Over the past 10 years, massive outmigration for foreign employment, mostly to the Gulf and Malaysia, has changed the livelihoods and social structure of rural Nepal. Presently, about two to three million Nepalese work in foreign countries. In 2011, 450,000 Nepalese left the country to work abroad, earning 23% of the GDP. The remittance inflows into rural districts dwarf other flows of finance, and the absence of men from agricultural and other parts of the labour force has had severe effects on agricultural production and gender relations. A study undertaken in Khotang and Udaypur districts in the hills of Nepal indicates a complex series of social, economic, and ecological effects of migration at household and community level. This paper presents these findings focusing on the gendered and class effects of migration. It looks at the changes within households and communities, including effects on the labour force and labour patterns, shifts in male-female ownership of productive assets, and changes in areas of authority and decision-making. All of these have longer-term effects on social dynamics as well as on the agrarian landscape, including wide-ranging impacts on women’s and children’s lives. The findings challenge models of group-based development as well as agricultural approaches that assume the continued availability of high inputs of male labour. Development practitioners and policy-makers need to rethink rural development strategies in areas of high migration and to consider wider rural-urban linkages as well as understanding the drivers of change that push young men and women to leave the hills of Nepal.