

Current Status of Community Forestry in Nepal

By

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Abbreviations

AusAID	Australian Aid for International Development
BISEP-ST	Biodiversity Sector Programme for Siwaliks and Terai
B.S.	Bikram Sambat (Nepali Calendar Year)
CDFWCP	Community Development Forest/Watershed Conservation Project
CF	Community Forestry
CFM	Collaborative Forest Management
CFUG	Community Forest User Groups
CIFOR	Centre for International Forestry Research
DANIDA	Danish International Development Agency
DDC	District Development Committee
DFCC	District Forestry Coordination Committee
DFID	Department for International Development
DFO	District Forest Office
DPR	Department of Plant Resources
DSCWM	Department of Soil Conservation and Watershed Management
FECOFUN	Federation of Community Forestry Users, Nepal
FSC	Forest Stewardship Council
HIMAWANTI	Himalayan Grassroots Women's Natural Resource Management Association
HLFFDP	Hill Leasehold Forest and Forage Development Project
ICIMOD	International Centre for Integrated Mountain Development
IFAD	International Fund for Agriculture Development
IOF	Institute of Forestry
IUCN	World Conservation Union
JICA	Japanese International Development Agency
JTRC	Joint Technical Review Committee
KMTNC	Kind Mahendra Trust for Nature Conservation
LFP	Livelihood Forestry Programme
LSGA	Local Self Governance Act
MoFSC	Ministry of Forests and Soil Conservation
MPFS	Master Plan for the Forestry Sector
NEFEJ	Nepal Forum for Environmental Journalist
NEFUG	Nepal Federation for Forest Resources User Group
NFA	Nepal Foresters' Association
NGO	Non- Government Organization
OP	Operational Plan
POWER	Poor, Occupational caste, and Women Empowerment in Resource Management
PRSP	Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper
RECOFTC	Regional Community Forestry Training Center
SDC	Swiss Development Cooperation
WCC	Ward Conservation Committee
WWF	Worldwide Fund for Nature
WUPAL	Western Upland Poverty Alleviation Project
VDC	Village Development Committee

1. Historical Overview

Nepal is a small mountainous country in the central Himalayas between India and China. The kingdom borders China to the north, and India. The total area of the country is 14.7 million hectares. The total population of the county is 23 million, with 2.2 percent annual growth rate, according to the census of 2001. The population density of the country is about 157 per square kilometer (CBS 2001).

Forests, particularly in the hills, are an integral part of the farming system. Farmers must have access to forest products such as leaf materials for fodder and for animal bedding, fuelwood for energy, and timber for buildings and agricultural implements. The Department of Forests, was established as a state agency in 1942 to manage the forest resources of Nepal (HMG, 1976). However, the focus of the Department was to manage forests without the involvement of the local people. Historically, forest management by the Department was protection oriented and efforts were made to make foresters powerful. To strengthen state control over the forest management process, and weaken the power base of the feudal lords, the private forests were nationalized with the promulgation of Private Forest Nationalization Act in 1957. This act legally centralized the authority of forest management in the Terai (lowlands) and hills under state control, although local communities were informally managing patches of forests adjoining to their settlements. Furthermore, special rights to issue permits even to harvest trees for household purposes were assigned to forest officials with the promulgation of the Forest Act of 1961. This Act gave further authority to forest officer to arrest forest offenders without warrant. Moreover, Forest Protection (special arrangements) Act was promulgated in 1967 to provide additional power to state foresters. It also established one-person special court run by the Divisional Forest Officer.

As the villagers depended highly on forest resources in fulfilling their subsistence daily needs like firewood, leaf litter and fodder, and the settlement of local communities was intermixed with small patches of forests, forest management was always of high concern to the local people. Converse to this, forest management by the Forest Department excluded local people up until the late seventies. Realizing the importance of people's participation in forest management, the National Forest Plan of 1976 accepted the need for people's participation, and mentioned it as its fifth objective (Kanel et al 2005).

Box 1: National Forest Plan 1976

Objective 5: Public cooperation has specifically said "To impartcountry's development and make people aware of, involved in, and partner to protect, produce and better utilize the country's forests, will be another objective of this plan."

The National Forest Plan was the first government document to accept the need for people's participation in forest management. In accordance with this plan, the Forest Act 1961 was amended in 1977 to make provisions to hand over part of government forests to a local political unit called "Panchayat", a territorially based politico-administrative unit established under the partyless Panchayat system (in operation from 1960 to 1990).

According to the 1977 amendment to the Forest Act, Panchayat Forest (PF) and Panchayat Protected Forest (PPF) Rules 1978 were brought forward for implementation. These rules officially initiated the implementation of the community forestry program in Nepal. The PF and PPF rules (Box 2) allowed for the transfer of responsibility for forest management from the government to the local Panchayat as Panchayat Forest (PF¹) and Panchayat Protected Forest (PPF)² (Joshi 1993; Bartlett 1992). For better forest management and implementation of these rules, the government launched several community

¹ A denuded forest handed over to the Panchayat as CF for plantation development.

² A natural forest handed over to the Panchayat as CF.

forestry projects with international support. One of the main early projects was the World Bank funded Hill Community Forestry Project, which operated in 38 hill districts. Other projects implemented were the Nepal Australia Forestry Project (in two hill districts), and the Integrated Rural Development Projects with forestry components in the Koshi Hills, Rapti, Rasuwa and Nuwakot Districts in the central and eastern Hills.

Box 2: The main features of the PF and PPF Rules 1978

- Hand-over government forests to local Panchayat
- Hand-over only degraded lands (with a few scattered trees) and no hand over of well stocked forests.
- Forests area must be within the boundary of the same Panchayat.
- Ceiling for handing over of national forests to Panchayats was up to 125 hectare (500 ropani) for PF and 500 hectare (10,000 ropani) for PPF
- There was provision of sharing revenue between the government and Panchayat. In PF local Panchayats got all the income, and in PPF local Panchayat got 75 percent and government got 25 percent. Some expenditure for forest development works was mandatory.
- Authority of handing over was vested only with Regional Director of Forests.
- Price of the forest products sold must not be less than per unit government royalty rate.

The PF and PPF rules of 1978 had the following major problems:

- Forests were not handed over directly to real users, who were protecting the forests or who could protect the forest, but to the Panchayat administrative officials. Thus, local people could not feel themselves as the legal owners of the forests.
- Village leaders working in the Panchayats did not have long-term ownership, because they were elected for five years and most of the forests were too far for them to effectively supervise.
- Because the forests were highly degraded, there were no initial benefits and incentives for long-term protection and management.

The Community Forestry policy, along with its legislation, has been continuously reformed over time. These reforms have recognized the use rights of the local people in the management of forest resources and established them as managers. Chapter 4 describes how progressive change in community forestry policy in Nepal occurred over time (see also **Annex 1**). At the same time, there were attempts to identify various models of community based forest management to address different socio-economic needs. During the process of this evolution leasehold forestry, collaborative forest management, buffer zone community forestry and people based watershed management policy and practices have evolved. A brief description of each of these models is presented in Chapter 3. From the policy evolution process and practice, it is clear that community based natural resources management approach is a must for Nepal for sustainable management of resources.

2. Institutions Involved in Community Forestry

There are many institutions involved in Nepal to support the community forestry program. Among them, the Ministry of Forests and Soil Conservation is the policy formulating agency, and the Department of Forests is the main implementing agency. Other government institutions like the Department of Forests Research and Survey, the Department of Plant Resources are also involved in technical backstopping of the national program.

Many civil society organizations, private institutions, community forestry federations and networks, development partners or donors are also involved in the program. A brief description of the institutions involved community forestry program is given in this chapter and a list of various agencies and projects involved is given in **Annex 2** and **Annex 3**

The roles of the main institutions concerning community forestry are described below.

2.1 Government Institutions

Ministry of Forests and Soil Conservation

The Ministry of Forests and Soil Conservation (MoFSC) is the line ministry of the Government of Nepal in the formulation of policies on community forestry. The objectives of the MoFSC include:

- To conserve natural environment, forests, wildlife and plants to reduce negative effect of human on environment.
- To provide regular supply of forest products from sustainable management and utilization.
- To create local level employment and income from farming and extension of herbs and other forest products.
- To monitor and evaluate the forestry programs as laid out in the Tenth Plan.

