field. Migrants have historically maintained long-distance networks and now new means of communication has made the ties between people living in different locations stronger. Migration and mobility can be seen as both a threat and strength in the process of place making, depending on the perspective applied. When seen as a strength places are actively constructed by a high degree of mobility, on the other hand it is a threat when people are leaving, resulting in depopulation or affects the place-identity (Vertovec 2004, Hardwick 2008). Particular places become popular destinations for migration, this forms a flow between certain places, referred to as migration corridors. Once established, further migration, interaction and flow will occur along these corridors (Zoomers & van Westen 2011). In the links created between the interconnected migrants, a network can be established, in which further migration is likely to occur. Economic, social, cultural, and symbolic ties will link home places with individuals, families and groups living outside the home place (Hardwick 2008). A translocal approach to mobility makes it possible to account for all of these complexities by going beyond the traditional binary concepts of mobility as dichotomous distinctions of 'origin' vs. 'destination'; 'emigration' vs. 'immigration'; 'temporary vs. permanent' (Faist 2008).

The fact that translocal migrants often have their homes, or at least a feeling of home, in two or more places points to the dual or multiple lives they live simultaneously. The increased interconnectedness, new means of communication, and an increase in modes of transportation, allow migrants to maintain continuous contact with their family members left behind in the village, and make a translocal family life or community life possible. In such a translocal family life, important decisions and advice flow in-between more than one place (Carrasco 2010)². Lawson argues that places play a significant role in the construction of migrants' identities and vice versa. Migrants' stories thereby become an integral part of the understanding of place. She argues that the neoliberal focus on economic rationalism and narratives of progress and growth fails to take into account the importance of migrants' experiences and thus fails to give an accurate account of place (Lawson 1999). Simultaneous engagement in two or more communities affects identity and affiliations (Zoomers & van Westen 2011). The flipside of this is that the translocal migrants are continuously moving along the 'continuum of place', meaning that they are always in-between places. When assessing translocal life it is important to include the state of 'in-betweenness' that the

² Carrasco use trans-nationalism, but since movement within a country can cross as many borders as international mobility, the theory is applied in a translocal context.

migrants must experience by the splitting of their sentiment and feeling of responsibility between various places. Therefore, in-betweenness is a concept very useful for grasping the social complexity of migrant translocalism (Gielis 2009).

Translocal communities

Even though we recognize places as constructed through processes from beyond, place is bound to a geographical location, in contrast to a community that not necessarily have a geographical origin. Cohen (1985) defines the core idea of the concept community, as something that reflects both social processes and cultural practice. Therefore, communities consist of both practical and conceptual parts, and these are important to assess in all cases where relationship plays an important role in people's life (Cohen 1985). This brings us to a presentation of Harvey's work with 'imagined communities' (Harvey 1996). According to Harvey, communities should be considered both empirically and normatively. They are constructed by common values and common discourses along with an implicit practice and understanding. This is what Harvey calls 'common discourse and implicit practices' (Harvey 1996:312).

Harvey has mostly been focused on urban places, and how we tend to dwell with the spatial fixed to our description of places. By fixedness of the spatial he refers to capitals that are bounded in the built environment and are fundamental to the mainstream way of reading places. Harvey's work with the understanding of places, also include a focus on memory and identity as important aspect of the construction of places (Harvey 1996). According to Harvey, places are spaces where things that have happened, give form to a continuity and identity across different generations, and forms communities, that again affect the processes that construct the places (Harvey 1996). A feeling of belonging, mutual dependence, and trust are also bound to specific places and persons with relation to the place. Furthermore, place has to be understood in relation to memory, e.g. what we know about ourselves and what we remember from our past, as our memories are normally bound to specific places and are reproduced or expressed in communities. 'Home' is especially related to our way of understanding identity and is constructed by our memories. The practical and discursive practice of binding places together, as well as creating the permanence of particular places is likewise a collective affair – within which all sorts of contested administrative and social practices occur (Harvey 1996).

Community is as vague and ambivalent a word as place is and the intertwining with 'imagined' makes a concept with many layers of meaning. One essential issue that both of these concepts have in common however, is that they have to be understood as more than just constructed from their permanence. Communities can be imagined, formal and tangible as well as stretching across long distances (Harvey 1996). The use of 'imagined community' in this thesis is not an attempt to examine diasporic community formation. Rather, the aim is to use the concept to examine the like-mindedness, shared identity and feelings of belonging that characterize translocal migrants' habitus and construct the translocal community that they are a part of. These translocal communities are molded by migrant narratives and imaginations, based in their sense of belonging and local

affiliation along with the knowledge they gather away from home through experiences of different cultures, alienation and challenges (Lawson 1999).

Tendencies show that individuals and groups, who migrate, regroup in new locations, reconstruct their histories, and reconfigure their ethnic projects (Appadurai 1996:48). According to this; identity and group feelings will attain a non-localized form, to which the analysis of place making processes will have to respond to. Analyzing 'scale' and other spatial units is no longer tightly territorialized, spatially bounded, historically unselfconscious, or culturally homogeneous (Appadurai 1996). Appadurai argues that 'the local is as much a process and a project' as the global (Appadurai 1996:33). Places acquire much of their character from collective activities of people who dwell there. People will shape the social and cultural landscape through their different activities. They create different institutions and form social relations within and around places. Places therefore attain their identity through practices, which derive from the imaginary and discursive links between individuals dwelling or passing through the place. This can be face-to-face contact between actors that meet in certain places, but also through other new forms of communication that can function as a way of exchanging knowledge and opinions (Harvey 1996). This can also occur on smaller scales of common action on behalf of common loyalty to a place. The constructing of a place can be created in the mind as well as on the ground (Harvey 1996).

Loyalty to a place constitutes powerful political meanings and even if people seem separated and show little communality in their daily practice, a feeling of loyalty to the place can be essential for it. Harvey (1996) uses The Paris Commune of 1871, to show that although there can be a strong heterogeneity within a community, it can be bound to together by common loyalty. The collective memories that are attached to places are connected to an imagined belonging, and this is why it becomes relevant to understand communities as imagined as well as actual to understand people's ways of belonging. Translocal communities are constructed from both imagination of a community and from actual connections and communities. The actors within a translocal field are connected in different ways. Mobility is central to the way we understand the contemporary world, but mobility remains unspecified, and in many cases it stands as an alternative to place, boundedness, and stability. It is therefore important to explore the imaginations that lie behind different actors' notions of place and mobility (Creswell 2006). Creswell (2006) and Appadurai (1996) also point to the changing social, territorial, and cultural reproduction of group identity and the importance of inclusion of social and cultural aspects in the understanding of mobility and formation of translocal communities.

Translocal habitus

Kelly & Lusia (2006) argue that migrants maintain multiple connections to their home place, and that the connections continue to have a significant influence on the migrant's life as well as on those who are left behind in their home place. Thus it becomes meaningful to study migrants' translocal habitus to analyze the translocal-life of migrants and to understand migrants as interrelated in social groups that share sentiment, identity and obligations within a translocal field (Kelly & Lusia 2006). According to Bourdieu (1988), habitus is a system of perceptions, thoughts and actions. Therefore, it becomes relevant to use 'habitus' to examine, how migrants are affected by living an in-between

life, but also how they affect places, where they are acting (Kelly & Lusia 2006). Habitus is the way society becomes deposited in persons in the form of capitals and trained capacities, thinking patterns and feelings, which then leads peoples' way of being and way of belonging. Habitus can be seen as a social and collective phenomenon as well as a personal phenomenon (Wacquant 2005). This can be studied by examining the life of migrants', to understand trans-local activities and their social and cultural ties and thereby examine their translocal habitus (Vertovec 2004). Vertovec (2004) uses Bourdieu's concept of habitus to describe the in-between life of the translocal migrants. According to him, it is possible to see migrants' life as formed of translocal habitus, where home and abroad is linked and migrants thereby construct a life-world with elements from different places. By using the concept of translocal habitus it is possible to go beyond the dichotomy between social structures in a specific place on the one hand and the individuals' strategies on the other. It is thereby possible to see social structure and individuals' strategies as interrelated, interdependent and inter-located (Kelly & Lusia 2006).

The bi- or multilocality that characterizes the translocal habitus, is equally important for analyzing migrants' sense of belonging, identity and future. One example is the desire to maintain family and community commitments as a strong factor in everyday life, across places. This necessitates recognition of circular flows in migration, which is not taken into account in the linear approach, which has been popular with various economic development scholars (Lawson 1999). This gives a possibility to conceptualize migration differently than in systematic demographic studies: as flows of migrants and number of people migrating. It gives the means to study people 'in between places' and understand places as translocal - shaped by people (Faist 2008). The translocal migrant's social position in one or more societies constitutes their translocal habitus. 'It gives the migrants a 'dual frame of reference' (or rather multiple frame), which will lead to constant comparison of the situation in the 'home' community with the situation in the 'host' community' (Vertovec 2004:974).

Migrant's translocal habitus is shaped and changed through the experiences they gain from their stay in various places, this new experience is central to the construction of worldviews (Creswell 2006). The concept worldview will be further expanded below. Translocal migrants dwell and reside in several places and it is too simplistic to count people as either 'in' or 'out' of a place. Their impact and footsteps will stay at a given location long after the person physically has left the place and it therefore becomes relevant to look at the continuum of places (Gielis 2009). The migrant's life in-between places affect the places where they dwell, belong and pass, but on the other hand migrants will also be affected by places they pass, and this contributes to the formation of their translocal habitus (Gielis 2009). The worldview is the insight in a world beyond one's own world. Mobility changes and constructs peoples' worldviews, no matter the physical distance of this mobility; worldview can also occur from looking in to near but unknown fields. A search for the unknown has historically driven mobility but also processes of change. The world is experienced as we move through it, and therefore can mobility, or the ability to move to new places, be experienced as a capacity, or a privilege to people (Creswell 2006). Two regional studies in Nepal and Bangladesh are interesting for understanding a migrant's notion of home and away and how

they are interrelated. The study from Nepal shows a tendency among young educational migrants in the rural Nepal to participate in a mobility process although none of them emotionally or formally leave the household or 'home'. This is what Bhim Subedi³ calls an extension of home away from home where migrants participate in various activities beyond home territory (Subedi 2006). He presents a framework to work with the worldview of rural Nepalese people. This framework focuses on '*Ghar*' (home) and '*Para*' (reach) and by using this framework he argues, that it becomes possible to understand Nepalese migration without seeing migration as a one-way process but as a circulation where Ghar and Para become two parts of an interrelated whole. Katy Gardner has made a similar study in Bangladesh (Gardner 2009). She uses the local words '*desh*' (home land) and '*bidesh*' (in a foreign place) in her framework. *Desh* is characterized by a sense of home and rootedness, whereas *bidesh* is a place, where one has the feeling of being a foreigner. The understanding of *bidesh* refers to a sliding scale of places ranging from another region within the same country or a place on the other end of the world. The importance is not the distance but the fact that you will feel as a foreigner in the place (Gardner 2009).

Subedi (2006) mentions the local expression '*kuwako bhyaguto*' used to describe people who have never been outside the village. It literally means a person who has not experienced the world outside the home place. Subedi uses the concept worldview; to describe the insight people can have about the world beyond the village. And it is said about persons that are limited in their worldview due to them not venturing out, that they have little intelligence (Subedi 2006). This shows that people who have lived a longer period outside the village have a high status in the village than the ones who did not expand their worldview through mobility. The ones who acquired experience and knowledge from the outside are seen as wise people who carry an interesting capital. Consequently, they are expected to invest parts of this capital in the village thereby contributing to the local community (Subedi 2006). A clear definition of mobility and migration is difficult to find in the case of Nepal, because the destination is very rarely final. However, as Subedi shows, it is the insight gained during the stay rather than the degree of permanence that is relevant (Subedi 2006).

By applying a translocal perspective it thus becomes possible to analyze sociocultural, political, economic, and social networks that span across geographical divides within a translocal field. Furthermore, a translocal approach makes it possible to examine migrants' multiple engagements in various places. If individuals engage in social relations and practices that cross borders as a regular feature of everyday life, then they exhibit transnational ways of being. When people explicitly recognize this, they highlight the translocal elements of who they are and are expressing a translocal way of belonging (Levitt & Schiller 2004). This relates to Bourdieu's concept field, which is twofold; on the one hand, it is a system of structures, which bind actors together, in this study referred to as 'ways of belonging'. On the other hand it is a system of perceptions, thoughts and actions, referred to as 'ways of being' (Bourdieu 1988). It is relevant to approach the dynamics of a transnational field by introducing a distinction between 'ways of belonging', which is here examined through a focus on translocal community, and 'ways of being', which is assessed through

³ Bhim Subedi has made extensive studies in the same area where the study for this thesis was carried out.

an examination of the constitution of a translocal habitus. This distinction will be applied in the analysis where it helps clarify the difficulties of double orientation in everyday life of individuals in transnational social fields (Levitt & Schiller 2004, Carrasco 2010)

2.4. Social remittances, migrants contribution to place making

A social field is composed of the availability of multiple forms of capitals that persons possess, but the capitals are not fixed and can be exchanged across places and in-between actors (Thieme 2008). By focusing on the exchange of remittances, it is possible to understand migrant's position in place making. This following part will elaborate on social remittances as a concept relevant to relate processes in the translocal field to place making.

Bourdieu (1986) is known for applying the economic term 'capital' to alternative values in the society. He proves that flows and exchanges within the society cannot be reduced solely to economic perspectives, but rather there are a variety of exchanges, which contribute to construction of social fields. Thieme (2008:30) describes Bourdieu's distinction between economic, cultural, social and symbolic capital. As follows: Economic capital is the ownership of monetary profit. It exists (or is owned) in e.g. buildings, livestock, vehicles, etc. Cultural capital is the product of a person's (or collective's) knowledge and educational qualifications. Social capital consists of a network of lasting social relations or of mutual commitments and responsibilities. Symbolic capital is the recognition and legitimization of other forms of capital; which can give a person prestige and reputation (Thieme 2008). By introducing Bourdieu's concept of non-economic capitals it becomes possible to connect the non-economic flows to the translocal approach, thereby uncovering how the migrants' translocal habitus, become relevant for understanding their capability to exchange capitals. The different forms of capitals are analytically difficult to separate and they often cohere, but at the same time it is important to recognize non-economic capital existence and effect. In this thesis the concept of social capital will be used commonly for non-economic capital, but it is important to recognize that the concept will cover various forms of capitals.

Social remittances are defined as flows of social capital including ideas, practices, identities etc. Social remittances are the changes in social practices associated with migration and remittances are therefore seen as a 'motor' that drives local processes (Sørensen 2004). Knowledge remittances are the acquired skills and knowledge derived from migration. Political remittances are the change in identity and political awareness that comes with migration. Other variations of the concept remittances have been used by various scholars, to describe different flows of non-economic matters (Rigg 2007a). However, in this thesis the focus is on social remittances. The term social remittances are used broadly to describe the non-economic flows of migrants and the changes affected by them. Social remittances is used as an umbrella, that includes far more than the mainstream focus on sending money from one place to the family (Page & Mercer 2012). Whether or not social remittances can be untied from the economic flow (economic remittances) is not relevant, in this study, the relevant discussion lies in a continuous re-thinking of what 'remittances' actually covers. Not only to define what they are, but also to assess their effect on local transformational processes and place making (Rigg 2007a).

Several studies of social remittances focus on the ideas and practices that individual migrants export to their relatives and friends, but the socio-cultural exchanges can also affect community development more broadly. To encompass these community affects, the term 'collective remittances' is used. It describes activities made by one group, for example money raising that can benefit a group in the place of origin. Collective social remittances are in cases where collective action are exchanged by individuals in their position as organizational members and are used in organizational settings such as hometown associations, church groups and political parties. (Levitt & Lamba-Nives 2010).

Exchange of social remittance takes place, when migrants return to live in or visit their original communities, but also when non-migrants visit their migrant family members at the new location. Remittances can also be exchanged through other means of communication such as letters, telephone calls, and the social media. In conversations on the mobile phone ideas can be passed on and information and values can be exchanged, in a quick and fast way (Levitt 1998, Page & Mercer 2012). Skills and knowledge are also moved in-between places during various activities such as festival, meetings and celebrations by which connections are maintained (Page & Mercer 2012). Remittances flow through informal channels within networks of family or friends and can therefore be experienced as more reliable than other information sources, as the information is passed by someone trusted and familiar (Levitt 1998). Communication technology is a complement and in many cases a substitute for, face-to-face contact. However, we have to bear in mind that various sorts of exchange still needs a face-to-face contact to build the trust needed to exchange capitals (Faist 2008). Furthermore ideas, practices, and other forms of capitals do not only travel one way, they are circulated, exchanged, and negotiated continuously (Levitt & Lamba-Nives 2010).

The Power geometry of migration and social remittances

Time-space compression is a concept used by geographers, to explain the processes and tendencies that make the world 'smaller', or more precisely new modes of technology, that give new perspectives to our perception of distance. Concretely this can be means of transportation, communication and technology (Massey 1994). The multiple flows and heterogeneity of processes ensure that all places are permanently in a state of flux. Due to difference in the geographically distribution of capitals it is necessary to bear in mind that some places are more in flux than others, and that some are permanent and securely bounded because of power, economic, cultural and social asymmetry (Harvey 1996). Because of the differences in geography, there are also variances in the degree of movement and communication within different social groups in the society. This reflects a differentiated degree of control and initiation, and results in a high degree of disparity in individuals' position within the 'time-space compression' (Massey 1994). This is what Massey (1994) names 'The power geometry of time-space compression'. To make this more complex, Doreen Massey argues that it is not only an issue about, who moves and who does not move. It is also about the power relation within the flows and the movements. In so doing, she shows that different social groups are affected differently by flows and movements: some are directly in charge of it, some are receivers, while some are imprisoned by the effects of movements and flows (Massey 1994). Similar to these assumptions about the geometry of power reproduction, Bourdieu's

habitus can be seen as a system of social reproduction, where power structures are reproduced (Kelly & Lusia 2006).

Social remittances are local-level and migration-driven, which means that the exchanges of capital are bottom-up processes (Levitt 1998). Flows of social remittances propagate the impact of regional- or national-level dynamics to local-level and thus spread affects and changes broadly (Levitt & Lamba-Nieves 2010). Migrants from the rural areas bring skills and know-how to the places where they settle, while at the same time continuing to contribute to development in their home place by the transfer of remittances, such as introducing new knowledge and skills, new traditions and new awareness. But remittances have a broad variety of effects and side effects. Thus, migration also creates dependency and inequality (Vertovec 2004). Furthermore, unrealistic expectations of standards of living may arise and new ideas can also cause cultural conflicts on local level (Levitt & Lamba-Nieves 2010). Migrants' returning is seen as an asset for development, but migration return is not always the most preferable scenario for development in migrants sending communities. There can be valuable on-going exchange of capitals, when migrants are living away from the home place, apart from the obvious advantage of economic transfers. Knowing somebody living near to the power center or important institutions is worth mentioning, and can have significant impact on local communities as well, for example, through home-town associations, but also through informal communities like the translocal imagined communities mentioned above (Faist 2008). Migrants in a translocal community can have a huge impact on processes of change in their home place, primarily through their exchange of remittances (Page & Mercer 2012). Thus, remittances have an important position in the thesis as they describe a social relationship between migrants and those left behind in the home place, as well as migrants' position and ability to interact in place making processes in their home place.

As mentioned in the first part concerning the migration-development nexus, social remittances have recently been introduced in the development industry, but the main focus has remained on economic-remittances. Development actors have tried to affect migrants in order to send remittances, but without being concerned with why people remit. Furthermore, the consequences of promoting remittances as the central element to drive development in the future have never been fully scrutinized (Page & Mercer 2012). Page & Mercer (2012) express their concern about the economic-remittances, these concerns can be relevant also, when looking at capitals, or remittances in a non-economic form: First; the consequences that those at 'home' can get an increased dependence of flows of remittances. Second; remittances can intensify existing inequality, causing uneven development. Third; focus on remittances can provide cover for the failure of local governments' development programs. Last; passing off the responsibility for 'development' at home to those who have migrated, can cause conflicts for the migrants and their new life at the current place of residence (Page & Mercer 2012).