Thus, the major activities of the MoFSC related with community forestry are the formulation of policies, legislation, and supervision and monitoring of community forestry activities in the country.

Regional Directorates of Forests

There are five Regional Directorates of Forests under the MoFSC. The regional directorates are responsible for planning and evaluation of forestry activities including planning and monitoring of community forests. The regional directorates also participate in the project steering committee of various community forestry projects.

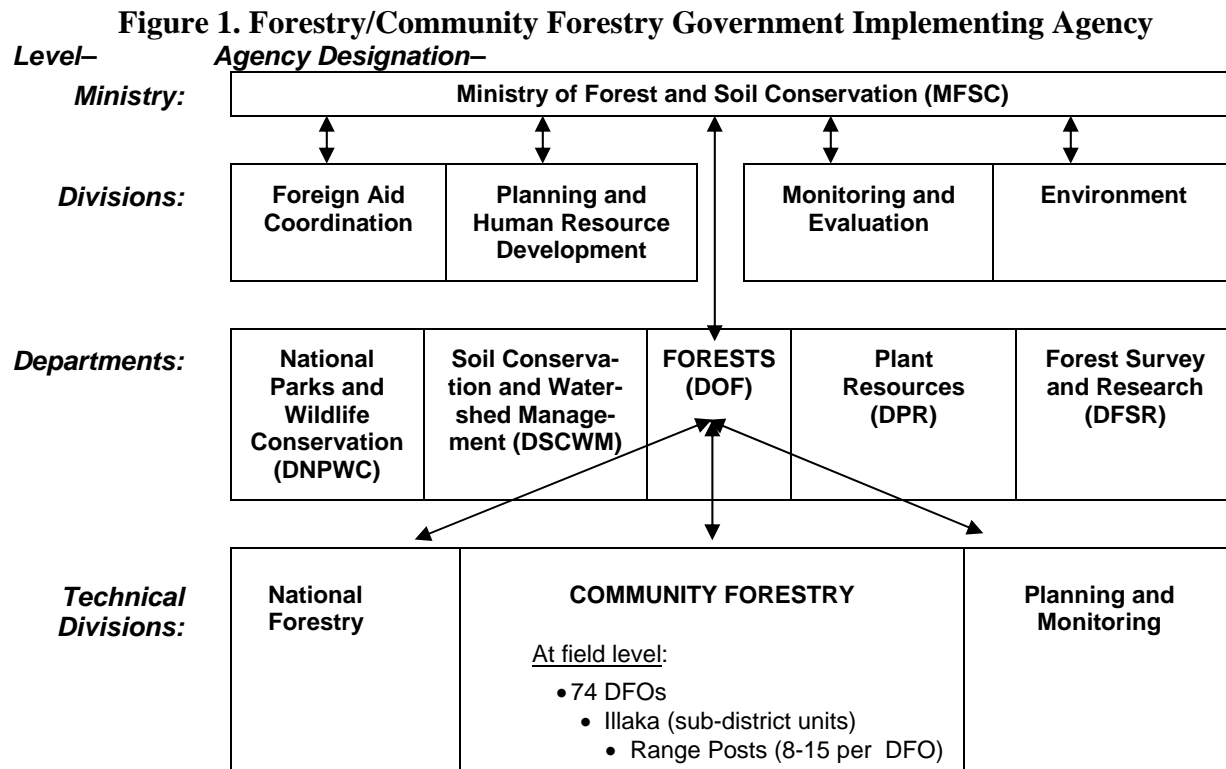
Department of Forests

The main objectives of the Department of Forests relating to community forestry include:

- Support to MoFSC in formulation of concepts, policies, acts, rules etc to protect, manage and utilize community forests;
- To implement and coordinate community forestry plans and programmes;
- To mobilize people's participation in community forest management;
- To provide guidance and coordinate community forestry programme for uniformity in implementations.
- To prepare and implement programs based on local people's participation;

- To provide technical support for better management of community forests.

The Community Forest Division under the Forest Department is directly responsible for the implementation and facilitation of the community forestry program. Likewise, the Tree Improvement and Silviculture Section of the Division provide technical assistance to CFUGs. This section mainly supports user groups in silviculture and forests management. Figure 1 below explains community forestry related government agencies in Nepal.



(Source: Messerschmidt and Singh, 2005).

District Forest Offices

There are 74 District Forest Offices under the Department of Forests. The major activities of the District Forest Office (DFO) related to community forestry include:

- To mobilize people’s participation in community forestry program;
- To handover community forests to user groups;
- To support user groups by providing technical skills in field activities, like forest inventory and operational plan; and
- To monitor activities of the user groups.
- To conduct various practical trainings such as forest inventory or operational plan preparation.

Department of Forest Research and Survey

The Department of Forest Research and Survey (DFRS) undertakes research in community forestry in the area of natural forest management, nursery and plantation management, biomass estimation, harvesting techniques. It also provides technical supports to field workers and government staff. The major activities of the DFRS related with community forests include:

- Develop and extend appropriate technologies to increase productivity of forests;
- Support CFUGs in different aspects of forest management;
- Disseminate the results of study and research to the intended audience; and
- Provide updated forest resources information to its users.

Department of Plant Resources

The main objective of the Department of Plant Resources (DPR) is in-situ and ex-situ conservation of plant resources. The department has expertise especially in research and management of NTFPS and medicinal herbs in activities like nursery management, after care, harvesting, storage, processing and other value addition.

2.2 Academic and Training Institutions

The Institute of Forestry (IOF) is involved in teaching various community forestry related courses in its campuses at Pokhara and Hetauda. It produces forestry under graduates in both campuses. Pokhara Campus also conducts bachelors, masters and doctorate courses in forestry. IOF also organizes field based programs in the community forests. Often the institute implements joint training activities with forestry projects. It also organizes community forestry trainings in collaboration with other partners.

Similarly, Training Section under the Planning and Human Resources Development Division of MoFSC conducts various training in community forestry for officers and rangers.

2.3 Regional Training Centres

The five Regional Training Centers located in five development regions are the main back stopping agencies in the field level community forestry training. They conduct field level training for CFUGs and territorial staff on social mobilization, forest inventory, operational plan preparation, updating and review of operational plans, etc.

2.4 Civil Society Organizations

The JTRC emphasized to increase the role of civil society institutions and private service providers in supporting community forestry. There are many civil society organizations involved in community forestry. New Era, a Nepali consulting company, was involved in collection of base line information in early eighties. Nepal Forum for Environmental Journalists (NEFEJ) is involved in various information dissemination and awareness campaign like community forest radio and television programs. The Nepal Foresters' Association (NFA) and Rangers Association are being involved in various programs like operational plan preparation, monitoring and training as (fee for) service providers. Recently, Forest Action is emerging as an active organization in conducting studies and training in areas such as forest governance, monitoring and other subjects. WATCH has been involved in various advocacy activities related with community forests such as rights of the poor, disadvantaged groups and ethnic communities. The possible roles for different government, NGOs and private societies in the development and management of community forestry program are provided in the figure below.

Figure 2. Functions and Competencies, and the Sources of Services Provided to Community Forestry User Groups (CFUGs) in Nepal

A. Basic Regulatory Services	B. Additional Capacity-Building & Good Governance-Related Services	C. Technical Services
– Government–	–Civil Society–	–Private Sector–
District Line Agency (DOF Staff):	NGOs, CBOs, Advocacy Groups, Federations, Local Government (VDC/DDC), Donors/Projects:	Entrepreneurs, Contractors, Consultants:
<p><i>These are the line agency's primary functions & competencies.</i></p>	<p><i>Overlapping or shared functions, competencies & needs.</i></p>	<p><i>Most of these are not the usual line agency functions or competencies.</i></p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ registration ▪ forest boundary demarcation ▪ operational plan approval ▪ legal oversight ▪ technical support ▪ Monitoring 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ user identification ▪ group mobilization ▪ constitution development ▪ flow of information (on law & policy) ▪ forest inventory ▪ planning ▪ operational monitoring ▪ team building ▪ collaborative works ▪ product harvesting ▪ income generation ▪ technical support ▪ management training ▪ study tours ▪ conflict management ▪ collaboration with various groups 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ fund mobilization ▪ savings & credit ▪ financial aid & budget support ▪ revenue sharing ▪ infrastructure development ▪ assets management training ▪ skills development ▪ skill sharing ▪ cottage industries development ▪ regional/national seminars & workshops ▪ visioning ▪ governance training ▪ advocacy & lobbying ▪ formal & informal networking & stakeholder coordination ▪ CFUG interactions ▪ awareness raising workshops ▪ group dynamics training ▪ coaching & facilitation ▪ supporting/monitoring animators ▪ financial & business accounting ▪ community development ▪ welfare work ▪ demonstration plots ▪ literacy training ▪ research & studies
		<p><i>None of these are expected of the line agency.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ accounting & auditing services ▪ feasibility studies ▪ resource assessments ▪ production assessments ▪ market assessments ▪ promotion, marketing & commercial expertise ▪ Certification ▪ investment advice ▪ engineering & construction ▪ resource persons ▪ specialized training ▪ private nurseries ▪ private plantations ▪ reporting

(Source: Messerschmidt and Singh, 2005).

4.5 Private Institutions

There are many private organizations involved in community forestry in strategic plan preparation, operational plan preparation, community forestry research and studies as service providers. Recognizing the emerging importance of the private sectors, MoFSC has developed a guideline for acquiring services from the private sectors.

4.6 Federations/Networks

The Federation of Community Forestry Users, Nepal (FECOFUN) is an umbrella organization of CFUGs represented in all 74 districts. FECOFUN has been active in advocating policy formulation and amendments in favor of community forestry. It is also equally vocal in providing rights to the users in decision making and benefit sharing (Bhattarai and Khanal, 2005). When the government banned handing over of large blocks of forests as community forests in the Terai during the year 2000, FECOFUN arranged series of protest processions in the streets of Kathmandu. FECOFUN is also the group manager of the Forest Stewardship Council (FSC) certified group certification system in Nepal, where 21 CFUGs have been certified. The organisation is also working through its representatives as a service provider and facilitating agent for community forestry user groups in the districts. Other networks supporting community forestry include the Nepal Forest Resources User Group (NEFUG), HIMAWANTI and the Community Forestry Supporters Network (COFSUN).

4.7 Development Partners

Many international development partners are involved in community forestry. Major development partners recently involved include Danida, DFID, SNV, AusAID, SDC, USAID through CARE Nepal. Other donors are also involved through NGO like IUCN, WWF, etc. A brief description of community forestry projects funded by different donors is given in **Annex 3**.

4.8 International Institutions

The Regional Community Forestry Training Center (RECOFTC), located in Bangkok, Thailand is an autonomous, non-profit making international organization working closely with partners to design and facilitate learning processes and systems to support community forestry and natural resource management in Asia and Pacific. It is active in various fields like exchange programmes, capacity building, livelihood, governance, training, etc. The International Centre for Integrated Mountain Development (ICIMOD) is also involved in the capacity building of local people and technology development for rural livelihoods, and is located in Kathmandu. ICIMOD is also involved in exchange visits and rural technology development. The King Mahendra Trust for Nature Conservation (KMTNC) is involved in supporting community forestry implementation issues. Recently, KMTNC has been conducting research on emerging global issues such as the benefit of carbon sequestration from community forests.

Similarly, the Centre for International Forestry Research (CIFOR) is an international research organization with global knowledge committed to conserving forests and improving the livelihoods of people in the tropics. CIFOR's high impact research helps local communities and small farmers gaining their rightful share of forest resources, while increasing the production and value of forest products. CIFOR is conducted studies regarding adaptive management in community forestry.

3. Community Based Forest Management Models

The foundation for the community forestry program was laid out in late seventies, and since then the program is being implemented in Nepal. With the successes of the community forestry approach, several complementary models of participatory community based resource management came in operation, such as Leasehold Forestry (LF), Collaborative Forest Management (CFM), user group based watershed management and buffer zone forest management. These models are briefly explained below and the present status of the achievements in terms of handed over forest area is presented in **Annex 4**.

2.1 Community Forestry

Community forests are national forests handed over to the local user groups for protection, management and utilization according to the Forest Act, 1993. The forests are managed according to the Operational Plan (OP) prepared by Community Forest Users Groups (CFUGs), approved by the District Forest Office (DFO). According to the act, CFUGs has to be established and registered at the District Forest Office (DFO) before handing over of the forests and they are self sustained institutions (Kanel 1993). The CFUGs can act as self-governing entities to generate, utilize and sell the forest products as mentioned in the Operational Plan. Procedural details of the community forests are explained in the Forest Rules 1995 and community forestry guidelines and directives.

According to the legislation, government started registering CFUGs and handing over of forests to the CFUGs for sustainable forest management. During the last 28 years of community forest implementation, about 1.2 million hectares (or 25 percent of existing forests) of national forests had been handed over to more than 14,000 local CFUGs (CFD 2006). These user groups constitute about 35 percent of the country's total population. The achievements of the community forestry can be seen in terms of better forest condition, better social mobilization and income generation for rural development and institutional building at grass root level. Further elaboration of community forestry process and approaches is explained in successive chapters.

2.2 Leasehold Forestry

The government brought forward provisions of leasehold forests as Leasehold Forest Rules in 1978 with the objective of producing timber, firewood, raw material for forest based industries, fodder and Non-Timber Forest Products (NTFPs). The Leasehold Forest Rules have two provisions to allocate forest areas either to firms or for a group of poor households.

The rules applying to a registered group require the identification of potential leasehold forests and open bidding to apply for potential leasehold forests. According to the rules, interested parties may apply for leasehold forests. The Ministry of Forests and Soil Conservation (MoFSC) has the authority to handover leasehold forests for 30 years upon payment of the lease rent, which is NRs. 20 per bigha (0.65 hectares) for the terai and NRs. 1 per ropani (0.05 hectare) for the hills.

In the Eighth Plan (1992-1997) government declared one of its main objectives as poverty reduction. Leasehold forestry for the poorest of the poor (pro-poor LHF) was one of the main strategies identified for poverty reduction. To materialize the vision, Forest Rules 1995 have made special provision for the transfer of degraded lands as leasehold forest to the people living below the poverty line. The poverty line was considered as the per capita income of the farm family less than NRs 3,035 per year at the base year 1996/97 (NRs 6,100 for 2002) and land owned per household is less than 10 ropani (0.5 hectare). Usually a leasehold forest group is composed of 10 households as members. Only isolated and degraded

forestland is handed over to them. In the beginning, Hill Leasehold Forestry and Forage Development Project (HLFFDP) supported by International Fund for Agriculture Development (IFAD) was the major project supporting pro-poor leasehold forestry program. However, Western Upland Poverty Alleviation Project (WUPAP) working in the hills of western Nepal also includes leasehold forestry as one of its components. The leasehold forest program for the poorest of the poor has the following objectives:

- To develop degraded lands through the process of land management and plantations;
- To initiate on-farm Income Generations Activities (IGAs) through cultivation and sales of seeds, grasses and bamboo, and initiate off farm IGA such as bee keeping; and
- To supply industrial raw materials and develop eco-tourism.

In practice, the leasehold forest management plans have to be approved and are handed over by the Ministry of Forests and Soil Conservation (MoFSC) for up to a period 40 years. Pro-poor leasehold forests are free of any lease fee, but industrial leasehold forest has to pay fixed amount as lease rent to the government as mentioned in the forest rules, 1995. As per this provision, poor households get access to land, which help them to improve their livelihoods. Therefore, pro-poor leasehold forestry program not only supports the livelihoods of the people, but also helps to improve ecological condition. So far there have been 2,500 leasehold forest user groups established, and they are managing 11,000 hectares of land involving 19,000 households as shown in Annex 2 (Leasehold Forestry Project Data Base, 2006).