There is gap between the mobility and fixity, which produces processes of uneven cycles of investment in places and lead to uneven development of places (Creswell 2004). Social beings invest in places individually and collectively through decisions leading to mobility. By taking such

decisions, migrants affect the place and in many cases they will also gain power. Human investment in places is, as already indicated, understood more broadly than in the narrow economic terms that characterize mainstream development scholars. Investment includes a variety of capitals. Capitals are intentionally circulated by migrants with the aim of improving places in which they have a shared sense of community or to where they belong. By recognizing that places are socially constructed we also recognize that power hierarchies are reproduced, or in other words, the human resources such as casts and class, are reproduced in the social production of places (Creswell 2004). Harvey draws attention to problems that can arise by romanticizing the construction of places through social processes. The social process can reproduce existing power structures and it can generate an exclusive genealogy. If the place is constructed by the imagination of a collective memory, then spatially exclusionary rights can be extraordinarily powerful (Harvey 1996).

2.5. Theoretical framework

The review of concepts for analyzing translocal migrant's contributing to local place making processes has resulted in the above-mentioned theoretical considerations. The main concepts are summarized in a theoretical framework, which forms the structure for the analysis and will be described below.

The first parts of the analysis is assessing the **socio-economic situation** in Namsaling, through an examination of the dynamics of local living in Namsaling, from both locals' and migrants' perspective. The **migration landscape** in Namsaling is examined with special emphasis on education and educational migration. Three migration stories, told by young persons from Namsaling currently living in Kathmandu are central for the analysis in chapter 5 and 6, their stories are presented in the last part of chapter 4. Understanding places as constructed by social processes from elsewhere, makes it possible to include migrant's contribution to the analysis of these processes; especially those, who have left their home place and are staying elsewhere.

In the second part of the analysis, the translocal field is examined in order to assess the spatial prevalence of processes included in the place making. The translocal field will be examined by assessing the **translocal communities** and the migrant's **translocal habitus**. Translocal communities are studied by analyzing migrants' **ways of belonging**. Way of belonging is concerned with migrants' in-between position embodied through the imaginary ties between people in various places; the shared identity, like-mindedness and their feelings of belonging, but also through the formal connections through e.g. institutions and networks (can be formal and informal) that construct a community across places. The migrants' **way of being** is concerned with how the migrants have been affected by moving through time and place, and how the migrants' new worldview has affected their identity that constructs their translocal habitus.

The third part of the analysis focuses on the **translocal living** to examine how processes from beyond construct Namsaling. The concept of **social remittances** is relevant to analyze migrants' position within a translocal field and to understand how they can affect the **place making processes** from beyond. Initially, the interconnected livelihood will be examined to explain the dependency

and obligation that defines the relation between migrants and their home place. The chapter will also touch upon the antagonism between the worldview of movers and stayers. The history of education in Namsaling is used as an example on how processes from beyond have affected Namsaling

This leads to a discussion of social remittances both as a concept to join migration practice and place making, but also in terms of the ambivalence that occurs when places are opening towards inputs from beyond, but still have to preserve their own sense of place or place-identity. Problems with reproduction of hierarchies and social roles as well as **power geometry** in the villager's access to changes are discussed. Finally, the discussion examines how the translocal approach and the use of social remittances as a concept that links migrants to processes in their home place, makes it possible to go beyond the mainstream focus on international economic flows that characterizes the **migration-development nexus**.

Chapter 3. Methodology

3.1. Hermeneutical approach

This chapter describes how the hermeneutic approach, which underpins this thesis, has guided the study and the methods applied. The hermeneutic approach is about understanding and not just rationally comprehending the phenomena under research (Thurén 2008). Central to the hermeneutic approach is that everything has to be understood as a whole before the various parts can be understood. This also affects the analytical approach in which the coherence between parts and the whole constructs a processual and dynamic structure of analysis. The researcher has to study the processes from within, even though the researcher's presence is consequential to the outcome of the research results (Nygaard 2012). The process of interpretation is formed as a circular process based on the researcher's pre-understanding. Questions will be formed and posed and the understandings of the research object/target will be developed dynamically, new understandings will be formed, and based on the new understanding new questions will be formed. This process is named the hermeneutical circle or spiral because the process of understanding is continuing throughout the whole research process (Simonsen & Hansen 2004). The hermeneutical approach is suitable for this study because the aim of the hermeneutical process of understanding is to promote an empathic understanding of actors' life-world. The point is not to explain a true reality because the hermeneutical approach refuses that 'reality' exists. It is only concerned with how 'reality' is understood by the people living in it. The aim is therefore to uncover important and yet unknown aspect of the world, by digging into various understandings of the research topic (Nygaard 2012). The process of understanding is dynamic in that new observations on new findings always contest the previous once.

Nygaard (2012) points to four fundamental principles in the practice of hermeneutical research:

- 1) To be conscious about pre-understandings and their affects on our understanding.
- 2) To be able to see things from another perspective.
- 3) To be conscious about questions and use them to continually contest understandings.
- 4) To contest pre-understandings and thereby challenge the way of understanding.

These four concepts have been fundamental for this study, how they have been incorporated throughout the research is elaborated in the following presentation of methodology and methods applied to this study.

Due to the use of a hermeneutical research approach, and the first and the fourth principle mentioned above, the preparation of the fieldwork in Nepal did not focus on constructing an overall (theoretical) framework to assess phenomenon in a local context. The initial research aimed at building a preliminary understanding of the local context and issues, as well as theoretical concepts (Nygaard 2012). This forms the first part of the hermeneutic spiral, because the researchers pre-understanding are contested. The process of letting new understandings decide the focus has been central for both fieldwork and analysis. This contrasts the positivist approach where a predefined

framework, created in preparatory phases, is tested through data gathered in fieldwork. This is exemplified on at least three methodical levels: 1) Fieldwork findings leads to further research, 2) Fieldwork findings inspire theoretical reading. 3) Analysis of findings defines structure and focus of the research, but also leads to further research and theoretical reading. This shows the dynamic research cycle, which has defined this study.

The process of contesting the pre-understanding was continued upon arrival in Nepal. The initial part of the fieldwork was concerned with broadening and contesting pre-understandings. Firstly interviews were made in Kathmandu with ‘experts’ on relevant topics to broaden (and contest) the understanding of migration, as well as the political and developmental context of Nepal. Upon arrival to the research site several PRA’s were carried out to broaden the understanding of the local setting. The pre-understandings have been contested throughout the entire research in the analysis of findings, and all the way to the finalization of the thesis. An example of this is that interview-guides have been modified if the respondents presented an interesting issue, which formed new understandings. Furthermore the empirical findings guided the theoretical review, which formed the theoretical considerations in this thesis.

3.2. Case study - a local based approach

The second principle for the hermeneutical research approach is concerned with the ability *to see things from another perspective*. Thus, this research has been formed as a case study.

Case study is applied as a research strategy when the aim is to examine a current phenomenon in its everyday context, and especially when the boundaries between the phenomena and the context in which the phenomenon are found, not are clearly evident (Yin 1981). Furthermore this case study is an in-depth multi-sited field study. Namsaling VDC⁴, a village in Ilam district in Eastern Nepal was selected as the primary field site with help from Dr. Bhim Subedi from Tribuvan University in Kathmandu. Dr. Subedi has made several studies in Namsaling and was involved in gaining contact and access to the village. The study includes households in ward⁵ number 5, one of 9 wards in Namsaling. The two other field-sites Kathmandu and Jhapa⁶, are selected through contacts from interviews and livelihood-migration mapping (see below). Both are major destinations for outmigration from Namsaling. The total length of the fieldwork was 3 months, where 5 weeks was spent in Namsaling, 3 weeks in Jhapa, 3 weeks in Kathmandu and 1 week in Ilam. During the period of fieldwork in Namsaling the celebration of the Hindu festival Dashain was underway, and several migrants returned to their village, and most of the interviews with the migrants are made in the village.

The context is incorporated fittingly into this study with the hermeneutic process of understanding

⁴ VDC (village development committee) is equivalent to a municipality and it is the lowest administrative unit in Nepal. There is approximate 1282 households and the total population is 6378 (NCDC 2010)

⁵ Namsaling VDC is divided in nine wards, that consist of between 77 and 175 households (NCDC 2010)

⁶ The interviews conducted in Jhapa is not included as a part of the analysis of migration, some of the respondents are included in chapter 6 where the history of education in Namsaling is used as an example.

and contesting pre-understandings because the spiral formation seeks to include both the phenomena studied and the context (Nygaard 2012). In this thesis the phenomenon studied is the migrants' exchange of social remittances and the context is the place (in this case the village, or Kathmandu). By using a case study strategy to go into depth about translocal lives and place-making processes, it is possible to conduct a holistic study of how multilocal migrants' exchange of remittances can affect local place making. Other types of research strategies would not have been relevant, because both the research question and hermeneutical research strategy demands an approach that includes various variables to make the understanding of the context and the complex processes possible (Yin 2003).

In Namsaling I stayed with a family in the village. It was a way to observe and, thereby, to understand the community. It was a unique opportunity to build understanding of the culture, traditions and tacit processes that construct the society, and I was able to explore the case context, as suggested by the second principle *to see things from another perspective*. There are aspects that are hidden when only short stays and interviews are the means of fieldwork. So by staying and thereby familiarizing myself with local people it was possible for me to understand the respondents when they were talking about their everyday life, traditions and habits (Dewalt et al. 1998). Longer periods of stay in the field and context central to the study also enables the researcher to establish a relation to people in the community, which can facilitate and deepen the interview process beyond the short interviews which can normally be arranged (Rankin 2003). It was my impression that the villagers came to trust me enough to open up because they got to know me through my sustained presence in the village. I never met resistance to participate in interviews or answer questions.

The research also included 're-visits' at selected migrants in Kathmandu as to understand their everyday life in an urban environment and to observe how the migrants were behaving differently in another setting. The intention was to visit them in their home, and have informal conversations with them about their life without putting them in a staged situation of interview. Kathmandu is the secondary field site and by comparing these observations to observations from the village it became possible to understand migrant's in-between lives.

Life course Approach

The case study builds on the stories told by different individuals, both villagers in Namsaling as well as migrants. Three educational migrants were selected, and main parts of the analysis build on their stories (see below and 4.2 (last section)). This is what Gardner (2009) refers to, as the life course approach. Life course are the phases of life, which people move through over time. It is an approach, which emphasizes the interconnection between people and places, rather than the disjuncture of life stories. The framework presents individuals' life stories. The life course framework recognizes the dynamic process of migrants' lives, where decisions lead to situations, which again lead to other decisions. It is relevant to use the life course framework to study migration to understand; how migration affects the migrants' life and their perception of the world and the everyday life. The changing elements in peoples' life courses articulate in complex ways the construction of places (Gardner 2009). It is relevant to follow the migrants' personal stories, to

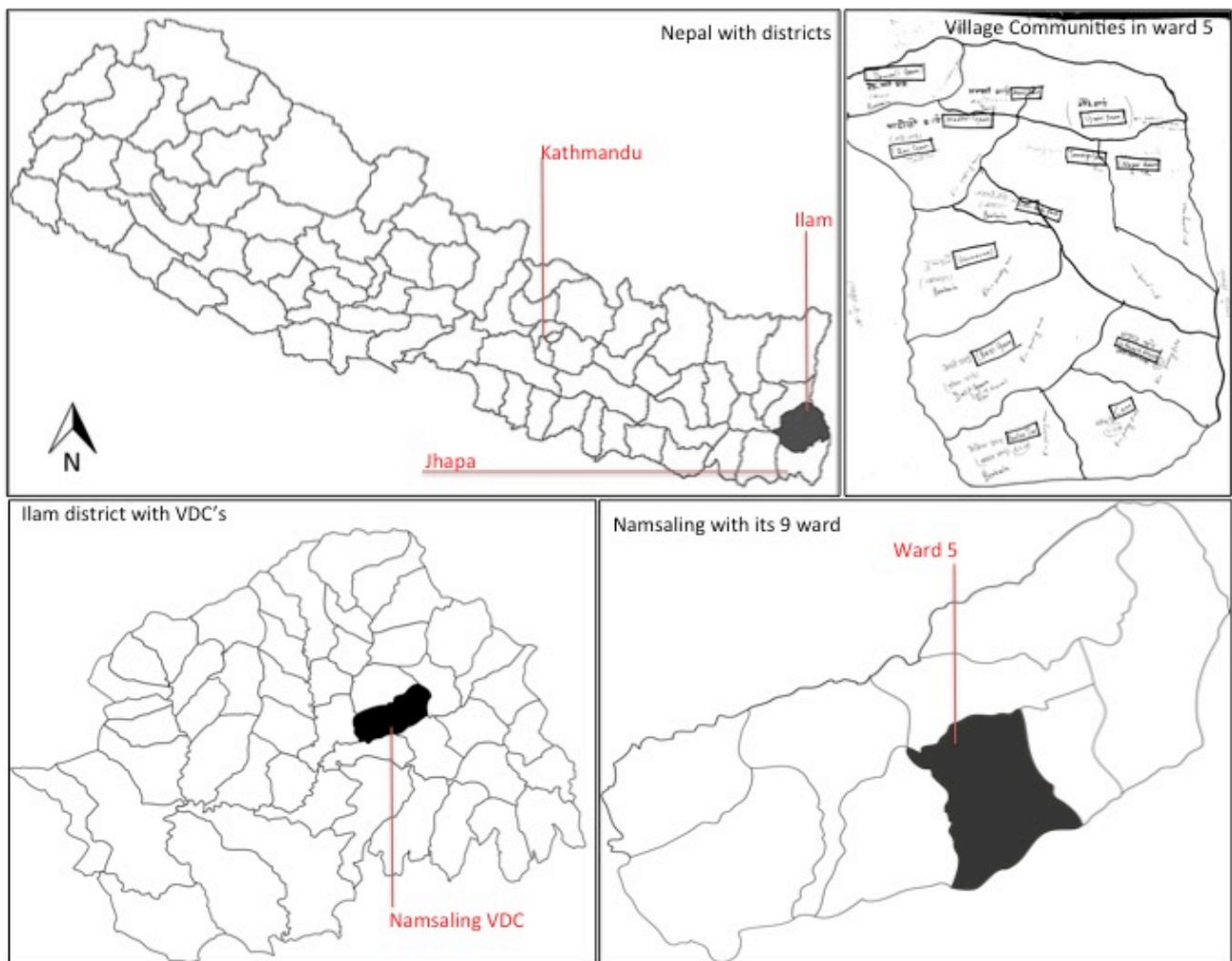
be able to understand how they are affected and how they affect their surroundings, and thereby contributes to the processes that constitute places. By using selected migrants stories as cases it becomes possible to study their life as a part of a broader whole, which also is central for a hermeneutical approach. The eyes, which see, tell the stories; thereby it becomes possible to understand the translocal dynamics from the migrants' perspective (Gilmartin 2008).

The aim of the case study is to analyze migrants contributing to place making, by examining one village and the flows and connections from there, to other places. Therefore, this research uses a combination of a translocal perspective and a place perspective. This combination is used to move the research away from a top down aerial-view. By using a local perspective it becomes possible to focus on the local people, and the local processes, but at the same time recognizing the translocal perspective, and the perception that all places are formed by process from beyond. Multi-sited research is ideal for studying translocal relations because it is possible to both interview and observe migrants in their different contexts. By both asking migrants about the translocal aspects of their life and comparing it with observations of the migrants' way of relating to different places it is possible to build a better understanding of the case (Levitt & Schiller 2004).

Introducing Namsaling

Namsaling is located in the province Ilam in Eastern Nepal. Ilam Bazaar is the district capital and is located in the middle of the District at an altitude of 1200m; the district headquarters and municipal offices are located here. The walking distance from Namsaling to Ilam Bazaar is 3 to 5 hours depending on the weather, physical condition, and the load carried. Ilam is bordering India to the east, the old Darjeeling-Ilam trading route passed through Namsaling and exchange with India in different forms has historically played a great role for Namsaling. The effect of the interaction with India is referred to as the Darjeeling effect. The geographical location in the fertile part of the Nepalese hill areas with good climatic conditions has made the area resourceful in many ways, and there is less poverty than in many other areas of Nepal. The increase of cash crop cultivation, since the late 1980s, has augmented the economic activities in this area (Sharma 1997, Takahatake 2001). The close proximity to the Indian border has historically given advantages in terms of trade and education, especial during the Rana autocracy⁷, where education was denied the general public. Mobility and migration has a long history in Namsaling and people with access to resources have traditionally been attracted to the possibilities of education and modern ways of living in nearby India (Sharma 1997). The historical tendency to exchange and trade, as well as a long tradition of migration has made Namsaling an interesting case for a contemporary study of place making in rural areas. Thus, it has to be recognized that Namsaling generally is above average in terms of living standards compared to other VDC's in Nepal, and generalization must therefore only be applied with precautions.

⁷ The autocratic Rana dynasty ruled Nepal from 1846 until the new constitution in 1951 where King Tribuvan gained back his power. (Whelpton 2005)



Map 1: Map of the case study area in Nepal.

Due to the landscape, the settlement structure in ward 5 is very scattered; finding larger patches for the building of houses can be difficult, hence the houses are scattered in village-communities (named Gaun in Nepali) with between 7-20 houses. The distance between each household in the village varies due to the landscape. Distance is never mentioned in kilometers, but only in walking time because this is the only way of moving in-between locations. The village-communities can be as close as 10 minutes walking, while others can be difficult to access because of the landscape and with up to 1 hours walking distance. There are even some singular houses that are isolated from others with 15-20 minutes to the nearest house. This has also influenced the fieldwork because planning of interviews was important in order to avoid many hours walking every day. Originally the ethnic groups and castes were divided in different villages, and the villages were subdivided in areas due to sub-caste. These structures are kept in some village-communities, but now many villages are mixed in terms of caste and ethnicity, and new houses are being built, where land is available, and not in order of caste and ethnic divisions. According to the PRA-mapping session

(described below), which mapped 137 households of approximately 170⁸ in ward number 5, the distribution of caste and ethnicity⁹ was as follows: 52 % high-caste Hindus¹⁰, 21 % low-caste Hindus and 27 % Tibeto-Burmese groups. The distribution in Namsaling VDC is slightly different; 33 % of the population is high-caste Hindus and approximate 50 % is from Tibeto-Burmese groups, and the rest is low-cast Hindu groups (NCDC 2010).

3.3. Consideration on methods

The following section is concerned with the empirical study, which is constituted by the case study. According to Nygaard (2012), the most adequate hermeneutical research methods are qualitative studies of actors through interviews and observations. Several methods are used in this study, and reflections on the selected methods as well as practical considerations are described below (see also table in Appendix 9.1). The whole study in Nepal was made through interpreters; therefore, it is important to consider that nuances could be lost in the translation. However, during the stay it became possible to build up a good understanding and a positive cooperation and workflow with the interpreter. Additionally all the sound-files were transcribed from Nepali to English by Nepalese translators, which helped to get direct quotations of the migrant's answers and statements¹¹.

Semi structured interviews

Semi-structured interviews are the most used method in this study: To make background interviews with key informants both in Denmark, in Kathmandu and in Namsaling as well as in the Livelihood-migration mapping (see below) and in interviews with migrants (see table in Appendix 9.1).

Semi-structured interview is a relevant method because it is a mix of a structured interview and an open interview, which gives interviewer an opportunity to jump between themes, and the ability to add new questions if the interview happens to develop in a new interesting direction, as is important in the third hermeneutic principle. The purpose of this type of research interview is to acquire knowledge through a conversation with a certain structure in which the interviewer has a higher degree of freedom (Kvale 1999). The semi-structured interviews were generally started with an open question where the respondents for example would be asked to describe something or tell the advantages or disadvantages about a certain theme. The open questions in each theme were then followed by confrontational questions demanding an answer in order to assess actual problems, disagreements or to contest theoretical considerations (Flick 2009).

⁸ This difference reflects 1) Borders between the wards was not clear. 2) The villagers did only count houses belonging to a village-community and therefore were remote houses not included. 3) Empty houses were not included in the mapping.