In the pro-poor leasehold forest program, the Agricultural Development Bank provides credit and the Department of Livestock Services supports animal husbandry to these poor households. The main part of the income for the people participating in leasehold forestry program is also derived from animal husbandry. Some of the achievements of the leasehold forest programs are described below (Yadav and Dhakal 2000; Sterk 1997; Ohler, 2000):

- Degraded land being changed into green area producing grasses and firewood.
- Reduced time needed to gather firewood.
- Encouraged local communities to keep improved animals.
- Promoted high degree of participation among women.
- Increased family income.
- A remarkable shift towards sharing of decision making among men and women. Before the leasehold groups were formed, only 10% of the women could decide for themselves, while 30% made joint decisions and 60% depended on a male member. Five years later, 25% of women could decide for themselves, while 55% made joint decisions and only 20% depended on a male household (Douglas, and Cameron 2000, Ghimire 2000 as quoted by Ohler 2000)

However, handing over of leasehold forests has been a very cumbersome and time consuming practice requiring a long chain of events passing through the DFO, Regional Forest Directorate and the MoFSC. The process was not always clear and it faced severe constraints in translating into practice. Realizing the extent of problems, a Leasehold Forest Policy 2059 was formulated. The policy identified criteria for potential leasehold forests such as degraded forests with less than 20 percent crown cover, or land reclaimed from river training or land evacuated from encroachment, and it explicitly mentioned procedures of handing over. Presently, the pro-poor leasehold forestry program is being implemented in 26 hill districts with support from International Fund for Agriculture Development (IFAD), and with support from the Western Upland Poverty Alleviation Project is being implemented in a further four districts.

Issues in Leasehold Forestry

There are following important issues in the program;

- Forest policy is in favor of Community Forestry. According to the Forest Act 1993; community forestry gets priority over leasehold forest.
- There is no legal mechanism to form leasehold forest groups like community forest groups.
- Leasehold forest groups do not get benefits by protecting the existing trees on the forest land.
- Changes in members in the group create problems in mobilizing loans.
- Smaller group size is vulnerable and faces tremendous managerial problems.
- It is very difficult to exclude rich people in current socio-political situation of Nepal (Western Regional Forestry Directorate, 2004). At the same time, it is difficult to accommodate all the poor households in the leasehold forests. They are also vulnerable to external interference.
- The leasehold forest policy considers poverty as simple and static phenomena. Rather, it is complex and dynamic in local context. (Baral and Thapa, 2004).

Lessons from Leasehold forestry

Various lessons learnt from leasehold forestry include:

- Because poor households area involved in leasehold forestry, they also needs the crops which provide quick return such as vegetables and fruits. However, the legal provision does not provide such cropping in the leasehold forests.
- Leasehold forests provide ample opportunities to reclaim degraded forests lands. It could be a problem for poor households to solve small encroached forest areas;
- Along with other forestry programs, institution building and capacity building of leasehold members are very important issues, because poor households are vulnerable groups with little capacity (Tamrakar and Kafley, 2005).

2.3 Collaborative Forest Management

The MoFSC formulated the Collaborative Forest Management (CFM) policy in April 2000 as a way to manage government-managed national forests in the changing context of participatory forest management. The CFM was introduced as a mechanism between two approaches of forest management, that is community forestry management and conventional government forest management. The CFM guideline 2060 defines “Collaborative Forest Management as a means of sustainable forest management where forests are managed by government and stakeholders collaboratively according to the approved forest management plan to improve livelihoods, economic opportunities and other multipurpose benefits such as maintaining ecological balance”.

CFM recognizes three principle stakeholders jointly managing forests in a sustainable way. These are central government represented by the DFO, local government represented by District Development Committee (DDC) and Village Development Committee (VDC), and local forest users represented by the user committee. In this process, there will be many other non-governmental agencies, which will be supporting the CFM such as management, marketing, processing, etc of NTFP.

Presently, the CFM is being implemented in the Terai region³ of Nepal. The potentials of using this approach are believed to be huge for productive forest management in this region. The Livelihood Forestry Programme (LFP), and Biodiversity Sector Programme for Siwaliks and Terai (BISEP-ST) are supporting implementation. The CFM is being implemented at pilot scale in three districts: Bara, Parsa and Rautahat.

Benefit Sharing

The existing policy of CFM has the following benefit sharing mechanism:

- Local users get non-commercial forest products either free or charged according to the decision of CFM user group;
- CFM groups get residual income from NTFPs after paying royalty;
- HMG receives 75 percent of the income from the sale of firewood and timber, and VDC/DDC and local forest users collectively get 25 percent. The distribution of this 25 percentage among VDC/DDC and local forest users is decided by the District Forestry Coordination Committee (DFCC).

Issues in Collaborative Forest Management

Because of large number of households involved in CFM, for example 33,000 in Sabaiya of Parsa district, group management aspects of CFM is very cumbersome and face many challenges and conflicts.

- The benefit-sharing base is not pragmatic and clear. Local users, DDC/VDC receive only 15 percent in CFM compared to 100 percent benefits to users in community forests.
- Roles of DDCs and VDCs are not always clear.
- Decision making role dominantly remains with the DFOs.
- The mechanism and process for effective participation of distant users and disadvantaged groups are not clear, nor are the benefit sharing arrangements.
- The biggest problem in CFM is disagreement and protest from the supporters of community forestry. They feel that government brought CFM program to down grade community forestry and enhance state control over high value forest resources of Terai (Bhattarai, 2006).

Lessons Learnt

Supporters of CFM think that being a new program, it takes time to make clear reflection on lessons from the present model. However, the following two key points could be considered as policy influences in conceiving CFM;

- Government has recognized the rights of distant users over the forest resources,
- Government has agreed to share revenue and other benefits with local users and local government

2.4 User Group Based Watershed Management

The Department of Soil Conservation and Watershed Management (DSCWM) has been implementing watershed management program in various parts of the country to mitigate land degradation problem. Presently DSCWM has the following twin objectives:

- Contribute in meeting the peoples' basic needs for forest and food products by improving the productivity of the land through conservation and management of watershed resources and;

³ The lowland plains to the south of Nepal, endowed with a large proportion of the remaining natural production forests, dominated by *Shorea robusta* (Nepali: *sal*).

- Assist in maintaining ecological balance by reducing pressure from natural hazards such as floods and landslides.

The Soil and Watershed Conservation Act of 1982 was promulgated to conserve the watersheds of the country. The act was based more on conventional forestry since it did not give any role of local communities in the management of the watersheds. According to the act, the government could declare any part of the country as protected watershed, and conservation officers could dictate the land use of the areas owned by general public. Fortunately, the act was never implemented.

Presently, DSCWM works with local people on a user group basis concentrating its efforts on micro watershed management, based on an integrated plan. The user groups are formed for particular soil conservation and watershed management activities. However, unlike the community forestry program, there is no legislation to recognize watershed user groups. Some of the watershed user groups have been registered under the Non-Government Organization (NGO) Act. The Japanese International Development Agency (JICA) supported Community Development Forest/Watershed Conservation Project (CDFWCP) implemented in Kaski and Parbat districts gives emphasis on the involvement of concerned wards of VDC. The Poor, Occupational caste, and Women Empowerment in Resource management (POWER) program is targeted for social equity in these two districts. The POWER program has organized women to form and work in groups and mobilize them for different activities like savings and credit.

Various donor agencies have extended their support to DSCWM to implement watershed management programmes. Development agencies supporting watershed management programs include the following projects:

Table 1: Community based watershed management projects and their coverage.

Programme/Project	Development Partner	Operating districts
Community Development and Forest/Watershed Conservation Project	JICA	2
Natural Resource Management Sector Assistance Programme, SCWMC	Danida	19
Churia Forestry Development Project	GTZ	3
Nepal-Australia Community Resource Management and Livelihood Project	AusAid	2
Churia Watershed Management Project	CARE	2
Biodiversity Sector Programme- Siwalik Terai	SNV	8
Sustainable Soil Management Programme	SDC	5

Presently, the first three projects are not in operation as they have been recently completed.

The main achievements of soil conservation and watershed management programs are listed as follows:

- Awareness level is increasing among local communities due to these watershed management programs. In many locations, communities have collected and used money for community development activities. Likewise, people are becoming aware of gender and social equity issues to some extent.
- Gender participation and social equity has increased: While forming watershed user groups, the principles of equity in participation and decision making are applied. In many projects, committees are composed of 30% women, and 50 % in the group. Likewise, participation of disadvantaged group members is highly encouraged. (CDFWCP, 2005).

- Decentralization practically applied: Ward Conservation Committees (WCCs) formed at the ward level by the watershed programs are the core bodies in the line with the decentralization policy, and the Local Self-Governance Act of 1998.
- Capacity Strengthening: Most of the community members involved in watershed management program can design, implement, monitor and evaluate watershed plans and programs.
- Maintained high level of transparency: Most of the watershed user groups are maintaining high level of transparency through public auditing and public hearing.

Issues in Watershed Management

- There is no legal basis to tie soil conservation and watershed management user groups under the umbrella of DSCWM. Presently, they are functioning as ordinary NGOs.
- Integrated soil conservation and watershed management activities include all natural resource management activities like forestry, agriculture, pasture and livestock. Providing authority to manage all kinds of these complex resources for a single agency is debatable.
- In watershed management, national interest basically lies on conservation; whereas the interest of the local communities is in using these resources. Sometimes, they conflict. For example, national interest in the fragile Churia hills is on conservation, whereas, the interest of the local people is to improve livelihood using the fragile resources, which may be difficult to conserve.
- In watershed management, working boundaries are often delineated on the basis of watersheds, whereas all the other activities are implemented on the basis of political boundaries like VDCs or wards. These two types of boundaries do not match, and it creates a problem for the personnel involved in the program (CDFWCP, 2005).

Lesson learnt

- For the agencies, which are working in partnership with local communities, public auditing should be made mandatory to get wider support from local communities (NFA, 2005).
- Local NGOs are more acceptable and efficient to implement natural resource management at the local level.
- For the long-term sustainability of the watershed, the management groups need to be engaged in continuous activities which will bind the group members all the time, like saving and credit schemes (NFA, 2005).

2.5 Buffer Zone Community Forest Management

The Department of National Parks and Wildlife Conservation (DNPWC) is responsible for the conservation and management of protected areas in Nepal. These include national parks, wildlife reserves and conservation areas covering about 18 percent of the country. However, these parks and reserves were facing conflicts with local communities, since they use the resources of protected areas for their subsistence needs. The success of people's participation in community forestry showed that similar arrangements could be applied even in the conservation of national parks and wildlife reserves.

In order to incorporate people's participation in the management of protected areas, the government made a fourth amendment in the National Parks and Wildlife Conservation Act of 1973 in 1992. The amendment provisioned the concept of bufferzone, which is the designated area to fulfill the needs of forest products for the local communities. The concerned Warden has the authority to establish buffer zone users committee to manage forests and distribute forest products, and to conduct other identified

community development activities. The amendment also provided for the allocation of 30 to 50 percent of the park or reserve revenue to buffer zone user committees. The management of the buffer zone community forests is governed by the Buffer zone Management Rules of 2052. If the committees accordingly do not manage the forests as per the operational plan, the concerned warden has the authority to take back buffer zone forests from the local community.

Besides biodiversity conservation, the main objectives of buffer zone management are to fulfill the basic needs of forest products to the local communities, and to support community development activities in the buffer zone area. The buffer zone community forests are the government forests handed over to the local communities for biodiversity conservation and at the same time for fulfilling their needs of forest products. In this model, the warden of the national park or wildlife reserve hands over part of the government forests of the designated buffer zone to the local unit level user committee. The committee delegates its right to the buffer zone community forest user groups as its sub committee. In the buffer zone, communities also prepare and implement an operational plan, and the stakeholders share benefits.

The achievements of buffer zone program include;

- To a limited extent, buffer zone development program has helped to save agricultural crops from damage by the wildlife through barbed wire fencing, biological fencing and through using watchers;
- The buffer zone program is able to use the revenues from the Protect Areas System (PAS) for the benefits of people located in buffer zones.
- It has been able to reduce conflict between park authority and local communities.

So far, 57 buffer zone community forests have been established in the terai districts. The area of these forests is 16,000 hectares, and is managed with the involvement of 19,000 households. These households are also getting benefits in terms of firewood, fodder and timber from these forests.

Issues in Buffer Zone Management

The followings are the issues experienced by stakeholders in buffer zone management:

- The goal of the government in buffer zone forest management is more focused on conservation, whereas the need of local community is more on using forest products. (Park People Program, 1999).
- The buffer zones have not been declared around all the protected areas. Therefore, this benefit is not available to the people, who are living around the protected areas, but the buffer zones have not yet been declared.
- The overall responsibility of buffer zone management is vested with the warden, who is a government employee. The warden is also the member secretary of the buffer zone council, which allocates money for different purpose within the buffer zone. Thus, buffer zone forest management is more influenced and some times controlled by the warden.
- The buffer zone rules allow only those households to be members in the buffer zone user groups, who are living within the declared boundary of buffer zone.
- The transportation of forest products such as firewood and timber outside the buffer zone area is not permitted. This is likely to reduce benefits from the sale of firewood and timber to the user groups.

Lessons Learnt

Various lessons have been learnt from the buffer zone program. They include:

- A large sum of money could be generated from the buffer zones of PAS for the benefits of local people. This could be used for various development activities,

- Local level enterprise development seems to be necessary for long-term income generation programs,
- The buffer zone development program has indicated that biodiversity conservation and community development could go together with the participation of local communities leading to a win-win situation (Park People Program, 1999), and
- The traditional users of forests should be included in the user group, even if their houses are outside the declared buffer alone (CARE, 2004).

4. Community Forestry Policy, Acts, Rules and Guidelines

4.1 Master Plan for the Forestry Sector

The Master Plan for the Forestry Sector (MPFS) was prepared in 1988 and approved in 1989. It provided a 25-year policy, planning and budgetary framework for the development of forestry sector. The long-term objectives of the MPFS are:

- Meet the people's basic needs for forest products on a sustained basis;
- Conserve ecosystems and genetic resources;
- Protect land against degradation and other effects of ecological imbalance; and
- Contribute to local and national economic growth.

The MPFS gave the highest priority to the community and private forestry program (Box 3). Some of the important points of community forestry as laid out in the MPFS include:

- Handover all the accessible hill forests of Nepal to user groups to the extent that local people are willing and capable of managing them;
- Emphasis on the supply of forest products from community forests to those who depend highly on them;
- Women and the poor should be involved in the management of community forests;
- Changes in the role of forestry staff to that of extension service provider and advisor; and
- Forestry staff should be provided with reorientation training so as to deliver the services needed by the CFUGs.

Box 3: Program of the Master Plan for the Forestry Sector

Primary Programs

1. Community and private forestry
2. National and leasehold forestry
3. Wood-based industries
4. Medicinal and aromatic plants
5. Soil conservation and watershed management
6. Conservation of ecosystems and genetic resource

Supportive Programs

1. Policy and legal reforms
2. Institutional reforms
3. Human resource development
4. Research and extension
5. Forest resources information system
6. Monitoring and evaluation

4.2 Forest Act 1993 and Forest Rules 1995

After the restoration of democracy in 1990, the MoFSC conducted intensive exercises with local people, non-government organizations, development partners and other institutions to prepare a comprehensive forestry legislation in line with the recommendation of MPFS. Finally, the legislation was enacted as the Forest Act of 1993. Under this Act, the government formulated the Forest Rules of 1995. The Act and the Rules have given absolute rights to Community Forest Users Groups in managing their community forests. Presently, community forestry is regulated by these legislative instruments. The focus of the legislation is on institutionalizing CFUGs as an independent and self-governing body, nationwide expansion of community forestry, and providing utilization and management rights to the local people. The Rules also describe the role of the DFO as facilitator, monitor and regulator. The main features of existing community forestry legislation are as follows (Acharya 2002, Kanel 1993, Kanel et al 2005):

Forest Act 1993

- DFO may handover any part of national forests to the communities, who are traditional users of the resources.
- Land ownership remains with the state, while the land use rights belong to the CFUGs.

- All management decisions (land management and forest management) are taken by the CFUGs.
- Each household is recognised as a unit for the membership and every member has equal rights over the resources.
- CFUGs and forest hand over will not be affected by political boundaries.
- Outsiders are excluded from access to community forests.
- There are mutually recognised use-rights.
- Equitable distribution of benefits.
- State provides technical assistance and advice.
- National forest can be handed over to CFUGs irrespective of size of forests and number of households.
- Handing over of national forests as community forest has priority over handing over as leasehold forest.
- User groups are recognized as independent, self-governing, autonomous and corporate body with perpetual succession.
- CFUGs can accumulate their fund from grant received by HMG and other local institutions, sale of CF products and amount received by other sources such as fine, etc. CFUGs can use their funds in any kind of community development works.

Forest Rules 1995

- User groups are allowed to plant short-term cash crops like NTFPs such as medicinal herbs.
- User groups can fix prices of forestry products for their own use.
- CFUGs can transport forest products under their jurisdiction anywhere in the county.
- In case of forest offences, CFUGs can punish their members according to their constitution and operational plan.