⁹ This division of caste-groups into 3 broad categories is drawn from Bora and Massey (2009) that have been shown to reflect meaningful distinctions in Nepalese society: high-caste Hindus, low-caste Hindus and Tibeto-Burmese. Tibeto-Burmese does count for various ethnic groups (Rai, Limbu, Devan, Margar, Tamang, Sherpa, Newar among others).

¹⁰ The proportion of High caste Hindus in ward 5 is higher than the rest of Namsaling. The high-caste Hindus have traditionally been the landowners, which means, they have been privileged compared to other population groups. Furthermore they have been dominant in politics, education and favored in the law system, which can influence their opportunities and lifestyle today.

¹¹ Grammatical corrections and misspelling has been adjusted in the quotations in the thesis, in order to improve the readability, in a way where the meaning not is changed. In some cases where correction could affect the meaning, the quotation are left in that way they were translated by the interpreters, even though it leaves some quotation with an incorrect language. The quotations marked with a * have been modified in order to make them easier to understand, the original translations can be find in appendix 9.8 (CD)

According to the hermeneutical third principle it is important to *be conscious about questions and contest the horizon through the way of asking*. The interview guides were prepared before the fieldwork, and was thus based on pre-understanding of the issues at stake (draft interview guides can be seen in appendix 9.8 (CD)). Therefore the interview guides and the manner in which the questions were asked have been continually re-viewed, throughout the fieldwork period, both in relation to the answers from respondents, but also with help from the interpreter, and his interpreting of the situation and responses. More importantly, the informants' answers and eagerness to talk about certain topics formed each interview so that by letting the informant take the lead the pre-assumptions, which had formed the prepared interview guides in the first place, were contested (Kvale 1999).

Eighteen interviews were made with the migrants in the village during Dashain Festival. Due to logistical challenges, it would not have been possible to meet all the migrants at their current place of living. Therefore interviews with migrants were carried out when they returned to celebrate Dashain in their home place, and as already mentioned was re-visit made to several migrants in Kathmandu. It is important to keep in mind that not all migrants return to celebrate the festivals. Mostly students and government jobholders return because they have holiday during the festival. Migrant workers in foreign countries do not have the opportunity to return, and most migrants working in transportation, construction or trading industries have to work while others are only coming home for a few days. Women who have been married off are not returning because their obligations lay with the husband's family. Therefore, most of the migrants interviewed during Dashain were educational migrants (14), few government job holders (2) and work migrants (2) who had returned because their contracts ended.

Participatory methods: PRA-sessions and informal Focus-group sessions

Participatory Rural Appraisal (PRA) is a term for various methods and approaches to enable rural people to present, share, and analyze their own life. The idea is to include them through different exercises, which will lead to an optimal understanding of their life, opinions, environment, etc. (Chambers 1994). PRA methods are useful in research based on a hermeneutical approach because by including the local people actively by letting them lead the process of understanding it is possible to challenge pre-understanding. This correlates with the second hermeneutical principle: *To be able to see things from another perspective*.

Several PRA-sessions aimed at mapping the village-communities in ward number 5. The maps include physical elements such as location of all households, information on roads and small tracks, along with information on location of water pipes, and special services such as dairy factories, shops, rice mills, tailor shops, carpenter shops, etc. The maps also included the name of the head of the households and the ethnicity and caste. The PRA-mapping sessions had multiple purposes; the first purpose was to understand physical coverage of the villages and to understand how villagers were talking about the village. Second purpose was to understand how they understood localities, distance and belonging. Thirdly the map became a key element in further selection of households for livelihood-migration mapping as well as for orientation in the village.

There were 3-10 members from each village-community participating in the session. One facilitator¹² was appointed with help from my host, and it was his task to select further participants that could be helpful drawing the maps or the timeline. The sessions turned out very differently: some of the maps were drawn by 10 people helping each other with the map, and others was made by few old men and some observers. (Examples of the maps can be seen on figure in Appendix 9.5). Additionally a PRA-timeline was made in another session. The aim was to understand the history of Namsaling in a way where both older and younger people were able to contribute to the discussion and point to the issues that they found relevant for the history and background of the village. (The timeline can be seen in Appendix 9.6).

During the fieldwork a number of focus-group sessions were carried out. In a focus-group session a small group of people are gathered together by a ‘moderator’ (typically the researcher) in order to explore attitudes, perceptions, and ideas about a certain topic or ‘focus’. Focus-group discussions are beneficial for retrieving non-sensitive non-controversial information in that people would seldom speak out conflicts in the open. Focus-group interviews can often make the informants search for consensus; details, variations and disagreements can be lost (Denscombe 2003). Focus-group discussions in foreign cultures and when conducted in a foreign languages can be challenging, because meaning can be lost, as for the dynamic of the group and how things are said. Furthermore, it is difficult to make room for translations without interrupting the discussion (Demant 2006). In Namsaling geography, and the long work days of the villagers were a challenge for gathering participants. Therefore the focus-group discussions were made in an alternative way. Informal sessions were made in places, where people were gathering for other purposes, for example in the dairy-shop, where many people from the village and the villages nearby, came every day to sell their milk. The aim with these sessions was to broaden or contest the understanding of the findings, related to the fourth principle: *To contest the pre-understanding and thereby challenge the way of understanding*. The disadvantage was that it was not possible to lead the group of participants in the session, which is an important element in a focus-group session (Demant 2006).

Livelihood-migration mapping

The PRA-mapping contributed with knowledge about houses in ward 5, which made it possible to select households for a household based livelihood-migration mapping. The livelihood-migration mapping was conducted in 50 households, which is 37 % of the total number of households in ward 5 (based on the PRA-mapping)¹³. There were selected households from each village-community in relation to the total number of houses. Furthermore the selection of households allowed for caste and ethnicity, as well as an equal number of men and women were selected as respondents (see Appendix 9.8 (CD)). The output of the mapping-session is two maps from each household the first

¹² The facilitator’s role was to collect a team of people that after his opinion would be appropriate for completing the map, it was also the facilitator’s role to lead the session. The group was dynamic, and additional persons were called in if there were some doubts, about household’s locations, small paths etc.

¹³ After finishing the Livelihood-migration mapping, I realized that the villagers have left out some parts of the ward, they were referred to as fields-areas but few households were also located here, but these houses was by the villagers referred to as remote, because they were difficult to access. There was another village-community of app. 10 houses that was left out, because there were confusion between the villagers whether these houses were belonging to another village-community or could be counted as separate community.

with the migrant's own migration and mobility history, and the second with the households connection outside the village, illustrated with family members and relatives staying in other places (See example on mapping in Appendix 9.5). Additionally semi structured interviews made during the livelihood-migration mapping are transcribed and used in the analysis (see Appendix 9.8 (CD)).

The livelihood-migration mapping gives an overview of migration and mobility patterns in ward 5, and it became possible to outline a common picture of the migration and mobility patterns. At the same time it was possible to gain knowledge about the socio-economic landscape and get an insight in the household's migration-stories. The intention was not to make a quantitative survey with the aim of statistical analysis, but to conduct interview with households to get an overview over migration trends, patterns and histories in the village. The livelihood-migration mapping serves four purposes: firstly to collect socio-economic and migration information of the village, which constitutes the basis of chapter 4, and includes an in-depth analysis of the migration landscape in Namsaling. Secondly to select informants for further studies in the village. Thirdly to gain information on households with family members returning for Dashain, and make preliminary appointments about coming back for interviews with migrants. Thirdly to point out secondary field sites (Jhapa and Kathmandu) and get contact information to set up contact with informants there.

Participant Observation

This research does not only include interviews, mapping and other conventional qualitative research methods, but also participant observations. Participant observation is an important aspect of the hermeneutic approach; it enables the researcher to compare the villager's claims against their actual practice, and assess, how people act in different situations and during events (Rankin 2003). By using participant observation as a central part of the study, it was possible to get close to the cultural tradition and family relations. Through an involvement with people in their cultural environment, this was possible because I lived in the village and visited migrants in their homes in Kathmandu, and in that way could participate in daily routines such as agricultural work, domestic work, meetings and celebrations. (Dewalt et al 1998, Rankin 2003).

Participant observations were relevant during the whole fieldwork period, especially during Dashain. Observations of the dynamics and relationship between migrants and their families were a unique opportunity to study the translocal practice. Furthermore another Hindu festival named Tihar was celebrated during the re-visit in Kathmandu. Many of the relatives living in the city were gathering for the festival. It gave a unique possibility to observe migrant communities away from the home place, and again an opportunity to observe and compare dynamics relevant for the study. Participant observation allows the researcher to examine how a person is able to simultaneously maintain cultural habits and identity, and interact with other actors in different places (Levitt & Schiller 2004). Furthermore, it is possible for the researcher to get an impression of how her presence influences the research context, even though this can never be completely clarified (Rankin 2003).

Participant observation is highly relevant to contest preunderstandings, but the method also demands a strategy for structuring observations to use them in the analysis. If this is not done properly, there is a high risk of overlooking important information. Observations were noted in a field diary in order to keep record of the observations. Several essays with observations and reflections on observations were made during the fieldwork and after returning. Examples on essay-themes are: migrant's life in Kathmandu, family dynamic during Dashain, global-hand washing day, local CBO meetings and socio-economic patterns. These have been highly relevant for the analysis and for an in-depth understanding of the case.

Analytic method

The pre-understanding is contested through the analytical processing of the empirical data. The aim with the analytical processing of the data was to analyze the data from new angles, systemizing and coding data in a way, which formed new understanding of the findings.

Firstly were answers from the livelihood-migration mapping systemized in a matrix (excel-file se appendix 9.8, CD). It was possible to arrange them in a table, even though not all answers were standardized. This systemizing of answers formed the main part of the analysis in chapter 4. Hereafter was the interview analyzed, this process were formed of four stages. Firstly, is all interviews review to find common and interesting themes, this method relates to the fourth hermeneutical principle: *To contest the pre-understanding and thereby challenge the way of understanding*. Because the preunderstanding is contested, by letting the research findings (answers from interviews) form the analysis. Secondly all themes are structured in seven main-themes (codes), with 4-5 sub-themes (se table in appendix 9.2 and 9.3). Thirdly a second review of all interviews is made, where the answers in the interviews are coded. And lastly a thematically systemization of the interviews is made based on the codes. This method has been relevant to systematize and organize the empirical material to be able to create an overview and to make a system for selections for the analysis.

Throughout the coding and analysis of the interviews, it became clear that education was an interesting topic. Firstly because it seemed to occupy the villagers it was an important theme for them to talk about, but also because it has been formative to their identity. Furthermore education had played a role in the development of the village, as well as for contemporary migration trends. Therefore education is central through out the analysis of place making in Namsaling. After the coding and systemization the stories (or life course) of three educational migrants were selected as a foundation of the analysis in chapter 5 and 6. All three migrants are currently living in Kathmandu (the migrants are introduced in last part of chapter 4.2). Apart from Kathmandu only Ilam Bazaar was a destination for educational migration, Ilam Bazaar was not selected as a site for studding migration because it is relatively close to the village and most villagers did not count family members in Ilam Bazaar as staying outside, because they came back relatively often.

All names of respondents have been changed to protect the respondent's controversial statements. Furthermore some of the quotes have been changed slightly to clear the understanding, these quotes are marked with a*, and the original (as translated) can be found on the CD (appendix 9.8)

Chapter 4. Outlining Namsaling as a Migrant place

4.1. A place in progress

Namsaling is a place in progress; several processes are taking place simultaneously. The perspectives of the migrants and the villagers are introduced to capture the ongoing process of making Namsaling. The focus on education is a theme throughout the thesis. There has traditionally been a strong local emphasis on education through the school sector, and as a part of the villagers' identity. This has played a role in local development and impacting Namsaling through outmigration. Therefore it is natural to focus on education as a general theme throughout the analysis. These local perspectives are analyzed through the answers provided mainly through the livelihood-migration mapping¹⁴, which forms a basis for this part of the analysis. Moreover, semi-structured interviews from the village were also used to support this analysis. The analysis focuses on processes and changes in order to examine the local context in a temporal perspective and to outline the direction of the local development. The following part is continued with an in-depth analysis of migration as a livelihood strategy in Namsaling.

Improved living conditions: income, agriculture and technology

A young schoolteacher, who had recently returned to Namsaling after completing his training in Katmandu, prefers village life in Namsaling to that of the life in the city. The schoolteacher noticed that the living conditions in Namsaling had improved during his time away:

*Before the living condition of the people was not so good, they lived their life in poverty, but now, the economic conditions are being improved, due to work, to foreign employment, people are being educated [...] But not all things are being changed in this society. Some limitations are here (*Raju, schoolteacher in Namsaling).*

Several villagers are concerned with the lack of facilities in the village, especially the lacking road connection, thereby lack of access to the market. There is no road connection in the rain-season, and the river is difficult to cross. And in the dry-season a small road through the pass is opened, but it takes longer time by vehicle than by foot, but for those who can afford it have the possibility of transportation of their cash crops to the market. The proximity of Namsaling to the India border is seen as an important factor for the relatively high standard of living and knowledge about democracy among the villagers:

*I think [Namsaling is different], because the border to India is close, Ilam was ahead in education from the beginning, we have good understanding and respect about democracy in Nepal and I believe that, in compared to other places of Nepal we have better democratic mindset (*Bijay, local farmer).*

¹⁴ See Appendix 9.8 (CD) for a table summarizing results from the livelihood-migration mapping

Several respondents also mention trade with India as an advantage for Namsaling. Good environmental conditions in the village is an important factor for the agricultural production; more than 40 households have, apart from their subsistence rice production, at least one cash crop and several have 2-3 different kinds of cash crops¹⁵, which shows that advanced cultivation methods are adapted by the local farmers. Several farmers mention the use of fertilizers to improve the yield from the relatively intensive terrace cultivating system. Cash crops are a major source of income in most households along with small business¹⁶, wage income (e.g. teachers and day to day work) and remittances. These relatively diverse income sources have formed a basis for the relatively good living standards of the village. A local farmer mentions the better economic conditions and relates them to the cash crop production:

Definitely there are changes. The changes are in transportation, in sanitation, in attitude and mentality of people because of the education [...] There is a change in economic condition. The living standard of Namsaling has been changed in the past 20 years. Moreover, the electricity has come and the production of ginger has made a good economic standard [of living] (Posha, local farmer).

Several villagers also mentioned technological improvements. Electricity has been available in the village since 2000 (see timeline in Appendix 9.6), and at present 45 out of 50 households has electricity installed in the house. More than half of the households have a television and more than 30 have a radio, the first television, using batteries, was brought to the village in 1995. Forty-three out of 50 households have at least one mobile phone, and a growing number have internet access via their mobile phone. The first mobile phone came to Namsaling in 2007 so this is a remarkable change. During the preparation for Dashain the number of telephone calls increased, as the planning and coordination of the festival and the coinciding family get-togethers, had to be done. In Namsaling and in most of Nepal the major festivals are important family events, and the planning of these events would have been difficult to plan for the translocal family - when their members are scattered and living in different locations - without the use of mobile phones. The technological improvements especially concerning communication has given more possibilities to stay in touch with migrants living away from home, and access to news and information.

Many changes have taken place, means of communication has made it easy, before we have to go to listen to radio in others house, now everyone has television in their own house. (Kamalesh, migrant and teacher in Kathmandu).

This shows a transformation toward a higher degree of technological connectedness to the world beyond the village. Several respondents, especially migrants, point out that it is a problem that newspapers not are available in the village. They argue that Newspapers are an important source of critical politics, as Nepalese television is said to be controlled by political interest.

¹⁵ The villagers mentioned ginger, broom-grass, chili and turmeric as their cash crops. Tea was cultivated for own consumption

¹⁶ The villagers were engaged in various forms of small business: dairy shop, rice-mill, iron-workshop, carpenter-shop and grocery-shop etc.

Social issues: women's empowerment, discrimination of lower castes and health facilities

Discrimination of women has been a general problem in Nepal. Discrimination has been through: unequal access to education, unequal property and citizenship rights along with general discrimination and violence (Tamang 2009). But the discrimination seems to be decreasing. Suzaan is a young unmarried woman living in Namsaling. She stayed in Darjeeling for a number of years helping in the house of her relatives. There she took sewing classes and she is now giving training to other women in the village. She is content with the better options the women have today:

*In our mother's generation, daughters were not given education because of the fear of being witches. They were constrained to be limited inside house [...] But in our generation, we are not in that position and so much mechanical equipment is functioning to support our daily chores. Now we are not that much bound to be in the home [...] I feel that Indian women have better conditions. But at least in my locality [Namsaling] no parents are against women empowerment. They encourage their daughters to stand in their own legs (*Suzaan, local unmarried woman and sewing teacher).*

Just within one generation the conditions of women have noticeably improved. The education of girls plays an important role. Another aspect is the machinery that helps in household-chores, and makes tasks of women in the household easier. This is especially true when it comes to the motor driven rice mills, as flour no longer needs to be grounded manually. The women are likewise freer to make their own decisions and several women mention less domestic violence. According to Suzaan, Namsaling is ahead in promoting women's empowerment. Just 10-20 years ago the women who decided to become educated and teach in the school, were met with skepticism, but now several girls are dreaming of becoming teachers. Suzaan is as other young women in the village dreaming of opening a business. She wants to run a beauty parlor and tailor shop in Fikkal¹⁷. An older woman mentioned that she was very rarely allowed to leave the kitchen, and she could not speak to others, not even the husband. When taking in to account the older women's accounts about their lives, several changes become apparent: girls are being educated, there are women teaching at the schools, they can speak (more) freely and the women are organized in local organizations for example women's savings groups.

Issues of discrimination between different ethnic groups and castes have occurred in Namsaling, as well as in the rest of Nepal. Lower cast people have not been allowed to use the same water sources, enter high caste houses, or participate in village activities and organizations. In 1962 a law was passed making it illegal to discriminate against the untouchable castes¹⁸, but the discrimination is still continuing today because it is embedded in the culture (Tamang 2011). The women's savings

¹⁷ Fikkal is a town on the Ilam-Jhapa road, similar to Ilam Bazaar there are a bazaar in the city, but the size is smaller than Ilam. Villagers from Namsaling go here for shopping.

¹⁸ Untouchable caste is another word for Dalit. The word refers to the practice that other people from other castes not were allowed to drink from the same water taps, or eat boiled rice from a Dalit

group, in the village, is not only empowering the women, but also improving the relation between castes:

We do not discriminate any religion, ethnicity or community. We have Brahmins, Dalits, different ethnic groups and all in our organization. Our president herself is from the Dalit community. (Nisha, teacher, housewife, and former president in the women's savings group)

There are initiatives to bring the castes and ethnic groups closer but castes are a cultural phenomenon and the old habits about untouchability¹⁹ are difficult to let go of. This is especially true for the older generations, as they were raised with the practice, and it is still incorporated in traditions and habits. Local organizations are working for securing rights for lower castes and raise awareness towards discrimination problems. Durga and Bishnu has noticed the change of discrimination in Namsaling and that it is less in the school than else where in the society:

We thought that we should not eat anything given from a Dalit, because we were so traditionally bound, but at this time in the school they are playing together, they are eating together. There is no problems among the young guys - that is good (Durga, local farmer, high school teacher and my host during the stay)

People from upper class and caste did not want to share their desk and bench with the lower class people [...] But after 1951²⁰, the situation changed. They became ready to sit together (Bishnu, retired school teacher).

Bishnu has experienced a transformation of the students' relation to each other. This decrease in caste-based discrimination in Namsaling, reflects a general tendency in Nepal, though it must be mentioned that there still are issues of discrimination related to caste (Poertner et al. 2011).

The sanitary condition is a general theme mentioned by the villagers. The VDC has stated that all households should have a latrine otherwise they will be disqualified for all kinds of social benefits²¹. Building materials are given free of charge, but the construction is the responsibility of the individual households, and around the village several toilet building projects were taking place during this fieldwork. Awareness about health and hygiene is growing and during the fieldwork a local organization held a seminar informing locals about the importance of using soap. There is an increasing focus on using the health-clinic or going to the hospitals, but at the same time the 'witch

¹⁹ Untouchability is a social-religious practice, where a minority, or a lower status group, in case of Nepal the low castes, were segregated from access to certain places or denied participation in activities.