The legislation and the rules give absolute authority to local communities to manage the forests and get all the benefits from the forests. Therefore, local communities have full authority in the management of community forests. Hence, the legislation and the rules are claimed to be the most progressive ones in existence. In fact, CFUGs have access, withdrawal, and management rights over their forests, but they do not have rights over the sale of the total stock of forests and the land on which the biomass stand.

4.3 Forest Sector Policy 2000

Initially, the focus of community forestry program was on conservation. However, gradually, it focused on community empowerment and institution building for forest management and community development. Unfortunately, the forest sector policy of 2000 reverted back to the conservation issue of forest management through government domination. The policy exclusively mentioned as below:

- The barren and isolated forestlands of the Terai, inner Terai and the Churia hills will be made available for handing over as community forests. A community forest operational plan will be prepared and forest products will be utilized based on annual increment.
- As the main objective of community forests is to fulfill the basic needs of local communities for fuelwood, fodder, and small timber, when surplus timber is sold by CFUGs, 40% of the earnings from

the sale of surplus timber in the Terai, Siwaliks and Inner Terai will be collected by the government for program implementation. Until July 2003, CFUGs paid 40 % of their income to the government, which was reduced to 15 % through the financial bill enacted in July 2004.

4.4 Community Forestry in the Tenth Plan (2002-2007)

The Government's Tenth Five-Year Plan and Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper (PRSP) have targeted the reduction poverty in Nepal from 38 to 30 percent by the year 2007. In line with the overall objective of the PRSP, the Forestry Sector Plan focuses on reducing deforestation, soil erosion and degradation of biodiversity as well as solving the problem of poverty and unemployment. As per the plan, the forestry sector has two objectives:

- Sustainable forest management and Conservation: This includes sustainable supply of forest products and environmental preservation through conservation, management and enterprise development of forests, watershed, plant resources and biodiversity.
- Poverty Alleviation: This includes creating employment and income opportunities for poor, women and disadvantaged groups through participatory approaches.

Table 2: Community Forestry Targets in the Tenth Plan

Community and private forest development	Target (number)	
	Normal case	Low Case
CF User Group Formation	2500	2500
Operation Plan Preparation and handing over	3000	3000
Operational Plan revision	4000	4000
Forest Management Support to user groups	2500	2500
Silviculture demo plot establishment and operation	500	425
Forest enterprise dev. for poverty alleviation	500	500

The major strategies of community forestry program in relation to the objectives of poverty alleviation are:

- Increased livelihood opportunities of the people living below poverty by expanding forest development activities; and
- Extend community forestry program to increase participation, and the access of poor, women and disadvantaged groups to forest resources.

To achieve the targeted goals and objectives, the Tenth Plan has proposed the following main programme imperatives:

- Formulation and implementation of integrated program in community forestry, based on broad based economic growth, social empowerment, social justice, equity, and good governance for supporting poor, women and disadvantage groups and for increasing their livelihood opportunities;
- Organization of poor local households with the same interest in community forest as sub user groups to increase their access and benefit from community forests;
- Initiatives on NTFP farming and medicinal plants in community forests; and
- Identification and resolution of problems related with community forestry. Improving CFUG formation process to solve the problem of forest product distribution among the users.

Other community forestry related programme activities include:

- Initiate biodiversity registration to protect rights of local people in natural resources;
- Start integrating agriculture and forestry conservation farming in Churia watershed;
- Initiate participatory forest management in buffer zone around the protected areas;
- Provide governance training to community forest user groups; and
- Support by arranging training in gender mainstreaming in forest management.

4.3 Joint Technical Review of Community Forestry

The community forestry program was initiated with the objectives of forest protection and full-fill the basic forest product needs of local people. However, the Forest Act of 1993, and the Forest Regulations of 1995 expanded this objective and allowed CFUGs to sell surplus forest products to outsiders and use the money for forest management and community development activities.

After 20 years of community forestry implementation in 1999, it was seen that forests were regenerated and substantial progress has been made in social mobilization. However, several issues also emerged. These issues required further discussions and solutions. In order to tackle these emerging issues, The Government of Nepal and development partners jointly agreed for overall review of community forestry to make timely improvements in relation to the formulation of strategies and implementation. A Joint Technical Review Committee (JTRC) was established in March 2000 with preparation of terms of reference, and finalization of the report in February 2001. The committee included members from government institution as well as development partners.

There were 11 thematic papers addressing issues, strategies and recommendations on community forestry. Based on the analysis of these papers, the JTRC came up with a number of major recommendations such as redefining community forestry for livelihood support, using income of community forest for poverty reduction, giving access of community forests to the poor organized as sub user group, allowing the CFUGs to establish enterprises, and better involving local government. However, the JTRC did not consider the financial sustainability of the community forestry program (Acharya, 2003) when external support is terminated. As a result, no attention was paid as to as how the program could be implemented if donor's support was terminated. Presently, the Department of Forests and CFUGs are facing problems in getting minimum resources necessary for the continuation of the program. Thus, presently the program is in operation with difficult financial circumstances.

4.4 Community Forestry Guidelines

Community Forestry Program Implementation Guidelines

The Community Forestry Program Implementation Guidelines were first prepared in B.S. 2052 (1994/1995) and revised in B.S. 2058 (2000/2001) by the Community Forest Division of the Department of Forests. The guidelines aim to support user group members, field level staff from government and non-government institutions, forest technicians and facilitators in the implementation of community forestry program. The guidelines have identified five phases of community forestry development, which are

- Identification Phase
- Forest User Group Formation Phase
- Community Forest Operational Plan Preparation Phase
- Community Forest Operational Plan Implementation Phase

- Community Forest Operational Plan Review and Revision Phase

For each of the phases, objectives have been identified and tasks to achieve those objectives are also mentioned. For example, the following objectives and tasks are mentioned for the Identification Phase.

- Create environment of trust among user group members and facilitators;
- Provide knowledge to the user group members on community forest development, government policies, and also inform users on their activities, duties and authorities;
- Collect information on demand of forest products, purpose of utilization, status of forests, socio-economic condition of users, their managerial and technical capacities;
- Discuss on the potential of contribution of community forest in the generation of user group income;
- Identify needs of target group like disadvantaged communities, and sub user group with common interests; and
- Collect information on indigenous forest management practices.

Similarly, tasks identified are:

- Discuss potential contribution of community forests to user groups;
- Identify forests and households using forests;
- Discuss on community forest management systems;
- Identify wishes and needs of the user group members, especially the poor and disadvantaged groups; and
- Identify forest area, status and distance from villages.

4.5 Recent Developments

Community Forest Inventory Guidelines

Community Forest Inventory Guidelines was prepared in B.S. 2061 (2003/2004) by the Community Forest Division of the Department of Forests. The guidelines aim to support user group members to monitor species and their number in community forests, estimate growing stock, annual increment, and harvestable amount of forest products. This information is necessary for user group members while preparing their operational plans.

The introduction chapter of the inventory guidelines includes general information on the guidelines, its uses and limitations. The second chapter is on forest resource inventory and explains methodologies of inventory, activities to be done by forest user groups and supporting role of facilitators. The third chapter is on division of compartments, sampling and sampling techniques, use of telescope techniques. Chapter four is on data analysis. It elaborates on the estimation of growing stock, annual increments and annual allowable cuts. Chapter five is on uses of collected data, which include use of it in silvicultural treatments, and other possible activities, which will support members of poor and disadvantaged groups.

Further Tasks in Reforming the Guidelines

Because of the changing context and the experience gained by the forest user groups, stakeholders have felt a need to revise the current community forestry implementation guidelines. Similarly, the income of community forests are spent on different activities, especially community development such as road, school, temple construction, irrigation where the poorer groups of the society do not get much direct benefits. Hence, the revision of the guidelines is felt to be of very urgent need for the proper utilization of the community forestry funds. Therefore, the Community Forestry Division of the Department of Forests is drafting the revision of the guidelines in consultation with all stakeholders.

To summaries, the evolution of various forest management approaches, the related policies and legislations, and their effects are shown in the table below.

Table 3: Different Policies and Their Effects

Year	Policy/Legislation	Effect of Policy/Legislation
1957	Private Forest Nationalization Act	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • indiscriminate cutting of forests • conversion of Private forest into farm land in Terai
1961	Forest Act	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • forest categorization • forestry officials empowered
1967	Forest Protection Act , special provision	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • judicial power to forestry officials, • law enforcement power reinforced
1976	National Forestry Plan	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • recognition of people's participation in forest management • concept of village Panchayat forest
1977	Amendment in Forest Act	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • provision of Panchayat Forest and Panchayat Protected Forest
1978	PF and PPF Rules	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • handing over of National Forest to village Panchayat (elected village body)
1982	Decentralization Act	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • authority to District and Village Panchayat • promotion of User's Committee concept
1987	Revision of PF and PPF Rules	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • provision of User's committees for forest management
1989	Master Plan for the Forestry Sector	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • incorporated the concept of CFUG • priority given to community forestry
1993	Forest Act	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Users as managers of forests • CFUG empowered for forest management
1995	Forest Rules	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • process of community forestry detailed • Forestry staff's role changed from custodial to facilitation
1999	Revision of Forest Act	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • control mechanism brought for violation of operational plan • provision for spending 25% in forestry activities
2000	Forest Policy 2000	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • degraded and scattered forest areas in Terai & Inner Terai can be managed as community forests, • CFUGs in Terai to give 40 % of their income from the sale of surplus timber to the government for program implementation (Until July 2003, CFUGs pay 40 % of their income to the government, which was reduced to 15 % from only two species through the financial bill enacted in July 2004).

(Source: Modified from Shrestha and Nepal, 2003)

Community Forestry is the most successful and preferred model and the subject of further discussion now in Sections 5-8.

5. The Practice of Community Forestry

5.1 Statistical Profile

As of March 2006, there are 14,258 CFUGs established across the country. They manage 1.187 million ha of forests involving 1,640,239 households (CFD, 2006). Similarly, in leasehold forests 2,524 groups are managing 11,109 hectares of forests and 18,496 households are involved (Leasehold Forestry Database, 2006). Likewise, 57 buffer zone community forests are established around the Protected Area Systems (PASs) of Terai region, where 19,362 households are managing 15,925 hectares of forests. Summary of these achievements is given in table 4 and details is presented in Annex 3.

Table 4: Summary of User groups, area and households involved

Management Models	User groups in number	Area in hectares	Households numbers
Community Forests	14,258	1,187,000	1,640,239
Leasehold Forests	2,524	11,109	18,496
Buffer Zone Community Forests	57	15,924	19,362
Collaborative Forest Management	1	3,139	33,000
Total	16,840	1,217,172	1,711,097

5.2 Community Forestry Process

According to the Forest Act, Forest Rules and Community Forestry Guideline 2002, there are five phases of community forest development. These steps include:

- Identification of users and formation of user group;
- Formation of CFUGs constitution;
- Preparation of operational plan;
- Implementation of operational plan; and
- Revision and update of operational plan.

Identification of users and formation of user group

Various steps and procedure should be adopted during the identification of users and user group formation process. They are;

- Identification of proposed community forest and its boundaries;
- Knowledge about resources and use status of proposed community forests;
- Visit villages around forests and discussion on the proposed community forests among the households;
- Preparation of draft list of users;
- Categorization of users in different social strata; and
- Final decision on user group members or users.

In order to know about the users, first it is necessary to know about the potential community forest. A sketch map of the proposed community forests should be prepared to identify the potential households. Once the boundary of the forest is known, it is necessary to know about the status of the forest because products which can be withdrawn from the forest depends upon its status and interests of the local people also depend upon what they can get from the forests. The next step is to discuss in the villages around the forest so as to collect the list of households who are using forests or who are the potential members of the user group. Compilation of such a list from different sites of discussions is helpful in identifying a first round of user group members. If necessary, the list can be categorized into different social strata. Vulnerable groups like disadvantaged groups or ethnic communities, poorest of the poor or, women, can be identified for close consultation and support. The users are sometimes categorized in terms of primary, secondary and seasonal users depending upon their distance from their settlements. The primary users are heavily dependent on forests for their livelihood like firewood, fodder and other non-wood forest product for their own consumption or sell them to generate income. The secondary users are not heavily dependent on the forests but they go to forest once or twice in a month to collect firewood and other products. Seasonal users go to the forests occasionally, for example, getting leaves during ceremonies and collecting non-wood products as medicine. A final decision on the composition of a user group is taken up in the general assembly after intense discussion among the users, and necessary changes are made in the proposed list.

Formation of CFUG constitution

The community forest constitution is the procedural and legal document of the users. It should include the objectives of the user group, and transparently working modalities and commitments of the user group. The constitution is also a set of operational rules devised by and for the forest user group members. The constitution will also specify the clear basis of taking actions for those who do not obey the rules. Since the constitution is the main document for the formation of a CFUG, several rounds of discussions will have to be conducted before its finalization. The constitution should be flexible enough to incorporate necessary changes such as inclusion of omitted households in the group. The steps in the preparation and finalization of the constitution are given in figure 3 below.

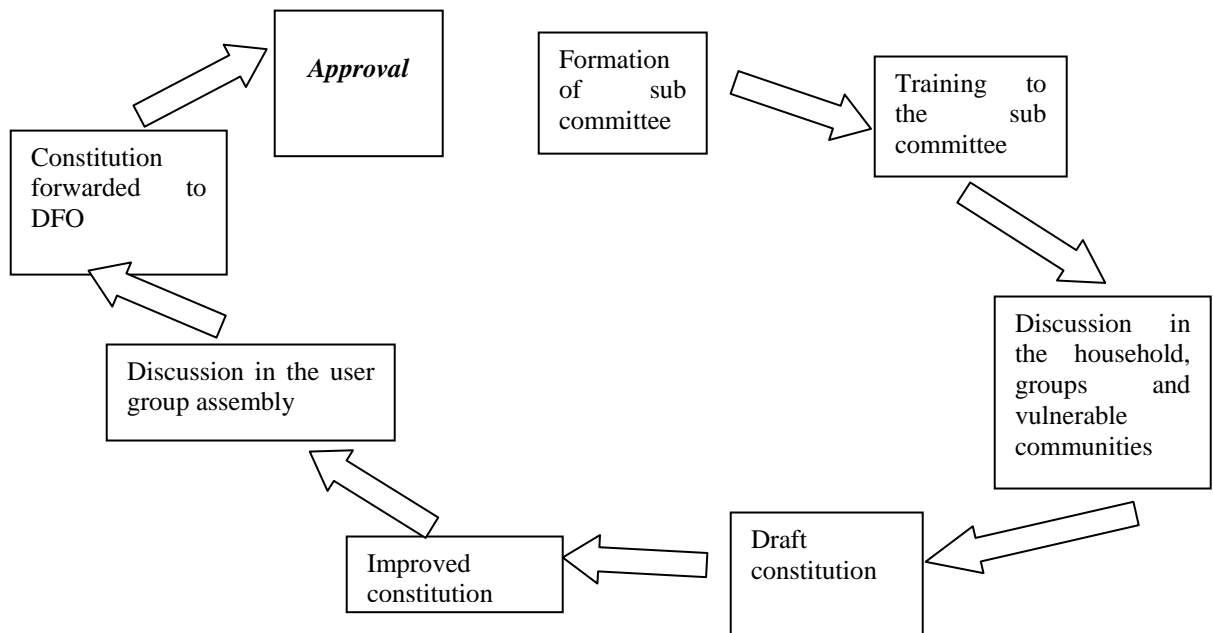


Figure 3: Steps before incorporating the CFUG constitution

The constitution also describes about the composition of the executive committee members and their positions; requirements to be fulfilled in the committee; and involvement of women, disadvantaged groups and ethnic communities in decision making and benefit sharing mechanism. The minimum contents of the constitution is given in the Annex 11 of the Forest Rules, which include objective of the user group, households involved, activities, duties and authorities of the user group and user committee, and methods to control forest offences.

Operational Plan

The Operational Plan (OP) is the main document of users for managing their forests and for sharing benefits among them. The OP contains all information necessary for forest management such as where to conduct silvicultural operations, how much to harvest and how to share the benefits, etc. This is also prepared with the involvement of all user group members. All user group members will participate and work according to the plan. The DFO is authorized to monitor the CFUG on the basis of operational plan implementation. The minimum content of the operation plan is given in the section 28 of the Forest Rules, which include information such as map of the forests, block division, objectives of forest management, protection methods, silvicultural operations, potential income generation activities, etc. The preparation of Operational Plan also requires a set of technical forestry activities and process, which are shown in the figure below.