²⁰ Rana autocracy had the absolute power in Nepal from 1846 until the Delhi Compromise in 1951, in which King Tribhuvan, the Rana family, and the Nepali Congress Party agreed to end Rana rule. Hereafter started Nepal to move toward reform and development but King Mahendra dissolved the parliament in 1959 and took control over Nepal. But many people see 1951 as the beginning of the democratization of Nepal (Bohra-Mishra & Massey 2011)

²¹ The VDC is in charge of paying different kinds of allowances to the villagers, for example to old people, students from poor households etc. They used this to put a pressure on villagers, if there was some kind of practice, that they wished to implement. Then they would refuse to pay the money until things was in order. In this case was it not possible for anyone in the household to get allowances if they did not have a latrine in the household

doctor' is still used, and stories are told about people who died because they were not taken to the hospital in time:

*We have one health post, it was also there 15 years ago [...] But in peoples mentalities there are a lot of changes [...] 15 years ago, Dhami Jhakri [witch doctor] used to come to the village daily but now he doesn't. [...] He provided his service with rice grain in a plate, humming something. Now people don't trust them much, instead they go to the health post or hospital for treatment (*Subash, migrant and government official in Kathmandu).*

People are aware of medical services, but it is very costly and it is a long travel to the nearest health facilities. Local volunteers run the health clinic in the village, but they lack medical education and they are not educated to handle medical treatment as such. Professional staff occasionally visits the clinic, but the resources are limited and they mainly offer vaccination and hygiene advices. In Ilam Bazaar there are possibilities to have consultations with a doctor, but hospitals and complex treatments are only available in Jhapa, India or Kathmandu. This is an interesting picture on the complexity of the development in Namsaling. The villagers are aware that medical treatment is better than traditional treatments method, but they do not have access to these methods. The lack of such facilities slow down the development, everyone is complaining about the lacking facilities and they blame the government.

Educational changes in Namsaling

Ward 5, where the study was carried out, has two primary schools. The total number of schools in Namsaling VDC is 9. There is one lower secondary school, 8 primary schools and 2 private schools (all levels) and 1 higher secondary school. In the higher secondary school it is possible to study +2, which is a 2-year addition to the 10 years SLC (School Leaving Certificate). +2 has specializations in, for example education, management or business (NCDC 2010).

The livelihood mapping showed that a child gets better education than the parents did (only in households where the kids were still young they have less education). In the following quote a proud mother, who has never been to school, tells how she has managed to send all her children, six daughters and one son, to school:

I had never been to school [...] [but] My eldest daughter is studying in Ilam [Ilam Bazaar] she is also working in an office there. Her earning is for them [the siblings] to stay in Ilam. The second daughter got married. The third daughter is teaching here in a boarding school (Nares, local farmer and housewife)

The children are getting significantly better education than was the case with their parents; it is not rare that parents without any or very little education afford to send their children to school. This does not only relate to higher living standards in Namsaling, but can also be attributed to the Nepalese governments strategies for providing better and affordable education (Whelpton 2005). There is still uneven access to education and there is correlation between the parents' level of

education and the education they provide for their children, the higher level of education the parents have, the higher level of education they provide for their children. Another factor is the resource level of the households and the necessity of the labor of the children in the household. But there are examples of illiterate parents who manage to send their children to +2 or university. This is also related to the Nepalese government scholarships to vulnerable groups in schools and universities (Langford et al. 2012).

Four years ago the +2 education was made available in Namsaling. This has made it possible for a greater number of students to continue after class 10. This is mostly because the students could stay in the village and did not have to leave, which demands resources. Girls outnumber boys in class 12 at the local high school. A teacher explained that he used to say, that it was a school for married women. The reason for the higher number of girls is that several girls are from other VDCs. They were married to their husbands in Namsaling at a young age and if the husband's family has the resources they can offer the young wives a +2 education in the village. The general tendency in the village is that boys get a better education than girls. In other words even though the educational level is improving and a larger number of children go to school, it is crucial to recognize the inequalities in the access to education.

According to many villagers was Namsaling ahead in terms of education and people from Namsaling are proud of their school system and the educational level:

*People from Namsaling were ahead in education from the very beginning in comparison to other places and they still are. Education has played a greater role in change and development here (*Bishnu, retired schoolteacher)*

It is believed that it has affected the village's development in a positive way. Mani is working as a teacher in Kathmandu. His uncle is a headmaster of the local school where Mani usually teaches when he is visiting the village. However, he is not content with the level at the schools in Namsaling as it is today.

The teachers in the school are not well trained; they don't have ideas about how to teach [...] last time I was here I was teaching in the school, [...] What I found was that the teacher was just going through the book, that was translated in to Nepali (Mani, migrant and school teacher).

He thinks that the teachers at the school lack knowledge of teaching methods in order to improve the children's level. He suggest that the teachers may need experts from outside to advise them, so that their skill level can be raised. How education is viewed as a driver for Namsaling will be examined in chapter 6. However, there are indications that show that other areas in Nepal are moving ahead in providing good education, and that Namsaling is being left behind. This can be seen in relation to the fact that educational purpose is a main reason for migration out of the community. This will be explored below in 4.2. This chapter has outlined Namsaling, as a dynamic

place in progress with technological, social and educational changes taking place. The next chapter focuses on migration patterns in Namsaling.

4.2. Migration landscape in Namsaling

The population in Namsaling is highly mobile and migration is a commonly used livelihood strategy. This analysis aims to present an overview of the most common migration tendencies in Namsaling. It is based on the livelihood-migration mapping, interviews with migrants and villagers in Namsaling, along with an interview made with the VDC-secretary²², and a report from NCDC²³ (NCDC 2010).

Mapping the migration

Several migrants from Namsaling do not see their current living place as a final destination, and the migrants live in a place for several years without being officially registered in the new place, or leaving the village formally²⁴. According to the VDC-secretary this is the reason that it is difficult to know the exact number of out-migrants. Hence, the places where migrants reside are not referred to as destination, normally being the case in other studies, but it is referred to as the place of current residence. The local notion of a migrant was only the ones who had left with their entire family to settle permanently in another place, therefore did it not include students as migrants, even though they normally had lived away for over 10 years, and they had no plans of returning to the village. Nor were contract workers on 4-year contracts seen as migrants. Thus, these forms of (relatively) temporary migration also give interesting aspects for the study. A relatively loose definition of migration has been applied: migration in this study is including all who have lived away from the village for more than three months. Apart from migration, mobility has been an interesting aspect of the villagers' contact to other parts of the country, when mobility is mentioned it refers to trips of one day to three-month in length, but it does not include visits to neighboring villages.

The overall reasons for migration is improvement of the families' livelihood, migration is not an individual decision, but rather a decision made by the whole family or an investment in the future. Lack of land was mentioned as a reason for outmigration, but education and employment are also common reasons. More than half of the people asked were considering migration in the future as a strategy for their livelihood. Twenty out of 50 respondents have been living in a place outside the village. According to the VDC-secretary at least 150 out of the 1280 households in Namsaling have left their house permanently. There are abandoned areas in the VDC with numerous empty houses. The 150 households does not include households where one or more family members is outside the

²² Elections at the village and district levels have not been held since 1997. During the armed conflict that ended in 2006, the Maoists gained control in many rural areas, and the state has not fully regained its presence there. The work of the VDC is currently assigned to district government-appointed VDC-secretaries, so there is no elected local body on local level (Hangen 2011 pp. 127)

²³ NCDC is a NGO originally from Namsaling but due to expansion the office has moved to Ilam Bazaar, and is now covering many districts in Nepal.

²⁴ In order to migrate officially, migrants have to require a 'migration certificate', not all migrants follow this practice for different reasons; if they own land, if they want to come back, or maintain their legal rights and rights to vote in the home place.

country or in another place in Nepal, for example, to take an education, neither does it include families that have sold their house or given it to other family members.

Half of the 50 respondents mention medical treatment as a reason for visit places outside the village. Other reasons are trading goods or buying goods not available in the village. Another common reason is ‘to visit family members’. This points to the fact that several families have relatives in various places. It is an indicator of a high degree of migration and mobility, which has affected family life in Namsaling for decades. Families are scattered in different places. Popular destinations are Jhapa in the lowland and the neighboring provinces, including provinces in the part of India that shares borders with Nepal. Thirteen out of 50 households have relatives in India, but none of them are contributing to the family economy, and most of them are classified as far relatives. The tendency of households moving to India seems to have past its peak:

‘It was earlier that the people had their land over there [in India], and some used to go for seasonal job and again come back. But these days it is not so.’ (VDC-secretary)

The reason for the decrease in outmigration to India is not explicit, but one factor could be the improvements in the Nepalese educational system. Another factor is the clearance of malaria in the lowland in 1950, after this Jhapa became an attractive destination (Poertner et al. 2011). Several families saw an opportunity to improve their income from investments in better land in Jhapa. The VDC-secretary was not able to tell the exactly number of outmigration to Jhapa, but according to him Jhapa is the main destination. More than 30 out of 50 mention that they have relatives living in Jhapa, this indicates that the number of out-migration to Jhapa has been fairly large.

There are also a number of migrants who classify themselves as political refugees. They moved due to political disturbance in the time of Maoist insurgency²⁵, the political refugees are from high caste Hindu families, they felt insecure because of the attack from Maoist groups operating in the rural areas. They have been able to come back, but a number of them are still staying elsewhere.

The number of people leaving the village to find industrial work in other regions in Nepal is very limited. One of the reasons is that Nepalese industry is almost non-existent; there are neither textile nor electronics industries. This creates a different migration pattern than in other Asian countries such as India, Thailand, Cambodia, etc. where a lot of people migrate to work in industry (Shakya 2009). There are migrants working seasonally in tea-factories, which is one of the only existing industries in Eastern-Nepal, but in only one of the households was this mentioned. Young people find temporarily informal work such as driving, construction work, or by running informal business mostly in Ilam or in the neighboring provinces. There are a number of men in Namsaling that supply their income with day-by-day work in Ilam Bazaar; this is mostly carpenters, ironworkers or

²⁵ The Maoists started an armed insurgency in 1996, also referred to as The Peoples War. The aim was to establish a communist republic. The decade-long insurgency caused more than 13.000 dead, nearly half a million people had to leave their homes, the government was displaced from most of the rural countryside and the economy was seriously undermined and so was the Nepali nation-state (Shah 2008).

construction workers. They live part time in the village and part time in Ilam Bazaar to find sufficient work to sustain the family. A women explains that her family members are searching for informal work in Ilam Bazaar:

My son went to Ilam [Ilam Bazaar] 3 days ago, to work as a helper on a tractor. My husband also went there 10 days ago for carrying stones and other kinds of work [...] We can get the work more easily in Ilam than here, but all our relatives are here so it is difficult for us to move from here (Tika, local farmer and housewife)

There are also a few examples of people going to Kathmandu to find job, mostly in small-scale or informal business or as security guards. But the options are limited. The persons who are working in Kathmandu are mostly people who have stayed there after completing their education. They are typically employed as teachers, or they are holding a government job. Due to the lack of job opportunities in Nepal, and especially in the village, several young uneducated men (or with a low level of education) pursue opportunity through leaving the country (Shakya 2009). The most popular destination is Malaysia or the Middle East (Qatar, Saudi Arabia or Dubai). Fifteen out of 50 villagers have a close family member (defined by those who are contributing economically to the household) in one of these countries, and a much higher number have relatives there. In these countries they are working in factories or in the construction industry. The salaries are low and the work hours are long.

I don't see any good opportunities in Kathmandu, because it is very expensive to live there [...] Most of the people went to foreign countries because of the lack of opportunities [...] it was just a hope of earning, nobody was sure of earning the money [...] When I was in Saudi we had to work for 10 hours. Even if we had a spare time it was not easy to go for visiting, so we just used to stay in the room and watch the television [...] I went three times but I couldn't earn a lot of money. If I get any opportunities here then I will work here, only if I won't get any opportunities here, I will plan to go again. What I think now is that if somebody shows me a good track then we can do something in our own village, we don't have to go anywhere for earning (Sailesh, former work migrant in the Middle East).

The cost and risks of leaving the country are high. Most migrants use the so-called manpower agencies and middlemen to arrange work abroad. They are typically away for a four-year period and report using the first two years to pay-off their debts to the brokers (Shakya 2009). Migrants normally live in dormitories next to the factory or construction site, and they have little time to experience and interact with the local culture in the place where they are staying. This kind of migration has only a little economic benefits for the village, apart from the number of mobile phones and color-TV's the migrants bring home. Neither are the migrants returning to the village with new knowledge or other skills, they can use in the local community. However, one important benefit that comes from this kind of migration is based on the difficulties faced by the migrants, due to the lack of education and opportunities which motivates them to invest money in their children's education:

I am facing a lot of troubles because of my lacking education, so I don't want to make my children like me. – When you go to a foreign land you have to face a lot of problems because of the language, so if you are educated then you will be able to talk with all kinds of people without having any problem. That is why I want to give good education to my children (Amit, former work-migrant in the Middle East)

Frustration among people without an education is high and due to their own lack of opportunities; the focus on education has changed, also among the poorer households in the village. There is a tendency for parents to send younger children to private schools in Ilam Bazaar, where the schools are said to be better, and children down to the age of 10 are sent away from the house to study. Most of the younger students are living with family members, especially in the beginning, and also with older siblings in rented rooms. It is normal that 2 or 3 siblings with the oldest aged 15-16 are living together in a rented room. The number of families with children going to school or studying in Ilam Bazaar is not elucidated because several families still count the children as living in the house because of the relatively short distance (3-5 hours walk) to the village. They will come back on the weekends, and they will bring food from the village back with them to Ilam Bazaar. The families with fewer resources cannot afford both school tuition and rent for a room in Ilam Bazaar, so they send their children to the local school in Namsaling.

Education is a common reason for outmigration, Kathmandu are a popular destinations for people who can afford it. There was only one example of a young man who moved to Jhapa for his education, and few examples of young people moving to India for educational purposes. In most of these cases it was due to practical reasons because the migrants had networks or family relations in India, which made it possible. Normally the students finish +2 in Ilam Bazaar and then they continue in Kathmandu, but a number of students attend both +2 and university in Kathmandu if resources are available, or to follow older siblings and share a room. There is a public campus in Ilam Bazaar, offering Bachelor degrees in Humanities and Education. Due to the low standards and the narrow variety of subjects in Ilam families who can afford it send their children to Kathmandu to study at the university or at private colleges.

Several migrants will stay in Kathmandu if they can find a job. There are 30 out of 50 households that have relatives living in Kathmandu, out of them 8 have a direct impact on the family economy, meaning that they are either contributing to the household by sending money, or that the family in the village is supporting their education. Several families mention that they take big loans to pay for education and the living cost of their children studying. They mention that they are investing in their children's education, and expect to get something back from their investment in the future. There is an increasing tendency to send the children away from a very early age, this has an effect on their upbringing, they get used to taking care of themselves, to living in the city, and to managing a life with very limited resources, but they also grow up in a very different environment. How this will affect the migrants feeling of belonging will be discussed in chapter 5.

Uneven patterns and negative consequences of migration

Not everyone can afford the opportunity to migrate or visit other places. Of the young, the poor and the women, a large number have only left the village very few times and for short periods. The ability to migrate can create a gap between people in the village:

People who are educated are capable to just think about going outside and people, who are uneducated and everyday cares of their hand to mouth problem are living here. In the house of people who are rich, there are two or three members involved in government jobs and in the house of poor, same quantity are unemployed even they are qualified and capable. This is the reason why rich peoples are being richer and poor are being poorer. (Pratiksha, unmarried and shop owner)

It is not that all people living in the village are forced to stay in the village; in fact many of them have chosen to live there because they see it as a good place with good living standards. Only one respondent had never left the village. On the other hand there are others who are only mobile to a very limited degree and have only been to the nearest bazaar. Among the villagers there are a group of 'mobile' people, who have resources to leave the village frequently for different purposes. Pratiksha has been to India, Bhutan, and Jhapa with her mother. She is actually an immigrant herself, because she grew up in Jhapa. Pratiksha explains that not all women have the same possibilities like her and her mother:

*But the problem of we people here is that we don't have much freedom to go outside home as like male members because we are bound with so many limitations and chores. We don't have such education and awareness to go out from home. And even if we have this, we will not have enough money to go. So in Namsaling, the number of women who had gone out of house is very limited [...] In this locality the women are not so much free. They are bound by the patriarchal society. But my father was not that type. From the very beginning he gave freedom to my mother to go out from the home for her trainings. (*Pratiksha, unmarried and shop owner)*

To participate in trainings and workshops is a common reason for leaving the village. There is a lot of NGO's operating in Nepal. They offer trainings and workshops for the rural population. However, this is not an option for all women. The number of 'left behind' wives is relatively high, especially wives of the men who work in other countries. The wives are normally staying with their husband's family, when their husbands are abroad so as to earn money for building a house for their family, so they can become established (Rigg 2007a). A high number of women in Namsaling came from another village, as they moved to Namsaling when they got married, but they have not left their village since the marriage, apart from short visit to Ilam Bazaar.

One tendency seems evident in the livelihood-migration mapping: migration leads to increased migration. In household, where several relatives are living in other places, there are also an increasing numbers of young migrants, who have the opportunities to take an education away from

the village. It points to the fact that network is important, especially for the educational migrants. Migration in the family leads to further migration within the family. This causes the issue of 'left behind' parents of educational migrants. In 8 out of 50 household only two people are currently living in the house, the households sizes are generally diminishing: according to NCDC (2010) the average household size has decreased from 5.7 to 5.0 in just seven years. Several villagers mention difficulties with managing the farming and the fieldwork. Bijay has three sons, they all live in Kathmandu and he is not expecting them to come back:

People are migrating. For education they are migrating, that is good, but after completing their study, they are not coming back, which is the problem. It is sure that they will not come back again because history has proved this fact. Even my three sons will not come because they are habitual to live the life in the city and even if they come, they will not be able to adjust themselves because they do not know how to live here. As like the other foreign countries, here is the trend among the new generation to be centralized to the urban areas. Because of this, it is sure that, there will be no one to cultivate this village after our death. This is really a big problem. Nepal is known as agricultural country. But if all the people were leaving their place and land uncultivated, how would it be possible to develop the nation? (Bijay, local farmer)

Bijay knows that his sons will not return. He is concerned with the outmigration, but he knows that the young people are attracted to city life. The strong degree of urbanization can affect the community identity and history because they are built on the agricultural traditions. Bijay fears that there will be no one left to cultivate the land. Migrants are likely to plant trees on their land as a long-term investment and use of the land in their absence. If this tendency continues the village will be depopulated, as they will be occupying land without staying there. Moreover, since the only stable income source in Namsaling is through the sale of cash crops it will be difficult for immigrants to make a living in the village with no available land. The Government in Nepal has never been a strong player in rural development (Leve 2007). The villagers mention that they have developed the place themselves; they have carried the electric poles across the mountains to provide electricity to the village; they have rigged the tracks and roads themselves, and their forefathers built the complex system of irrigation channels. According to Mani the community feeling has changed and he does not see the same type of unity as he saw before.

In the past days all people used to gather in one place in the evening, they used to talk about different things. I remember a bit about that from when I was a small boy. They used to talk about different types of plans, and how to share the work and other things to share in the village, and about when it was time to harvest the paddy, at that time they used to work in the night, but not any more. [...] When I was little, people used to gather in this village, they all used to come to Durga house [his fathers house], and talk to late at night, but now all people used to gather in front of their TV (Mani, educational migrant).

Mani is blaming the television for negative change in the village; it is taking too much attention from other community activities. However, another reason for this change could be due to the emergence of a translocal community across place and space, where migrants and non-migrants are building a translocal community based on mutual dependency, networks and shared identity; this will be examined in chapter 5.

The life stories of three educational migrants

The following two chapters in the analysis draw on the stories of three young people: Ramita, Pran and Birat. The aim of these chapters is, through a selection of educational migrants in Kathmandu, to assess the flows between an urban area in Nepal and a rural setting in Ilam district. To follow Gardner's (2009) life course approach, the migrant's history is initially introduced. The analysis of migrants' multilocal life and ties to home will build on their stories.

Pran is a 19-year-old man who is wearing modern clothes and glasses. It is evident that he is not living in the village. Pran has lived in Kathmandu for more than 4 years. He lives in a very small room with his younger brother. The two young men are accustomed to living alone, and they take care of all the practical matters in their small household. He studies software engineering, a very new subject in Nepal, in a private college. Before Kathmandu he stayed in Ilam Bazaar, where he took his SLC. He has lived away from home since he was about 10 years old. This has affected his life remarkably, which will be analyzed in the next chapter. He seemed to be a family person and was taking care of his little sister who had fallen ill, and could not go to school in the daytime. He told me several times that his family was very important for him. He was conscientious and worked in his father's field during the day. He cared a lot for the village, it was expressed by all the time he spent working at the school, where his father was a teacher. Pran is influenced by a modern way of living, but at the same time he carries a sort of villager's calm about him.

Ramita, a 20-year-old woman, lives with her mother in Kathmandu. She is an only child. Her parents moved from Namsaling just after she was born, so she does not remember anything about living there. At least once a year she goes to the village to visit and she has a strong relationship to her relatives in the village. She is even dreaming about coming back to Ilam to start a business or get a job, though she knows that village life will be difficult for her. Her father holds a government job in Biratnagar. In order to keep his position he has to shift location every second year, Ramita has moved with him to new places. She describes herself as a rootless person. She is undoubtedly a multilocal migrant, but among all these places she has lived, she feels a strong commitment to the place where she was born, Namsaling, even though she only lived there for a very short period of her life. Ramita's room is like the room of most young people. It is decorated with comics that she likes, and in the corner she has her guitar. The conversations with Ramita were interesting because she saw traditions and social habits in the village as a foreigner, and in that she could easily relate to questions concerning multilocal lifestyle.

Birat is 28 years old. He is living in Kathmandu, in a room with his wife. He has studied Nepali and Linguistics and he is currently working as a teacher. Even though he is working now it is difficult for him to send money to his parents, because of the high living costs in Kathmandu. He is from a

traditional Brahmin family. Birat's parents are living in a mixed community, which means that the houses in the area are a mix of different ethnic groups and also different castes. Birat and other young people from the same community, have tried to convince the parents to accept their neighbors from different caste and ethnic groups by work with them and inviting them to join the same village organizations. Birat's stories about how his modern view clashes with the traditional village life is very interesting as they shed light on the migrants position in transformational processes. Birat is comparing the obvious differences he sees between his home place and Kathmandu, where he lives now. I will return to this discussion later.

Chapter 5. Exploring the translocal field of Namsaling

5.1. Ways of belonging

In the previous chapter the stories of three educational migrants were introduced. This chapter focuses on exploring the migrants' translocal way of living and examines their translocal habitus. Firstly, this chapter looks at the migrants' way of belonging, how they through network and interconnectedness have constructed as translocal community. Then, it focuses on the migrants' way of being, how they attain a translocal habitus through their feelings of belonging and shared identity. Lastly, the dominant issues from this part of the analysis are discussed.

Network and in-betweenness

Migrants maintain long-distance networks. This is not a new tendency, but now new means of communication has made it possible to exchange within these networks, and the networks are being strengthened. This interconnectedness is transforming the everyday social world of both individuals and families in migrants' places of residence and in their home places (Carrasco 2010). The networks are used to the exchange and circulation of capitals both in terms of money, but also in terms of social capital, which is also referred to as social remittance. However, the networks are also crucial for the migrant's opportunity to move in the first place.

Most of the respondents in this thesis have stayed with relatives, at least in the beginning:

My father's sister is in Kathmandu, and she has a house in Kathmandu, so I stayed with her there, they have a family. I stayed with her for 2 month, I studied staying in her house, and after 6 month, my father sent my elder sister, she was in class 11 at that time [...] and we started to live in a rented room (Pran).

When I arrived in Katmandu. In the beginning I stayed with my relative's cousins. Two of my uncle's sons were staying in Katmandu. They were also there for educational purpose. I stayed with them for two month. Later, after two month, I moved from there, I searched for my own room. I also started doing some private job and I stayed by myself (Birat).

For both Pran and Birat it is an advantage to stay with relatives in the beginning of their stay in Kathmandu. It is not only as mentioned here a matter of accommodation, but also a way to become familiar with the city, how to get around, and understand the habits of the local people. However, they do not stay with the relatives for long. One of the reasons is that the relatives often live in small rooms, and they easily become crowded. Another reason is that the young migrants are expected to assist with the household work, so that the time they have for studying becomes very limited. The tendency is that if their parents can afford it, they move and rent room of their own. Nevertheless, they stay in close contact after moving and assisting each other in all kinds of matters, as well as getting together for gatherings, celebrations, and festivals. These connections open doors

for new migrants. Experience with migration and network can, thus lead to further migration (Bohra & Massey 2009). The first migrants set a precedent, which makes it more likely that others will follow and migrate to the same place (Rigg 2007a). This was a tendency among migrants from Namsaling, and areas especially in Jhapa and Kathmandu have a high density of people from Namsaling or Ilam. This makes it possible to stay near friends and relatives outside the home place:

Most of my friends are from Ilam district, and some are from Namsaling VDC. (Pran).

There is one part of Kathmandu, where most people from Ilam are staying. It makes it easier for them to help each other when help is needed. Individuals and groups who migrate have a tendency to regroup in new locations. This is both due to practical and cultural reasons (Appadurai 1996). The migrants establish new communities in the new place, but as described later they also continue to have strong ties and community feelings towards their home place. Migrants are also organized and regrouped in political groups, interest groups and student groups. An example is Ilameli Students Forum (ISF):

*The students may have many problems while staying and studying in Kathmandu, so this organization helps them to manage such problems and provide a familiar environment to stay in Kathmandu. It also helps to make communication among all the students from different VDCs of Ilam district [...] We use to rely on the family, the organization cannot replace the value of one's family members, but it has its own importance [...]. Moreover, we can unite students from Ilam and do an effort for the development of our [home] place (*Mahesh, president ISF).*

Mahesh, the ISF president states that networks are important for the migrants and a big effort is put in maintaining formal and informal networks across place and scale. ISF was originally a 'reassurance network', but it also has other practical, social and cultural functions. At the same time the organization is aimed at keep strong connections between migrants with the same origin as well as between migrants in Kathmandu and their home place. ISF is an example of a formalized translocal community. Family networks have an informal character, because they build on shared feelings and identities, and not on formal membership. The migrants have multiple multilocal engagements both emotionally and practically, they have memberships in organizations in the place of residence, as well as translocal networks like ISF, and they also continue as members of organizations based in the village, for example in savings groups.

Feelings of belonging

This part of the analysis draws mainly on a conversation with Ramita, about her relationship to the place where she was born. It is an example on how important home places are for the Nepalese people; even though they have lived other places for most of their life, they will retain strong ties to the place where they were born (Poertner et al. 2011). Ramita is an example of the high mobility among young Nepalese people because she has already lived in various different places during her young life. Moving from place to place has formed Ramita's translocal habitus, adopting something

new from the different places she has resided. She is adapted to modern city life, but at the same time her multifaceted placial identity is important:

Moving from this place to that place - there is no place I can say I'm strong here, I grew up here, I studied here, I don't have a single place, though I was born in Ilam and I call it my home it is not exactly my home town because I never stayed back there (Ramita).

The birthplace has a unique value for Ramita. She lived different places, but she does not feel attached to any of them. Ramita comes to Namsaling every year to celebrate Dashain and spend time with the family and relatives. When she tells about her holidays in the village it is with a lot of apparent joy. A large number of respondents explained that if they were asked where they are from they will always answer Namsaling or Ilam even though they have lived away from there for several years. Ramita enjoys her free life in Kathmandu; she does not have to work like her cousins in the village. However, even though the modern life in Kathmandu gives her a lot of freedom, she is not completely content with the city life:

I don't like this place [KTM], I find this place to selfish, and it is polluted too, so I don't like to stay here, it is just my dream to stay somewhere else than Kathmandu. As number one I will prefer Ilam [...] I love the weather there, it is really good, not so cold not so hot, and the air is really fresh. The first thing is weather, second is that is where I was born and the third thing is that my father is really attached to Namsaling (Ramita).

For Ramita the main reason for her dream about moving back is the fair climate in Ilam. As the second and third reason she mentions personal considerations that also have to do with the families' identity – Ramita has adopted her father's feelings and attachments to his home. The term 'home' has to be used with precautions. When migrants were talking about moving back, it had to be understood in a broader sense, thus moving back is not limited to returning to the village:

In Namsaling it will not be possible for me to get a job but at least Ilam, somewhere there in a bank, I will prefer that, and I will prefer that because culture in Nepal is really different, Eastern Nepali culture and Western Nepali culture is really different, so we can't really mingle with Western Nepali people so I prefer eastern side (Ramita).

When migrants were talking about coming back it was not necessarily to live in the village, as it was not possible for them anymore because of their new lifestyles and qualifications. When migrants were talking about their 'Home' or about moving 'back' they did also mean Ilam Bazaar. Several respondents mention that they will consider a life in the village if a road was to be constructed and job opportunities were created, but this seemed more like a dream, than a rational possibility. For Ramita the dream about coming home is not only due to the feeling of belonging that she has towards Namsaling or the fair climate, she also includes cultural kinship and cultural belonging in her considerations about going back to Ilam. She finds the culture quite different in other parts of Nepal, and she will prefer to stay with people that she can get along with. Throughout

the mobility processes migrants have different levels of maintaining home-contact, but is common that they all have a sort of home-contact and the importance of this home-contact plays a role in their everyday lives and helps to maintain a feeling of belonging to a community. Pran and Birat has, like Ramita, a wish to come back, they feel connected to their birthplace, but they are split between their feelings of belonging to their home place, and their actual opportunities there:

This is my birthplace, and I really love it. [...] I can not come to this place and do the agriculture, so I have to do other job in other places [...] I don't mean that I wouldn't come here in my future, but I will be working in other places [...] because if I'm staying here I have to do agricultural activities like my father, and that is the main problem (Pran).

Even though I love this place, even though I love my family, even though I want to stay here [in Namsaling]. I could not make this place my working field. Here are no opportunities because of social and political problems. I have learned so many things. Things are very good here. I want to stay here but I cannot make my future and life here. Here are no sorts of facilities and development (Birat).

Most of the migrants asked had a strong sense of loyalty and feeling of belonging to Namsaling although they had lived away from the village for several years, and were no longer familiar with the local lifestyle and hard work. They all know that with their new achieved skills, knowledge, and their modern lifestyle life in the village would not be relevant for them. Ilam Bazaar is a long walk across the mountains, and several of the migrants who study in Kathmandu went to school in Ilam Bazaar. Ilam Bazaar is a place with extensive growth, where new big houses are being built, and the main street is full of shops, money transfer agencies, travel agencies, internet cafés, restaurants, etc. It is obviously that it is not only Ramita who is thinking about Ilam as a place to look for a job. Several people have also returned after staying further away. They return to be closer to their family in the villages, and are taking part in the development of Ilam.

A striking observation is that none of the migrants hesitated to answer when they were asked about the difference between the village and their life in Kathmandu. Immediately they started explaining social, physical, cultural and economic differences. It seemed as if these issues occupied their minds. The differences are so significant that they influence the migrant's daily life:

Socially my life is really good here [in Namsaling], here all people are helpful, if I get sick all the villagers will come and carry me, but in Kathmandu, even if I died in my room the people from another room would not come, they don't care about other people. The social environment is really bad there, because all people are very busy with their own work and they are concerned about themselves. [...] I have a very good social environment here, really good, but that is not the same in Kathmandu, I don't know who is living in the other rooms [...] (Pran)

The migrants multiple frame of reference, leads to a continuous comparison, as we see here with Pran. This is a result of the feelings and commitments he has to the village. Pran is satisfied with his life, but he cannot find the same social environment or the same ‘sense of place’ that he finds in the village, so he feels that he still belongs to the village, even though he had not lived in Namsaling for almost 10 years.

5.2. Ways of being

The migrants ‘ways of being’ and ‘ways of belonging’ can be difficult to separate analytically. The antagonism between the way migrants are and where they belong can cause conflicts, and it helps to elucidate the difficulties in reconciling the double orientation of the everyday life of individuals in a translocal social field. The analysis of the translocal field is continued in this section. Firstly, this is done by assessing the expansion of migrants’ worldview, thereafter through an analysis of the migrants’ comparisons of ‘here and there’. By assessing their way of being it is possible to understand what creates migrants translocal habitus.

Expansion of Worldview

The world is experienced as we move through it and people’s movements are constructed by their worldviews. Worldview is used to describe insight in affairs going on outside the home village, which can only be understood by experiencing it (Creswell 2006). Pran, Ramita, and Birat are educational migrants; they are studying at colleges and universities in Kathmandu; and their purpose for their migration is learning and education. But apart from the academic skills and knowledge, they have learnt a lot from their participation in the society. In this part of the analysis the migrant’s worldview, understood as experiences that they will adopt from moving through time and space, will be used to examine their ‘way of being’ and how it forms their translocal habitus. Pran is aware that he has gained an insight from his life in Kathmandu, which would not have been possible for him to learn in the village:

*I have learnt more history, there [in KTM] are many historical places, and I visited the historical places. If I was in this place I did not get any chance to learn about these historical things [...] I have learnt more about the political situation of Nepal because I’m in the capital city. While I was in the village, I did not have any chance to learn directly about that, because I only had the television and radio, but I’m seeing things there, and looking at what the political parties are doing (*Pran).*

According to Pran, you learn from the society you live in, and there are things that you cannot learn in the village. Firstly, he mentions that he has gained new insights in the historical past of Nepal. He also mentions politics. In Kathmandu he is in direct contact with politics because the political leaders are in Kathmandu, and he is closer to where political decisions are made, a prerequisite to understand the complex political system in Nepal. The political activities are unevenly distributed; it is a common complaint from people in rural areas, that they feel ignored by the political leaders (Leve 2007). Pran does not think that radio and television is enough for rural people to stay updated and informed.

Pran has gained new knowledge from his stay in different places and this has expanded his worldview. But at the same time he is still carrying knowledge from his time in Namsaling with him:

*... I'm proud that I also know how to farm, how to cut grass, how to plow the field, I can not implement those things in Kathmandu, and when I share these things with my friends, they get shocked, one thing with me is that I'm good in education, I get first ranked [...] 'You are good in education, you know more than us, and you know other things also how can it be' and they get shocked about those things also, And I tell them about my experiences in my village, and in the past I used to teach in Ilam [Ilam Bazaar] (*Pran).*

His experiences and what he has learnt from his life in different places forms his way of being and his identity: from living in the village he has learnt farming, and from his years in Ilam Bazaar he has become a responsible person and learnt how to manage life and how to cook his own food. He has also obtained teaching skills and now he is occupied with his education. Migrants can both have negative and positive experiences in the place they stay, but new experiences change their worldview and also their habitus. This shows that customs or habitus can change over time due to the migrant's life course. Ramita has for several years lived a life in-between places, this life on the move has affected her life in various ways and also her personality:

It has made me stronger [moving a lot] I can deal with all kinds of people, though I'm really small. I don't know how I got that, but I can get along with all kinds of people. I become friends with all kinds of people, at least friends, maybe not very close (Ramita).

The fact she can get along with all kinds of people is her way of adjusting to new places, she has adapted this capacity as a response to her translocal life. The adaptation strategies that she describes above have become a part of her way of being. Pran has several reflections on how his 10 years in Katmandu has changed his way of being:

I am stronger now, because if I have stayed in my house I even don't know how to cook rice, my mother, she used to cook all the time, so if I stayed at home I did not have to cook, that is a simple example [...] I'm doing things myself, my father is sending me money, but they can not solve the problems that I'm facing there [in KTM], so I have to solve the problems myself (Pran).

He has changed personally, and is now able to handle his daily life, he is still very much tied to his home, because of his economic dependency on his parents, but he is still living away from home and he has to solve his problems by himself. Pran does not only experience that he has changed on a personal level, he also describes how he acquires new knowledge and how his horizon has been broadened:

I think I'm different [...] They [villagers] know this village only. What is the lifestyle of people in different places, they don't know. I know things, about other lifestyles, about other cultures of Nepal, but the people who stay here, they don't know other cultures and other lifestyles (Pran)

Pran has changed his worldview by living long time outside the village. He reflects about the knowledge he obtained away from home, and he is sure that he would not have been the same person if he had stayed all his life in the village. This shows how migrants are affected by their surroundings and it affects their personality and their habitus. Moreover, when they adopt something from various places it will shape their translocal habitus.

Formation of a translocal habitus

Migrants 'way of being' is in this part examined by assessing the complexity of their identity, by looking at their double orientation via comparisons they make between places and lifestyle in the village and in Katmandu.

I faced a complete difference between here and there. Because of our geographical problem, we are staying in a remote place. Our living standard and their living standard were totally different. Any new thing reaches there first. They are advanced because of that and they can gain any sort of technology and change first so they can advance themselves. I also feel that there were some wrong things there, which were not in our culture; in term of languages and dresses [...] I have to adjust to that environment as one from a remote place (Birat).

Birat is fascinated with the development in Katmandu, the modern life, and how the modernization reaches there first. He sees Namsaling as a remote place; this is interesting because it is a point of view he shares with other young people, but not with the older generation. The older generation has experienced another époque in the village. Namsaling was located close to India, and one of the major trading routes between Kathmandu and India ran through it, which means that the elderly people remember that there has always been a cash-economy in Namsaling. Furthermore, Namsaling has been ahead in terms of education and democracy (Sharma 1997). Historically it is not remote, but since city areas in the lowland and the capital has taken the lead in terms of modernization and development, hill areas and villages like Namsaling are seen as remote, and behind, specially among the young people, who have not experienced the prosperous times of rural villages like Namsaling (Leve 2007). Namsaling's identity is changing and this becomes visible in how different generation refers to Namsaling. The older people are proud of coming from a prosperous place, and that plays a role in their identity. Younger people form their identity on feelings and stories about the past, rather than on memories of the prosperous time like their parents. They have to search other places to find facilities that match their needs; this is why it is relevant to talk about a dual frame of reference and a translocal identity.

Birat is attracted to the modern life, and he tries to fit in, yet at the same time he feels repelled by the different cultural habits in the city. This identity-conflict illustrates the in-between feelings that

characterize the translocal habitus and marks migrant's concurrent engagement in multiple places (Zoomers & van Westen 2011). This is also visible in the way migrants are dressed: in the village it is easy to identify the migrants among the local villagers. They wear modern styled clothes, and fit into the city life in Kathmandu. Ramita explains that her mother changes to sari, when she is back in the village, but she never wears the sari in Kathmandu. At the time of Dashain there was a lot of attention towards the migrants; the villagers were observing them and were fascinated with their new clothes, mobile phones, etc. The migrants brought technological equipment, books, clothes, food, etc. as gifts or on request from the villagers. The strict traditional habits practiced by the villagers were modified to fit the migrants' city lifestyle, for example the restriction towards meat and alcohol.

The migrants' habitus are formed of inputs from different cultures; they live a modern life in the city, and are affected by modern lifestyles in their everyday life. But at the same time they have commitments to traditional habits and cultural practices. Ramita has been raised in the city and her parents have lived long time away from the village, but she still feels that they have a traditional lifestyle compared to her friends' parents:

My friends are mostly locals from Kathmandu or from some other city in Nepal, my parents they grew up in the village, they are somehow more traditional than my friends' parents
(Ramita)

Ramita can mention various examples where she feels that her parents' view is different from her friends' parents view. Even though Ramita is very connected to her family in Namsaling, she mentions examples in which she has noticed sides of the traditional life which she do not necessarily favor: obligations, restrictions, different food, clothes, etc., Things that she found strange when she was a child, she now recognizes as a difference in lifestyles. She prefers a life without cultural restrictions and hard agricultural work as in the village. There are issues that occupy Ramita in a serious way and affect her life directly. Most important is issues about inter-caste marriage, caste discrimination and gender roles. Young people in Nepal are grown up in a time and culture, where different castes are living together and where discrimination has been decreasing (Ghai 2011). There are several examples where the migrants' modern worldview clashes with the traditional views of their families in the village. The marriage issue is one of them; in many cases, there are conflicts between the young people and their families. The following remarks are two examples concerning these issues:

Arghh!!! Marriage issues the most stupid thing [...] if they [the family] come to know we have a boyfriend [...] it is not something that they can accept very easily, it happens in our culture that they punish us [...] I don't only think that is stupid, I really hate these things, because when we are so much out in this world, we also can find out who is right for us and who is not right for us, so I really find it annoying (Ramita).

Ramita is not content that her parents want to interfere with her choice of husband. They have sent her away from when she was young, and she had to handle things by herself, and she found her own way of managing her life. Birat is also frustrated about his parents affect on his marriage:

I don't believe in the caste system. I only want to focus on finding a capable bride, but my family members desired that I should only look among related caste. I have to have the same level of caste that the women I'm going to get married with. [...] I don't find caste and cultural things important, but I could not change their opinion about those sorts of things (Birat).

Ramita and Birat are frustrated about their parents' part in their marriage, a good example of the conflicts that young Nepalese people face in their in-between life. They live their life away from their parents where they are free to take their own decisions, and manage their everyday life, but when it comes to marriage it is different. It is very common that the young people keep boyfriends and girlfriends secret from their family, and it is well known and accepted among their friends and where they live that they have boyfriends and girlfriends. However, when the migrants are the right age for marriage it is very common that they follow their families' decision (Leve 2007). They do not feel they have other options. According to Ramita they risk punishment if they go against the wishes of their parents. This also contributes to form the translocal migrant's dual life. In cases where the social structures and habits are incompatible, it can cause consequences for the migrants' lives.

Migrants maintain the connections to their places of origin and families, and expectations of their families continue to have significant influence on their lives. Through the migrants' stories, it is visible that they are not living their lives in one social field, their translocal lives are formed from different social structures and social orders, and sometimes they can find themselves in a situation where the two worlds are incompatible (Kelly & Lusi 2006).

5.3. The translocal field – Migrants as central players

The migrants 'way of belonging' and 'way of being', are not completely separate as mentioned above. By making a distinction in the analysis it has been possible to examine both the formation of translocal communities as well as their translocal habitus.

The concept of translocal community is very useful regarding the internal complexity of unbound translocal networks and formation of new communities across scale (Gielis 2009). Appadurai (1996) coined the term trans-locality to describe the ways in which communities become extended, via geographical mobility of their inhabitants. Translocal ties are getting stronger, and people are concerned with what is going on beyond the village. The community feeling on the other hand is fading in importance. In the previous chapter Mani pointed out that the cohesion in the local community is becoming weaker, but the analysis of migrants translocal communities shows that networks, feelings of belonging, and dependence is bringing people closer together in a community across places. Members of a community are no longer living in the same geographical place, but

they inhabit a translocal community across place and space (Harvey 1996). The translocal migrants' way of belonging is formed in a cross-field between identity and connections to places, or more precisely to the community that produces or define the common identity for a group; in this case with strong commitment to one place (Levitt & Schiller 2004). The concept belonging offers a way to understand the relationship between migration and identity (Gilmartin 2008). In this study examined through a characterization of their translocal habitus. New modes of communication technology and increased possibilities of mobility are allowing migrants to maintain continuous contact and interconnectedness with their families in Namsaling. It is possible to follow family events, participate in festivals and celebrations, and thereby engage in a translocal family life (Rigg 2007a, Carrasco 2009). Their ties are hence strengthened and affect their feelings of belonging. Media and telecommunication seem to be a complement to, rather than a substitute for, face-to-face contact. This is because the face-to-face contact makes it possible to build the trust needed to circulate deals, information and advices. (Faist 2008). Which again affects their mutual interdependence.

The emergence of a translocal community is not based on migrants' rational choices, but rather by collective practices, memory, identity, like-mindedness and feeling of belonging. These elements are formative for migrants', as well as locals,' ways of making a living by bridging their lives together. The translocal family life is affected by the emotional experiences embedded in mutual expectations. Ramita, Birat and Pran express their feelings of belonging to Namsaling and along with expectations from the family it is what creates the processes that construct a translocal community. Ramita's feelings about Namsaling are composed by her visits and through stories told to her about Namsaling. She re-tells the stories, her father told her about his life in the village. Her belonging to Namsaling is a part of her identity and has formed the feelings she has to the place. This shows the existents of a positive discourse about Namsaling, constructed by people who live elsewhere. The migrants 'way of belonging' is ambivalent. They have been affected by the new life away from home, as well as they are attracted towards their birthplace's 'sense of place'. The community feeling constructed by common values and common discourse along with an implicit practice and understanding seems to be attractive to them. It is an example of how people can create a sort of place-identity derived from imaginary and discursive links, and forms the translocal community (Harvey 1996).

This translocal way of living gives the migrants a multiple frame of reference, and naturally they will compare places in which they have dwelled, passed, and especially where they have feeling of belonging (Vertovec 2004). By applying a translocal perspective to the analysis it becomes possible to examine migrants' translocal habitus. As described above, translocal migrants often have their 'homes' in two or more places and carry on with dual lives with feelings of belongings towards multiple places. Their dual frame of reference is embedded in a complex of subjective feelings of belonging that emerge through mobility; when migrants are living outside home, but still have strong feelings to their home place. Ramita's feeling of belonging to Namsaling is created through the stories that were told to her about her home place. These dual or in many cases multiple frames of references affect the migrants way of living and creates a translocal habitus. To understand this

in a local context it is relevant to draw on Subedi's studies from Namsaling (Subedi 2006), where he argues, that even though people from Namsaling move they do not abandon home. They leave home to participate in activities beyond the village, but still their identity is tied to the place that they consider as home. Home should not be understood in a narrow sense of a house, but as the whole sphere of socio-cultural environment in the village (Subedi 2006). People who have insights, from living in other places have a high status in Namsaling. Knowledge about other lifestyles and other cultures becomes an important capital in rural societies. Worldview has been seen as a highly respected capacity, and people who are without this insight are seen as left behind and backwards (Subedi 2006).

Migrants dwell and reside in several places, and even after leaving they will take something with them from there, or leave impacts, in terms of memories, changes or new customs, on the place. Therefore, it is not possible to define if people are 'in' or 'out' of places. Also, means of communication makes it easier for migrants to stay updated on what is going on at the home place without changing their location. This maintains strong networks and family ties, but at the same time reinforces the in-betweenness of the migrants' lives and affects their habitus. The migrants' translocal habitus is formed by their sense of belonging, and shared identity to various places, as well as through expansion of their worldview. The translocal lifestyle can result in ambivalent relations between expectations from their home place and their way of being. Nevertheless there are indications that the migrants are important for place making and that they contribute to shape the translocal communities. How this is a relevant aspect in place making processes and how migrants contribution to various simultaneous processes in different places, will be analyzed in the following chapter.

Chapter 6. Translocal living

6.1. Interconnected livelihoods

In the previous two parts of the analysis the focus has been on defining Namsaling as a migrant place and defining the translocal migrants from Namsaling. This part of the analysis will focus on understanding Namsaling as a field of interventions and processes, in which the livelihood of locals and migrants are interconnected. This is examined through a focus on dependency and obligations, as well as the exchange of social remittances between Namsaling and other places in Nepal from both a migrants' perspective, and also from the local villagers point of view. The discussion will follow up on the complex issue of social remittances and processes of place making in Namsaling.

Obligations and dependency

This first part of the analysis will go into depth about the obligations and the dependency that also plays a part in the maintaining of the strong networks. It is an extension of the analysis of relations between migrants and their families; however, the aim is to point directly to the potentials for exchange of remittances.

Pran and Birat are aware of the expectations that their parents have for them. Several villagers in Namsaling mention the expenses for their children's education as a large expense. The money they earn from selling their cash crops is used to invest in their children's education. Large loans are also taken.

I have to depend on my parents, not only for my education, they also have to pay for my staying there. We have to pay for the rent. We pay around 4500 NPR for a single room, that is the main problem in Katmandu, and that is going up every year. We have to buy the food, and we have to fill the gas cylinder, and we have other expense, and after that they have to send us the money for our education [...] They [the parents] have to take loans all the time [...] and the loans are increasing. If we can't earn good in our future it will be a very bad problem, they have to trust in us (Pran).

Pran is studying at a private college in Kathmandu, it is impossible for him to finance his studies and the cost of living in the city by himself. Sometimes he can find small jobs, but this is very unstable. The young people try to find work when they finish so that they can pay the loan back. Nonetheless, the salaries are low and they still have to suffer from the high rents in Kathmandu (Shakya 2009). The migrants' relation to their family and home place is affected by these obligations; the parents expect to get benefits from these investments:

My parents always inspire me to do something good. My parents are investing money in me - thinking that I would be doing well, better than I could have done in this place [Namsaling]. So they are sending me to study. They have their expectation that I would be doing something

good. I am sure that I cannot fulfill those expectations by sitting here, because there are no opportunities. (Birat).

Birat is aware that his education and life in Kathmandu is seen as an investment by his parents. This creates a pressure to 'do good' by paying back the loans and taking care of the family. These examples demonstrate that the orientation towards the village is based on more than just a feeling of belonging. Migrants have to live up to obligations, and therefore the economic dependency has to be considered in an analysis of the translocal field.

The expectations of young people are gendered: investment in girls' education will benefit the future husband's family. However, Ramita does not have brothers and her situation is different. Ramita explains that statistically many students will not graduate as it is a strict college and the pressure is high. She often hears her parents fighting about their financial problems, and she knows that her education is expensive. It is important that she passes, because she has to look after her parents by herself:

They don't exactly say: your family is important you should care for them. But the way they raise us the way we grow up, we ourselves know that parents is important. I have to look after my parents; naturally I will get attached to them (Ramita)

The economic responsibility to her family is mixed with her emotional attachment to them. They all know it is their duty and their responsibility; it is implicit in Nepalese culture. It puts another perspective on the previous discussion about belongings; the emotional relationship and their obligations are intertwined in a translocal field. The following section will continue with reflections of the migrant's social contributions.

6.2. Social remittances, processes from beyond

As it has been shown in chapter five, the migrants have connections to Namsaling, and they participate in a translocal community with in the translocal field. How they can contribute to the social processes that constitute Namsaling by their engagement in their home places will be the topic of this further analysis.

Migrants exchange of social remittances

In the previous section the migrant's economic obligations were outlined. In this section some examples of the migrants' social responsibility towards their home place are presented:

Due to globalization processes, the world has gone very far. I will be the change maker for my home, I will be the reason for the change to come to my home, for example if my parents don't understand, then I will be saying to my parents, that this thing has occurred in this place, and now things are changing, and now we have to behave in this way. I will be saying like this to my parents, and that will bring a kind of change [...]. Whatever you learned from there [KTM], you can share the ideas about how those people are implementing those sorts of

ideas over there. How those people are doing work over there. You cannot implement whole ideas here. But you still can share those ideas here. You can just try to make the things better (Birat).

Birat thinks that it is his responsibility to spread 'globalization' to Namsaling so that new ways of doing things will also benefit his home. He feels that it is his responsibility to educate his parents. Birat mentions a formalized way of transferring social capital, which also can be interpreted as learning process. In many cases the transfer will be much less intentional and the migrant will not be aware of the transfer, it will take place through villagers observation and adaptation of migrants behavior, or way of being. Pran shares Birat's idea about migrants as contributors to social processes:

We can bring good knowledge, lifestyle, and knowledge about other places, we can share it to the people here, most of the people in the village, they don't even know where Kathmandu is, they don't go out from this village [...] we can bring a lot of knowledge about the places, about the people, about the lifestyle of other people [...] If we force ourselves to do something, we can do some new things here in the village (Pran).

Migrants can bring new ideas to Namsaling; they can share their worldview in the village. According to Pran migrants, like him, can change something in the village by bringing back experiences and knowledge from Kathmandu:

I used to share things that I have learnt. I have shared with people about the historical and cultural places of Nepal. I have shared how the local people are living there, and I have shared about lifestyles of other people also, because not only local people are living there, not only local people have house in Kathmandu, but also other people from other places (Pran).

For Pran it is important to tell his family left behind about how other people in the same country live their lives different from them. Knowledge about different cultures is an example of experience that is difficult to obtain in the village. On the other hand this is relevant knowledge in Nepal, where a higher degree of coherence is implemented through the current processes of democratization and restoration of peace within the new constitution. Pran does not hesitate to share his experience in Namsaling:

If I can get any chances here, I used to share [experiences from KTM] with some elder people, some villagers and some of my friends. I used to say things about the system of Kathmandu, I don't mean that all the systems in KTM is good, but if I saw any good things I use to bring those things here and I use to share these things here also (Pran).

Pran does not blindly accept the life in Kathmandu as the good life, there are a lot of opportunities, especially for young people. However, there are also several problems with overpopulation and

poverty. For Pran it is important to learn from the good things and to bring it back to the people left behind in his home community. Pran is very engaged in the school in Namsaling. He has experience in teaching from his stay in Ilam Bazaar. If he has the time, when he is home he will teach his father's mathematic classes. His motivation is that the students in the school should be presented with new input:

I find that it [the local school in the village] is a really good place to share my things, because there are all the younger people there, and if I share my knowledge with these younger people, there will be some implementation of this in the village also. (Pran).

The young people will listen to him because of his seniority and they will be able to use the new knowledge; he has faith in the younger generation. He believes that they can do well in the future, but at the same time he is concerned that a high number will try to leave Nepal, in search for better living standards.

The migrants from Namsaling were concerned with the information level, and the access to media and other sources of information. Even though several houses have both television and radio, people used it mostly for entertainment, and not for news. The Nepalese TV-channels were criticized, especially by the migrants who did not find them critical enough, or good at giving a nuanced picture of what was going on in the country. Mani and Subash are both migrants living in Kathmandu. The two of them are concerned with access to books in the village they have the idea that they want to unite people in Kathmandu and collect books for a local library:

'Lets collect some books and make a public library [...] when you have the library you can read something, and develop the habit of reading [...] children who are living here need to broaden their mind. (Mani, educational migrant in Kathmandu).

Mani has studied English literature, and the access to literature is very important for him. Every time he comes to the village he brings books. They are circulated among those who have the interest in reading. Subash had the same idea and he has already thought of a plan for his library-project:

I am planning to establish a small library in the primary school. My wife and I are talking about it. I have so many friends so I am planning to ask for 2-3 books with each of my friends. I will collect them and bring here. I think that education is the root of civilization; this is why I want to do that (Subash, migrant and government official in Kathmandu).

Both of them find that access to books and the ability to read is important. They also think that this is important for the village.

Examples of collective remittances were mentioned, during the interviews with the migrants. Most of them had economic perspectives: a group of migrants in Namsaling had taken the initiative to

gather all migrants from Namsaling in Kathmandu; the aim was to raise financial support for the local schools. Another had organized a collection in favor of local temples and other physical improvements. These examples of collective remittances are not described in-depth, because the direct impact has an economic goal, but it is important to recognize that the building of schools and temples have an indirect, but large social and cultural impact in the local community.

The local people from Namsaling do also contribute to the processes of place making in Namsaling. Kopila is one of the women, who had participated in training. She explains how she was able to share her knowledge and make a difference in the village:

My group decided that I have ability to go there [to a training] and take some sort of knowledge to share within the group. The training was about women's awareness, and upgrading women condition [...] I took this sort of training to remove the social evil. I collected some of the women from the society and I gave them training about women's awareness, and how to upgrade their standard. When somebody comes to us and asks us something we could not speak with them. In this training we learnt to have conversations with strangers. Now we have confidence to speak face to face with others. This training has boosted our self-confidence. It is important. Where I go, what I learn at least other people should also learn about it. If I am capable, I should also make other capable. That is why these sorts of training are important in village (Kopila, housewife, member of women's savings group).

What Kopila learned at the trainings she shared with the other women in the village. This is an example of how knowledge acquired outside the village, can be implemented in the village, and thereby affect the social environment. In Chapter 4 it was explained how Suzaan had learnt to sew in Darjeeling, and then gave classes to the local women, another example of a local woman who had the privilege to learn something, and then shared her new knowledge in the village. Suzaan and Kopila have been part in forming local initiatives. It is therefore important not only to point out migrants position in the place making processes, which are going on in Namsaling, but also to recognize that local people with a high degree of mobility can also be significant in change processes.

Social remittances is not a new phenomena in Namsaling, this is shown through the example of education. The villagers pointed to the fact that the level of education from an early stage had made Namsaling a prosperous place. In fact, Namsaling is home to one of the first secondary schools built in Nepal (Takahatake 2001). Resourceful villagers had managed to gather resources to travel abroad to India and China and acquired inspiration from democratic movements as well as from pioneers in the educational field (see pictures in Appendix 9.7). They met with Nepalese democracy campaigners that had been sent into exile and were inspired by their thoughts. With this inspiration they were able to start schools in Namsaling and inspire democratic movements and instigate social work. When they returned they were very eager to implement what they had learnt. One of the privileged families; The Dhakal-family had furthermore privileges, through good connection with

the Ranas, who were ruling Nepal until 1951. Before 1951 education was a privilege for the relatives to the Rana rulers or other highly respected people (Shakya 2009, Whelpton 2005). Dhama Prasad Dhakal, who was born in Namsaling in 1905 and was educated in Calcutta and Darjeeling, had to obtain a special letter from the Rana rulers to establish the first school in Namsaling.

In Jhapa it was possible to meet a descendant of the establisher of the first school (A small excerpt from the story can be seen in Appendix 9.7.) Several local people and migrants in Namsaling were talking about the school system and how education has always been important in Namsaling. This story about the first schools is relevant to understand the on-going flows and on-going processes that formed the village. It is an example of how changes in other places has been imported to Namsaling by mobile people and have contributed to the making of Namsaling.

These two parts of the analysis has examined the migrant's impact on their village, and to some extent mobile local peoples, both in terms of economic obligations and their contribution to social processes. The focus has been on "intended" transfer of knowledge and learning processes because the migrants' perspective has been the reference. The unintended exchange of capital is likewise interesting, but also very difficult to assess; it will only be possible through longitudinal observations. Nevertheless this analysis of formalized exchange through social learning processes shows that social remittance are circulating between migrants and those left behind; thus, this analysis has clarified migrant's exchange of social remittances and the potential of them in place making processes.

Local acceptance of the contributions from beyond

Most villagers' welcome migrant's new thoughts, but not everyone is supporting the inspiration from beyond. Migrants' way of being is different than it was before. This can be conditional for them to enter in the place making process, but on the other hand it can also be problematic for them when they try to improve or share worldviews in the home place. This part brings fourth how the migrants new ideas are received in the village, and how migrants regard the villagers after there stay in another place.

Migrants have a special status in Namsaling; the fact that they have experience from the world outside the village is seen as a special privilege, and those who have had the opportunity to study enjoy a high status. Among the villagers in Namsaling there is a strong belief that the migrants' expanded worldview puts them in a position to do something for the village and several villagers are interested in hearing about their new experiences and new ideas. A local farmer expresses how content he is about the migrants, and what they have learned from staying in the city:

There will be a difference [between people who have been living in other places]. They have done a lot of progress. They have seen many places. They have acquired a lot of knowledge. When those people tell about their lives, stories and environment, then I feel so glad. We can see that they have gained a good knowledge from staying in another society. They have a good culture and their response to the local people is very good (Tahmi, local farmer).

The expectation can be high, and it can put a pressure on the migrants. Pran is also generally experiencing a welcoming attitude toward him when he is sharing his idea. However, not all people are happy about his involvement. This has to be seen in relation to the hierarchy between generations in Nepal, especially in rural society where respect towards elder people is considered as a social code of conduct:

Most people they use to listen to my things if I say something, because they also want to know about things from new places, they also want to know, what is happening in Kathmandu. But this is not the same with all the people from here, some people become offended [...] some people who have their own ego, some people, who are older than me (Pran).

Birat has felt the same kind of resistance, which Pran explains. People in Namsaling live in communities formed of 10-20 houses traditionally formed by people within the same family, but along with the expansion of the number of houses increasing areas of land has been cultivated and new mixed societies have emerged. Especially among the high caste Hindus there has been a tradition to form their own societies within the community, to handle different social matters and assist with family celebrations. These societies are called Samaj, and have mainly an economic propose. Birat's family is living in a mixed community, but they insisted of having a Samaj with only members from their own caste, resulting in exclusion of households from other castes and ethnic groups. Birat and other young people from the same community have been raised with another view on caste discrimination, and they have tried to persuade his parents to change this practice:

We young people tried to organize one village meeting. We tried to include all the people from the community; all castes and ethnicities, but the older people they did not support our idea about including all the people from the community. [...] We could have had one society including all the people [from the same village], but because of that disturbance, now we and other households are members of Adhikari²⁶ Samaj. Some people from the same area, they are members of another samaj far from here. (Birat).

It is not possible for Birat to persuade his family to change their view the caste issue. His ideas about inclusion of different castes in the society clash with his parents' mindset.

The people, who have got a traditional mind-set, just like my parents or old people. Even they listen to the new thing, those people would not be supporting. For some sorts of entertainment they would be listening, but they would not be supporting the ideas. (Birat).

Not all are willing to listen to the migrant's ideas and modern worldview. His parents are not willing to listen to his ideas and let his advice change their mind. So even though the migrants are sure they can make a difference and bring new thoughts to the village, they do meet difficulties. The

²⁶ Adhikari is a Hindu high caste family name

villagers have their traditions and own ways of handling things and it is not in all cases that they are interested in inspiration from outside.

6.3. Linking places within a translocal field

Migrants living outside Namsaling are linked to their home place in several ways. This analysis shows that both economic commitments as well as social responsibility characterize this interconnectedness. The connections build on migrant's feelings as well as obligations towards their family and the community at large. Migrants' orient themselves towards Namsaling; they maintain family relationships to the home place even after years away from the village. There is a pressure on the migrants, as they know they have to take care of their families. Their parents has invested in the their education, and thereby in their own future there is no option for them to cut the ties to their responsibility as it is a part of the culture. They are trying to live up to these obligations, but at the same time they are trying to make a living in the city. Obligation and dependency is notable when discussing the migrants' connection to their home place. The analysis focus on understanding the exchange of social remittances within a translocal field, but the connections are built on more than just shared identity and feelings of belonging. The economic and emotional ties are intertwined and so are the remittances because social and cultural capital is exchange within the same network as economic capital (Harvey1996).

Social remittances are intangible: defining social remittances, not least their impact and affect on receiving communities, can be very complex. This analysis has thus been concerned with the potential for remittances to be exchanged, as well as showing examples of exchange between Namsaling and Kathmandu through translocal connections facilitated by migrants. By examining education in Namsaling it is outlined that processes instigated from beyond is not a new phenomenon. The migrants' transfer of social and cultural remittances to the village is evident especially in the field of education and it is an example of how 'social remittances' have had an impact on Namsaling. This process continual and still today people, such as migrants, which are able to get inspiration and knowledge from staying and visiting places outside the village, contributes to the making of Namsaling. Through social remittances the translocal migrants can intervene in local processes from their position outside the place. It is through social remittances that places are linked together in a translocal field, and have multiple effects on each other, in the process of place making. However not all change processes have to be coined with the exchange of social remittance.

Remittances can be divided in private or collective remittances. The private remittances are the most difficult to assess because of the sharing of ideas, experiences and different kinds of knowledge in-between individuals. Groups initiate collective remittances, but they are still exchanged by individuals as parts of an organization, a translocal community or in other organized forms. Collective remittances are tangible and easier to assess, because it presupposes a common action or at least a common target (Levitt & Lamba-Nives 2010). There are indications of how social remittances affects Namsaling and that the migrants are important players. Birat, mention that he wants to be a reason for changes in Namsaling, he see himself as an important player in the

process of making Namsaling. This has to be seen in conjunction with the general mistrust in the Nepalese government, its inability to undertake development projects, and provide the needed assistance to rural areas in Nepal. Also, the media in Nepal is seen as highly influenced by the political parties and thus translocal links are also an important source to information from beyond (Bleie & Dahal 2010). But the migrants' role is not easy, there are obligations towards them, but at the same time they are met with resistance from the villagers. Changes take time and the villagers do not always agree with the migrants' point of view.

Chapter 7. The making of Namsaling

This study has been concerned with the complex forms of subjectivity and feelings, which emerge through mobility. Internal mobility has been of particular interest, in order to point to the fact that mobility within a nation-state is an interesting, but less studied issue within recent migration studies (Mercer et al. 2008). Internal mobility shares the same characteristics as international mobility with the dynamics of leaving and coming back, circulation and extended networks and communities, flows of capitals and remittances (Conradsen & McKay 2007). The making of Namsaling and the processes that define what constitutes places, has been assessed through a translocal approach with an actor-based focus. By analyzing processes in a translocal field it has been possible to abandon the notion of places as geographically isolated entries and introduce a new geography of interrelated places with translocal communities and migrants with translocal habitus as central analytical elements (Massey et al. 2009).

Different kinds of impacts and actors are affecting the making of Namsaling; throughout the analytical chapters the village has been outlined as a dynamic migrant place. The process of understanding the making of Namsaling consists of four interconnected steps. The first step is the expansion of places to comprise processes from beyond within a translocal field. Secondly, the concept of social remittances is applied to understand the processes and flows of capital that links places within the translocal field. The third stage in the understanding of the making of Namsaling, is concerned with the affect processes have on places and the contribution that migrants have on these processes. Lastly this calls for reflection on whether and how locally based social studies of migration and remittance can contribute with new aspects to bring the discourse of local place making and development beyond the migration-development nexus, and however the theoretical methodological considerations has been adequate for this purpose. These four levels form the structure of the following discussion:

1. Understanding places as translocal fields
2. Exchange of Social remittances, processes from beyond
3. Migrants contribution to place making
4. Beyond the migration-development nexus - Reflections on methodology

7.1. Understanding places as translocal fields

Migrants from Namsaling leave home and stay away from home for a long time, yet they continue to have strong ties to their home place. The analysis has outlined how migrants are oriented towards their home place. There are several reasons for this orientation, it is both the emotional ties, and cultural like-mindedness but also obligations towards the family play a major role. Ramita has emotional ties to Namsaling; this is exemplified through her stories and her way of belonging. She reveals strong feelings towards her home place. She explains how she can see herself fitting into the culture, this shows that her identity has roots in her home place and her habitus includes the relation and her identity links to Namsaling. Birat and Pran have lived away from Namsaling for a long

time, but they follow the development in the village closely and feel obligations not only towards their families, but also towards the community as a whole and they both still see themselves as part of the community.

Migrants enjoy the familiarity and the sense of belonging when they visit Namsaling; they feel proud about their new knowledge and experiences they bring back. But there are also cases, where the time spent away has made the migrants aware of the gap between their wishes and new worldview and the way of life and the actual opportunities available in their home place. The migrants reveal deep ambivalences about the life in Kathmandu versus their former life in Namsaling. They express a sense of self, of their habitus, that is continuous across places, but another part of their habitus is highly affected by their new life (Lawson 1999). Migrants have to cross physical, cultural and social borders. When they meet new cultures and new modes of life, it will not only affect their social life and thereby their life course, but it is also forming their translocal habitus (Gardner 2009). Lawson (1999) has made similar studies in Ecuador, showing the same kind of identity conflict, where migrants embrace the modern city life. At the same time, they do not wish to stay there permanently. Thus, even though migrants are staying in the city, within a modernized place, they can not be fully incorporated materially or discursively into the modern city life, because of their consciously ties to their home. While they are there, they will continue to maintain their cultural identity and feelings of belonging through ongoing ties to their home places (Lawson 1999). Migrants have to relate to different ways of living and all the new experiences and different economic, social and cultural practices involved with this. The migrants are obviously attracted to both the modern life and that of the home place. Although they adapt to their new setting, they experience difficulties fitting in to different ways of living, and they feel an attraction to home. Their worldview as well as their habitus has changed, it makes them different from those, who stayed behind in Namsaling. This makes migrants able to contribute to change processes, but furthermore it creates the ambivalent relations and risks of (re-) producing asymmetric access to change.

The translocal field is where all links, feelings, connections and ways of communicating exist. Appadurai (1996) focus on how human action in the place making processes forms an opening towards an actor-based focus. In the analysis of this field, two major issues have been examined: the migrant's way of being and way of belonging. The migrants life and their way of being is understood as their translocal habitus, hence it is recognized that migrants do adopt things through their moving through time and space. And bring things with them their life in other places, which has formed their life course. The translocal habitus is created by a variety of processes experienced in the new place, but also the processes that migrants participate in throughout the process of moving; from the actual process of leaving home, to the social networks that assist them in moving and settling in the new place, combined with the economic and cultural ties that exist between migrants and home (Gardner 2009).

By assessing the way of belonging it has been possible to analyze the relative structures that consciously exist between places facilitated and initiated by both migrants and stayers, which are interpreted as forming a translocal community. Since the migrants no longer are physically present in the village they do not belong to a traditional locally based village community. They are members of a translocal community, which exists across place and scale, in-between people who share feelings of belonging and identity to the same place. The communities seem to be spatially extended by the reach of mobile people, which rethink and remake the emotional, social, cultural and physical structures through their translocal way of living (Gilmartin 2008). This leads to a spatial expansion of the community; the community becomes translocal because it comprises migrants staying in various places. This translocal community is important for the interconnectedness between migrants and their home place and it is through these ties that stayers in the village will benefit (Thieme 2008).

7.2. Exchange of Social remittances, processes from beyond

Translocal migrants are connecting places within a translocal field, through social remittances. In this way, they contribute to the local place making process. The analysis of migrants' way of being and way of belonging has formed a foundation for the understanding of their potential to exchange remittances and thereby expand their reach to include geographically distant places.

The empirical studies have pointed out impacts of migration and mobility on various processes in Namsaling. Social remittances have shown to have various direct and indirect impacts on a local community like Namsaling. One example is the educational sector, which has been improved through inspiration brought in from elsewhere. The question is whether social remittances will affect broadly. The migrants themselves have indicated that they share knowledge more broadly than in just their own family. New knowledge is for example shared in schools or used to empower women in a savings group. If it is the case, that social remittances are affecting the society broadly and not just the migrant's household, then social remittances can be seen as processes of bottom up interventions, which can lead to local equality and eradicate imbalance in the local power geometry in Namsaling. Social remittances can through flows of ideas and practices affect the local view on issues of discrimination, gender equity, health and democracy (Faist 2007) and it is therefore useful to distinguish between individual and collective social remittances. This analysis has not completely accomplished this distinction, but examples have shown on the one hand, that social remittances can be exchanged and deployed in-between individuals and on the other, they can also be attached in collective, organizational settings, which was the case with the women's savings group (Levitt & Lamba-Nives 2010).

Education is accessible for a larger number of people, but there is still difference in the level of education, as privileged families can send their children to better schools, when others have to choose less costly options. In chapter 4, it was outlined that not all people can migrate because mobility takes resources and that not all destinations give access to a changed worldview or access to improved capitals, which shows local power geometry in Namsaling. Migration reproduces local patterns of power geometry, because not all households have the same resources to improve their

living standards by investing in education for their children. This tendency is reinforced by the fact that migration creates further migration along the same corridors or through migrant networks; those families, where migration is a part of their livelihood strategy are more likely to migrate again (Zoomers & van Western 2011, Portes 2011). Migration can cause economic or technological dependency, at least in two different ways; firstly it creates expectations for living standards, for those who have experienced a modernized life. It discourages migrants from coming back to the village, because they get adapted to the way of living in the city and they do not find the same facilities, living standards and job opportunities in Namsaling. Some of them will alternatively choose Ilam, but a large number will also stay in Kathmandu. Secondly the stories told by the migrants make the locals feel dissatisfied about their life in a remote area; they create a need towards the better life in other places but also a dependency on material goods, as well as improved agricultural methods to raise the income from cash crops, in order to pay for education (Levitt & Lamba-Nives 2010).

It is within the translocal field that social remittances can be exchanged, and by analyzing and understanding this field, I have shown that by opening for an understanding of this field it is possible to assess underlying structures to comprehend the social system in which social remittances are exchanged from one place and applied in other places.

7.3. Migrants contributing to place making

Namsaling is a migrant place; I have shown that migration is a common element in the household's livelihood strategies. Massey's and Harvey's open approach to place was applied to examine how a migrant place like Namsaling, can be affected through the connections the migrants create to other places. Places are unities formed through 'a global sense of place', which assumes that elements from anywhere outside the place itself, imported through various forms of interaction, contributes to the process of place making (Harvey 1996, Massey 1994). Namsaling is in a process of change, this can however not be outlined as a new phenomenon and migration and the connection to the world beyond through links, flows and social remittances are not the only reason for transformation processes in the village. Nonetheless, in relation to the general transformation processes in Nepal and the high degree of mobility, this study has shown interesting aspects of migrant's contribution to place making from distant locations.

Worldviews, experience and knowledge about other cultures practices can affect the making of places like Namsaling, when they pass or dwell there. This is especially apparent because of the high number of migrants, who continually keep contact to their home place and furthermore, continue to have feelings as well as obligations toward the place. Thus, it is relevant to see places as culturally constructed and to understand that cultural impact can come from beyond (Escobar 2001, Gielis 2009). By drawing on the work of Appadurai (1996), it has been possible to address places' position in a translocal field, which no longer can be seen as localized. This forms a way of understanding the exchange between places facilitated by migrants.

Mobility and various translocal processes have an impact on Namsaling; flows of flexible capital, mass communication and transportation affect the place and give rise to different changes. However, the increasing amount of out-migration is also leading to new challenges, as outlined in the analysis. Villages like Namsaling have to define themselves within a new translocal field, where cultural practice from outside can change the sense of place. The villagers and the migrants are acutely aware of these challenges, and further studies could assess their way of handling the challenges (Creswell 2004).

Namsaling is influenced by migration: both in a direct way due to the increasing number of people leaving, but also when translocal migrants from Namsaling reach out from their current places of residence to affect their home places. The analysis has shown examples of migrant's intentioned contribution but along with the intentioned impact migrants have, there will be implicit contribution as well, these contributions are difficult to assess through a relatively short stay. By looking into migrants' life course, I have focused on their different ways of belonging, and the processes and feelings by which migrants' interactions create translocal communities, which link their home place together with their current place of residence. It is crucial for a place-centric study of migration tendencies to focus on places as relational as it is in this way, that it becomes possible to see how various social flows and processes intersect and meet in a place, and contribute to the transformation of it (Gielis 2009). Therefore, are migration and mobility essential for studying, analyzing, and understanding places. The task is to find a way of tracing the processes associated with human mobility at different scales and tie them together into a coherent whole, without neglecting the importance of their difference (Creswell 2006).

An interesting discussion is hence how Namsaling will look in the future. Since it is important to recognize that not all changes are related to migration, and the migrant's contribution to place making. Times are changing and Namsaling is no longer a model place in terms of education. Years of political instability and lack of local elections²⁷ has stagnated the development of rural areas. The economic activities remain limited and uneven compared to Terai and certainly Kathmandu valley, where there are remarkable development within various sectors, such as education, infrastructure and trade. (Bleie & Dahal 2010). There is a general concern that the migrants lose their feeling of belonging if more than one generation lived away from the village. Migrants born outside Namsaling will have less connection to Namsaling. The migrants who formed the educational sector in Namsaling over 60 years ago came back to the village, after staying outside. The current educational migrants from Namsaling are not coming back to the village as there are no possibilities for them to find jobs and their changed lifestyle does not fit in with rural life. Lack of facilities such as roads, access to markets, and health facilities are among the reasons for the migrants' decisions not to come back. It is likewise the reason for entire families to leave Namsaling. Migrants do however consider returning to Ilam Bazaar, where development is on the rise. So a future scenario can be development of these urban centers in the rural district, this

²⁷ There has not been elections in the village (VDC) and district since 1997(Hangen 2011)

tendency can both be seen as strengthening of the rural areas, but also as causing further depopulation and marginalization of village areas.

The multilocal field, new means of communication and the time-space compression is becoming complex and difficult to understand, with various people living and acting in more than one arena. Therefore the discussion about the migrants' contribution to place making and the impact of social remittances is all the more relevant. The processes that have formed Namsaling over the course of more than one generation are expanding both quantitatively and qualitatively: quantitatively because the number of migrants is increasing and qualitatively because the number of destinations is expanding. Taken together these expansions have made the multilocal field even more complex. Apart from the educational migrants in Katmandu, there are numerous migrants staying in Jhapa with remarkable influence on various processes in Namsaling. In addition, the work migrants in Malaysia or the Middle East are in daily or weekly contact with their family in the village through mobile phones and they continue to have an effect on the family decisions, when they are away. Finally, there are a rising number of young people, who are seeking to take an education in the North. All of these tendencies will continue to add to the complexity of the translocal field.

There has been a rising attention from international organizations and various development actors, towards the impact of migration for development and transformation in countries in the Global South; this is what has been referred to as the migration-development nexus (Sørensen 2012, de Haas 2010, Faist 2008). Different scholars and policymakers have only thought of remittances as one-way and linear ways of transferring economic capital from developed places to less developed places across national borders (de Haas 2010). The word remittance is in its original form a one-way process where capital is transferred back to home places. Therefore, this local study has tried to focus on exchange of remittances to recognize the circular potential of the concept. Furthermore, the study has focused on processes of change rather than development, to recognize the complex and interconnected actions and relationship that forms the place making processes within a translocal field. As pointed out in the analysis, migration in Namsaling is not linear. For the migrants there is no final destination – they are moving through space and time to make their living, and so are the remittances, along with the processes of change.

7.4. Beyond the migration-development nexus - Reflections on methodology

The migration-development nexus in the recent development paradigm has focused on the impact of migration with the main emphasis on mapping economic and material flows and development. However, the recognition of the social aspect of migration has been weak. The channels for the social aspects are the same as for the economic remittances, but the impacts are deeper and therefore absolutely relevant (de Haas 2010). This multi-sited study has put the concept of social remittance in the forefront of the analyses and has at the same time recognized the intertwined relation between social and economic flows. The focus on social remittances has not tried to prove or disprove various impacts from social remittances, but it has focused on the potential for understanding social remittances as a part of a place making process via links within a translocal field. Further studies of social remittances could examine the long-term impact of social remittances

in Namsaling. Due to time constraints during the fieldwork it was not possible to return to Namsaling to follow up on the impact of social remittances in Namsaling. This could, however, have added a nuanced view on the actual impact of social remittances and consequences that process from elsewhere have on Namsaling.

The hermeneutical approach has strengthened this study of remittances and place making in a local context, in the sense that the pre-understandings have continually been contested, both during fieldwork and in the analytical phase, where local issues, ideas and practices has guided the research and analysis. This has given a good understanding of the local context, not to say that extensions of the lengths of field research and other parameters could have improved the findings. The case study built on a life course approach, has made it possible to understand the translocal field from the perspective of migrants, which is central for the hermeneutical research approach used in this study. The possibility to follow and observe the migrants intensively in different places and hence in different social environments and situations has made it possible to understand their position. This has been fundamental to the analysis. In the same way the observations of the villagers and their everyday life, made it possible to analyze the local setting. The semi-structured interviews both in the livelihood-migration mapping section and in other interviews have made it possible for the respondents to introduce important aspects, which have given a comprehensive understanding of the local context. Important elements could have been lost in the translation, mostly because emphasis and feelings imbedded in the answers have not been possible to access and understand. It has been possible to study a local community in Nepal, through a focus on the village's connections to places beyond, as well as migrant's actions within a translocal community.

By living in Namsaling during the fieldwork, it has been possible to observe the local dynamics and the local living. The observations of meetings and interaction between local villagers and migrants during Dashain festival have been a unique opportunity to understand translocal relations. The re-visits in Kathmandu has likewise been relevant in order to understand the migrants in-between life, and observe their way of being. It has to be considered that the presence of a researcher can make people act different than they would normally (Rankin 2003). Furthermore they may have an agenda, unknown to the researcher, which makes them act or speak in a different way and bring out certain issues or problems. These intentions are obviously difficult to reveal but there seemed to be an antagonism in the villagers' way of describing the village. On the one hand, the villagers and migrants are proud of Namsaling; they tried to paint a picture of the village as a modern and prosperous place. On the other hand, they were interested in outlining their problems, e.g. the bad road connection as they thought that it would draw attention to their problems.

As for considerations about bias, it is relevant to be critical of the way of entrance to the field, as it can have affected the outcomes of the study. The village of Namsaling was recommended as a fieldwork site by Dr. Subedi from Tribuvan University and it was through his contact that accommodation was procured with an educated and resourceful household. Therefore, the approach to Namsaling has been through a privileged and educated segment. Other perspectives could have been included if the entrance to the field had been through a disadvantaged household. This biased

entrance has been clear throughout the whole study and several steps and efforts were consequently made to broaden the study to cover the entire village. This was especially true for the Livelihood-migration mapping, where it was made possible to include people from all social groups in the study. The focus on education has likewise formed a biased perspective, because only affluent families could afford to send their children to college and university. Furthermore, the Namsaling-Kathmandu linkages segregated the study, because less privileged families tend to send their children to study in Ilam Bazaar. A study focusing more on this differentiation and household's ability to include migration as a livelihood strategy, could have been another interesting issue for a local study in Namsaling.

The qualitative methods used in this study have shown its relevance for a local study of remittances and place making in Nepal. The results of the impact of social remittances in Namsaling have shown that there is a need for social focus, within the study of migration's impact on development, in order to assess the processes, that are immeasurable, but of high importance to development. Furthermore, internal migration seems to be significant in the making of rural villages in Nepal, where the geographical, infrastructural and political landscape makes an even distribution of social as well as economic capital complicated. A combination of a translocal approach to a place-based case study outlines a possible way to go beyond the migration-development nexus focus on measurable economy. It points to the fact that translocal social processes are relevant for local level changes, and can be considered with in development studies.

Theoretical reflections on translocality combined with a local level multisided field study in Namsaling and Kathmandu, outlines how migrants make their living, within a translocal field and forms a translocal habitus. The theoretical considerations on places constituted by processes from beyond, through the exchange of capitals within translocal communities, has shown a viable theoretical frame for understanding migrants exchange of social remittances. Thereby it becomes possible to outline migrants' participation in translocal processes and their contribution to place making in their home place from beyond.

8. References

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9. Appendix

9.1. Table: methods, interviews and respondents

Propose /aim	Method / Type	Numbers and participants
Preunderstanding / Background /expert	Semi-structured	Anita Ghimeri post doc at North South, Kathmandu FES- Nepal Chandra Dev Bhatta Martin Chautari: Gaurab Home Net Nepal: Om Thapaliya Bhem Subedi. Tribuvan University Ilameli Student Forum VDC- Secretary in Namsalin Namsaling Samparka Manch (Political group)
Preunderstanding / Background /Group discussions	PRA- Timeline PRA- village mapping	1 Timeline app. 10 participants 6 mapping session (3-10 participants)
Pre-understanding / Background / overview / migration mapping	Livelihood-migration mapping / Semi structured interviews	50 interviews Whit villagers from different communities, cast, religion, gender and age
Understanding of Namsaling and the local community	Semi structured interviews	8 Interviews CBO etc. (Besi Gaun Samaj, Punajagaran Yuwa Samaj, Namsaling Gumaune Samaj, Dalit Pressure group against untouchability, Group for Disable people, Mahalaxmi Saving Group, Okharbote Agricultural Group, Womens empowerment group)
Empirical analysis	Semi structured interviews	12 semi-structured interviews with locals in Namsaling
Empirical analysis	Semi structured interviews	17 semi-structured interviews With migrant (primarily educational) that returned for Dashain festival in the village
Empirical analysis	Semi structured interviews	24 interviews with migrants in Jhapa
Background/ analysis	Observation	Various (field diary and essays)
Background /analysis	Focus-Groups	Various

9.2. Table: Themes and codes

Main Theme	Sub- theme
1. Education in Namsaling	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Brain Drain – people leaving the village not returning b. Education in the village vs. Other places c. The history of education in Namsaling d. Migration to India
2. Multilocality and feeling of belonging to the village	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Discourse – ‘they will returnee’ b. Migrants about coming back c. Network and practical use of network d. Feelings about the village
3. Knowledge about democracy in the village	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Access to knowledge village vs city b. Access to information c. Examples of knowledge acquired outside the village used in the village d. Visions for changes in Namsaling e. Early migration and relationship with India
4. The level of development in the village (vs City)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Social problems and changes (awareness of social, health, education) b. Physical problems and changes c. Cultural problems and changes (incl. Ethnicity, gender, age etc) d. Examples of changes generation shifts
5. Involvement in activities in the society	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Tradition for involvement in community activities in the village b. Involvement in the village (residents) c. Involvement in the city/Jhapa (residents) d. Involvement in the village (non residents) e. Citizenship and obligations
6. Social Remittance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Discussion and sharing of knowledge (migrants) in village b. Migrants project and ideas c. Young migrants their opinion about the society d. Parents and children relationship
7. Local governance local leadership	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Local organisations, managing a community without a state b. Understanding of democracy in the village c. Local political conflicts – democracy in danger during the insurgency d. Believe in the young people and the changes e. Political conflicts at local level f. Relationship between the villagers.

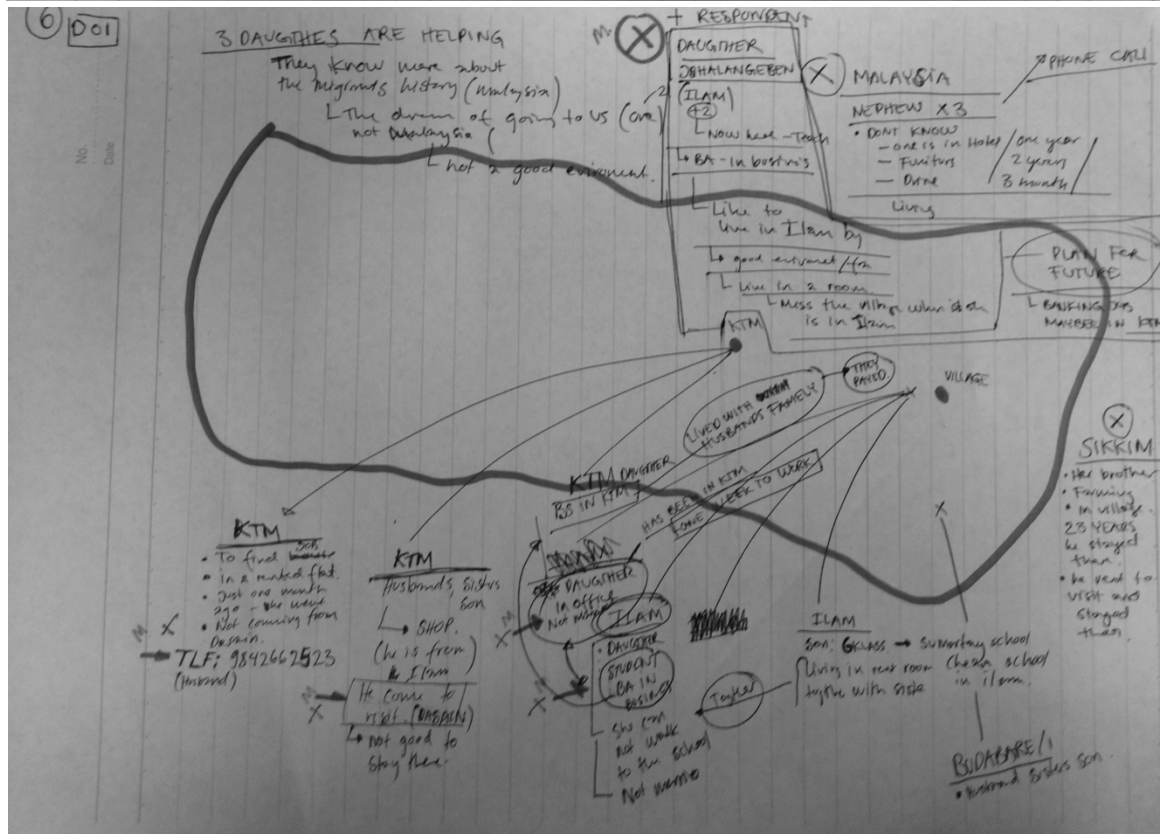
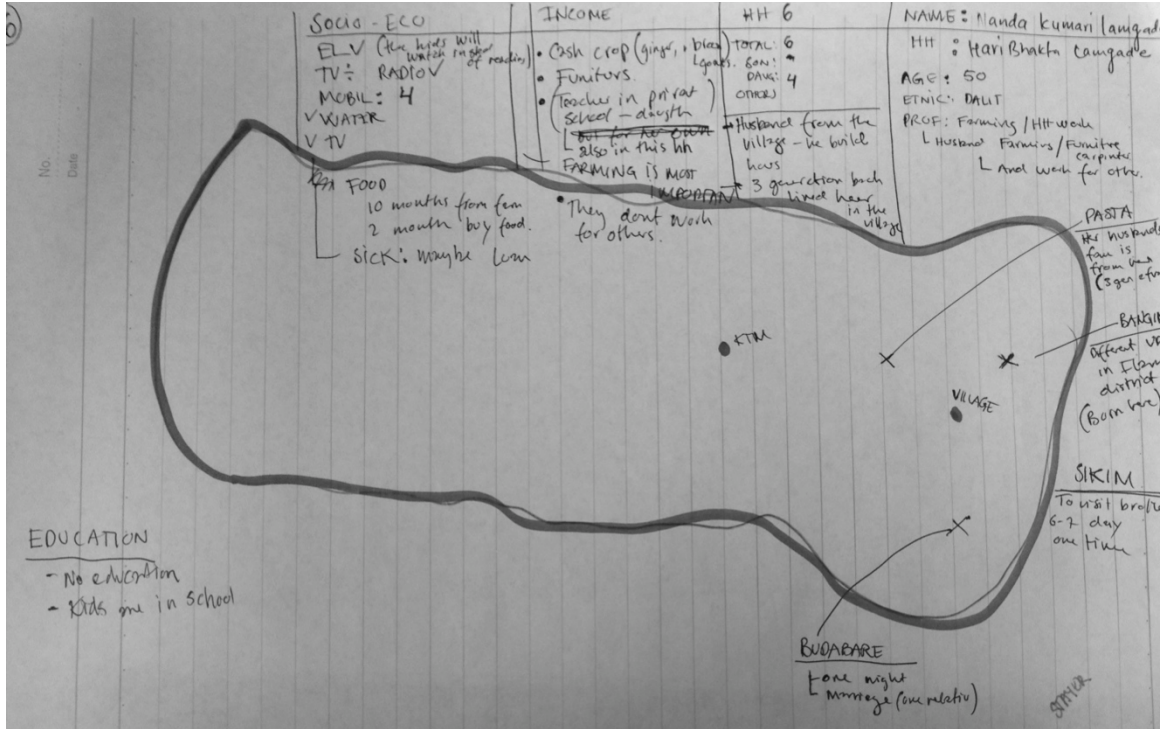
9.3. Coding themes: explanations

1. Education	Education has been one of the driving pillars for the development in Namsaling. Many of the respondents are proud of the educational level in Namsaling. Many of the respondents have or have had relatives playing a central role in building up the school system. An interesting aspect for including this theme is that many of the central players in developing the school, have obtained the knowledge from their visit and stays in other places typically India and Kathmandu. Knowledge about education has been remitted in the last 60-70 years. This theme focuses on the development of education in Namsaling and how the level of education in Namsaling is compared to the level in other places of Nepal. Many people, mainly the resource families, who have played a vital role in the village, are leaving the village to study and work in other places, many respondents in Namsaling mention the affect out-migration has on the community and the possible 'brain drain' in Namsaling.
2. The multilocal life and network	The multilocal life can be understood by focusing on the migrant's feelings about their home (origin), their feelings of belonging and their responsibility and dependency towards their origin. The themes also include the contrast many migrants express in their answers about their (emotional) wish to return and the actual possibility to return to a life that they have left, where it is difficult to make use of their new qualifications. There are some interesting analytical elements in the migrants answer for eg. What do they see as home, and how do they talk about Namsaling. It is interesting to mention the contradictions in their answers where rational thinking and emotions a being mixed. Not only feelings but also cultural obligations towards family member specially to support old parents or younger siblings. The Network is important in almost al migration case and this is also included in this theme.
3. Ideas and experience - the worldview	When the migrant moves to a new place, they are normally exposed to a lot of new things. They get new ideas about the world and their country and they get new experiences about how the life is away from the village. The new knowledge can be formalized because many of them are taking an education and getting new skills, but they learn from many other informal processes because they are being agents in new social spaces. They face new culture, new people, new languages and they have to adjust to different lifestyles and norms, they get inspired and learn from living, seeing and participating. They mention that they feel that they are somehow closer to the power, they can se some direct effect of the government's actions, and they get a better understanding of some of the processes that forms the country. They have better access to medias for e.g. newspapers and internet and they can participate in formal and informal meetings to gain information and raise their awareness towards different subjects. Migrants and other people who had the opportunity to visit or liv in places away from the village gets a special status in the village. There insight and knowledge from other places are seen as a privilege and an advantage that the villages are interstate to get access in, with other words there is an inters from villagers in letting the migrants share some of there ideas and experience, this is what later will be analyzed as the worldview.
4. Social, cultural and physical challenges	This theme has two major aims first is it the migrant's opinion about the challenges that their origin face. What are the social, cultural and physical problems for the development in Namsaling. The second is the migrants comparison of origin and destination. Examples are caste-based discrimination, gender roles, health awareness, educational level and social environment.
5. Involvement in activities in the society.	In this themes there is a collection of quotes hat helps to get an understanding of how the migrants spend their time and how much they are involved in work, study, leisure activities and specially if they are engaged in social and political activities in their community. It has relation to theme 3, and some of the statements can be used to support quotes in theme 3. There ail be focuses on involvement in origin and destination, but there will also be included some aspect of tradition for involvement in the village and changed patters of involvement
6. Information flows, knowledge sharing and remittances	This theme is one of the central themes. It collects the migrant's statements about their oven activities in Namsaling. Firstly the focus is on there ability to share their experiences from the life away from the village. All different kind of ideas, practical knowledge, academic knowledge etc is included in this theme. Secondly the theme focuses on concrete ideas for how to face some of the challenges in the village and how they could imagine their role in changing small things in the village. Finally this

	chapter points out the expectations from the villagers to the migrants and herby the child-parents relationship.
7. Political conflicts and political leadership	This theme focuses on the political environment and the local political conflicts mentioned by the migrants. The theme is not central for the analysis but it is essential for the understanding of the difficult political environment to collect some of the important statements in a theme, and it is helpful for background knowledge.

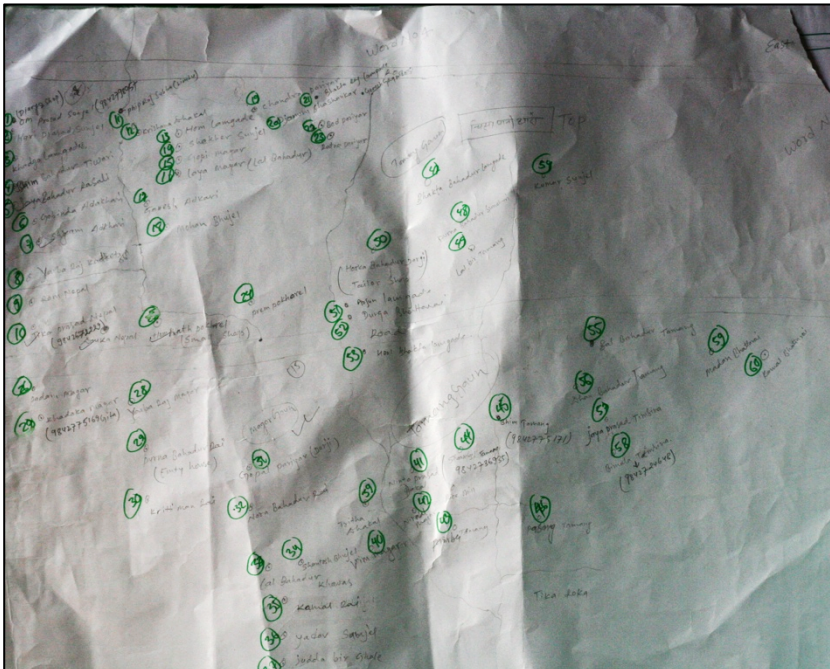
9.4. Livelihood-migration Mapping

Example on maps made during the Livelihood-migration mapping. First map shows the respondents migration and mobility pattern, and second map show migration and mobility pattern for the entire household



9.5. PRA-Village maps

Three examples on maps made during the PRA-mapping session, for three different village communities



9.6. Timeline PRA

Timeline for Namsaling

Nepali year*	Natural event	Historical/ physical event	Educational event	Technological event
App. 100 years ago		People went to Bhutan and India to build railroad. At that time there was poverty migration towards Assam		
2000			Namsaling School started (unofficially)	
2006			Namsaling school established (but started earlier)	
2006		First political party was established (communist and congress)		
2011	A big landslide and flood damaged a lot and a number of people was killed			
2011				First motor-bike in Namsaling
2013				First rice field drain (Soyang Kulo)
2015		First national election	Namsaling High School established	
2024	A big haggel storm destroyed the harvest. –food from America			
2025			Paul Johnson (first foreigner) from USA (PCV) taught in the village	
2045	Big earthquake			
2045		First CBO: NCDO established		
2054		First woman's organization		
2051				First television
2056		The road was established		
2056				Electricity
2060				First motor bike
2063				First mobile phone
			Namsaling Higher secondary school (+2)	

Time line made during the PRA-session

* The official Nepali Calendar follows a different system Bikram Samwat (B.S.) The B.S. year is 56.7 years ahead of the Gregorian Calendar

9.7. Education in Namsaling

Ranas did not give the permission to anybody but he [his father] had approached them so he could do it. People may have told you about the letter which Rana has given saying that you are permitted to open the school in your locality in your own name, which means in my fathers name. If anything happens against our rule or will, then you and school both will be suspended, we have to take the action against you. If you agree with that we will give you the permission to open the school. With his confidence he could take the permission. That is why the Namsaling people are very fond of him (Khagendra Prasad Dhakal, son of the establisher of first school in Namsaling).

My father was conscious about education because he had stayed in Assam for many years. He was very found of rituals, but he was not a traditional and conservative type [...] Dhakal families are educated at that time because they had studied in Darjeeling. And Dharma Raj Dhakal was the first to pass SLC examination in Ilam district. And they established the Namsaling Secondary School. When they started the school, my father was also one of the members. He later realized that there should be one school in Nepal Dadha. So, in 1949, he brought one teacher from Khasang in India. The reason was that at the time, there were no teachers in Nepal. He lodged him in our own house and gave him salary by himself. Our house was the stating point of that school. Later he encouraged and influenced other villagers too to teach their children in school and in 1951, taking the support of other villagers and old intellectuals; he started the Nepal Jyuti School. He did not get that inspiration from Dhakals. Rather he had got it from Assam. When he was in Assam, many people [political refugees for Nepal] used to live in 'Goths', means small cottage to raise the cows. My father also used to do the same thing. It was the time of B.P. Koirala's²⁸ father Krishna Prasad Koirala. They were the strong supporters of democracy in Nepal. And for that reason they were thrown out from the country [...] While teaching and uniting other Nepali people, who were living outside the country, they came to Assam and started to teach people about the importance of democracy and education in Nepal [...] my father got highly inspired to open the school because those people were talking about democracy and education in Nepal frequently (Tirtha Raj Sharma Nepal, son of co-founder of first school in Namsaling, and founder of second school).



Foto: villagers from Namsaling, visit in China

²⁸ Bishweshwar Prasad Koirala was Nepals priminister from 1959 to 1960. And he was the first democratically elected Prime Minister in Nepal, but he was imprisoned just 18 month after his election by the king, and he spend the rest of his life in prison or in exile (Whelpton 2005)

9.8. Contents on CD

1. Interviews from Livelihood-migration mapping
2. Interviews with local villagers in Namsaling
3. Interviews with local villagers in Namsaling, concerning CBO
4. Interviews with migrants during Dashain
5. Key Informant interviews
6. Livelihood-migration mapping – Excel-overview-table
7. Various (Draft) interview-guides.

The CD is only for review of censor and supervisor for examination.