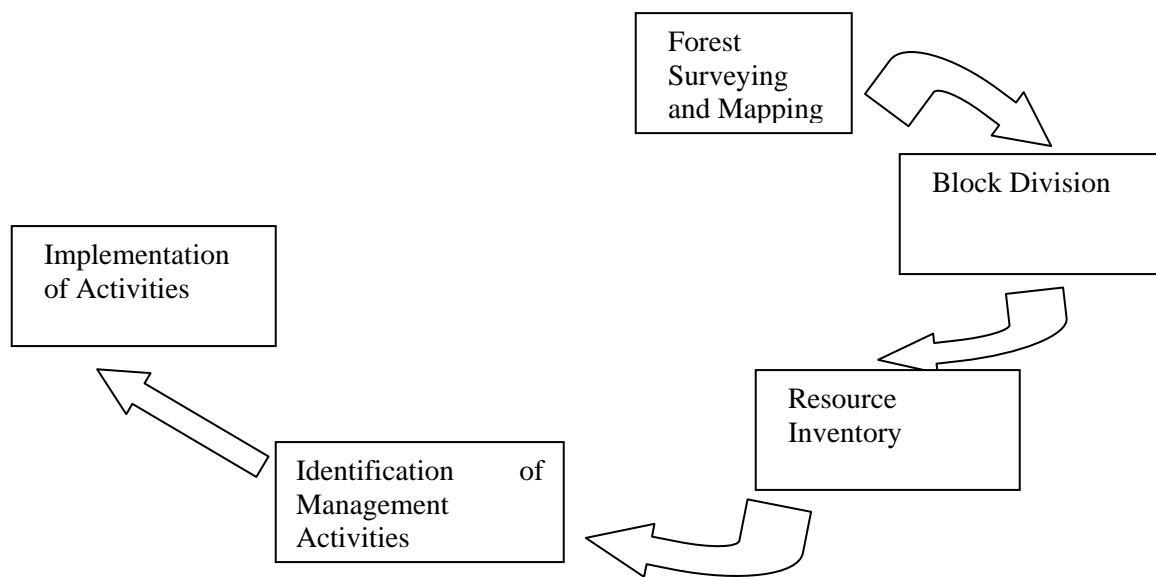


Figure 4: Technical Steps and Activities in the Preparation of the Operational Plan

Implementation of operational plan

Implementation of the operational plan means conducting all activities according to what has been proposed in the operational plan. Before implementing the operational plan, it is necessary to understand the legal aspects of community forestry. Similarly, users have to understand all the provisions mentioned in the operational plan. The committee members have to inform the processes and outcomes of the plan implementation to the general users. Various steps of operational plan implementation are given in the figure below.

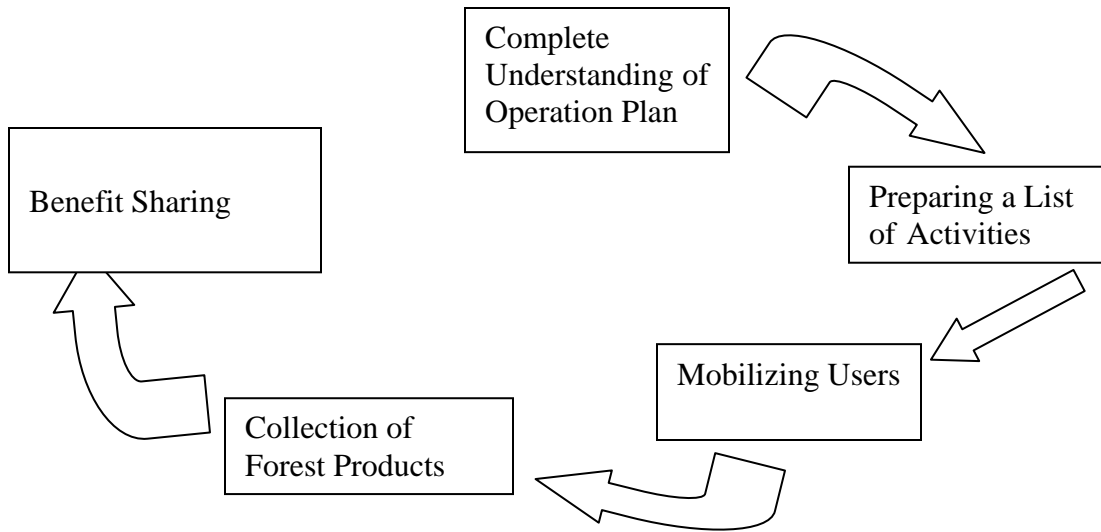


Figure 5: Steps of Implementing the Operation Plan

Revising and updating operational plan

The revision of an operational plan means changing some provisions in the operational plan within the valid time period. When the situation changes, it may be necessary to revise the operational plan. The condition could change due to changes in law, which has to be followed by the community forest user groups; accidents like fire or natural disaster, which may kill many trees; changes in the availability of alternatives to forest products or changes in the knowledge of CFUGs, which they acquire from experiences, exchange visit, training etc.

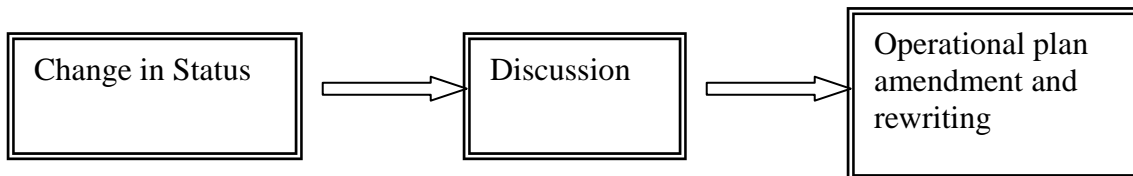


Figure 6: Operational Plan Amendment and Rewriting Steps

Once, the date of validity expires, it is necessary to update the operational plan. While revising and updating the operational plan, all the steps which are necessary for preparing the operational plan has to be followed. Moreover, the revised plan has also to be approved by the DFO and CFUG chairperson.

6. Achievements of Community Forestry in Nepal

During the past 28 years of community forest implementation, about 1.2 million hectares (or 25 percent of existing forests) of national forests has been handed over to the 14,300 local community forest user groups. The user groups cover about 35 percent of the country's total population. The achievements of the community forestry can be seen in terms of better forest condition, better participation and income generation for rural development and institutional building at grass root level. They are explained below.

Establishment of the rights over resources

The community forestry and other community based forest management approaches have established traditional rights of the local people over the resources. According to legislation itself, local people have the rights and their duties to manage community forests. They are also contributing their voluntary labor in various community development activities. The total voluntary participation of user groups in community activities per year is estimated to be 2.5 million person day, which worth 164 million rupees (over US\$ 2 million) at an opportunity cost of rupees 65 per person per day (Kanel and Niraula, 2004). Out of the total voluntary labor spent in community forestry, 42 percent is spent on community forest protection, 19 percent is spent on meetings and assemblies, 19 percent is spent on forest product harvesting, and the rest on miscellaneous activities.

Participation of women and other minority groups

Increasing participation of women, poor and disadvantaged groups has been imperative and plays an important role in empowering these groups. Participation of these groups is ever improving, and the national data base maintained at the Community Forestry Division shows that women participation is 24 percent and there are about 600 CFUGs managed by women only committee members.

Local level capacity building

The 14,300 CFUGs are functioning as independent and self-governing entity exercising democratic process at the local level. In those CFUGs, about 7.9 million people (35 percent of the population) are involved and there are about 165, 000 local people working as committee members. Some members of the user groups and committees have received different kinds of training including silviculture, gender equity, and record keeping etc. The trainings and exposure visits have strengthened the local capacity, and turn it into rich social capital. As a result, many of them were elected in different positions in local government organisations, the District Development Committees (DDCs) and Village Development Committees (VDCs).

Establishment of federations and networks

There are networks of user groups established at range post, district and national levels. The FECOFUN is the largest and strongest networks of user group that spread in 74 districts. These networks of user groups also work as pressure groups to formulate favorable policies and promote good governance within the community forestry program.

Regenerating forests

Studies and anecdotal evidences show that as a result of community forest program, denuded forests have regenerated and the condition of forests has substantially improved (Acharya 2002). A study in four eastern hill districts showed that total number of stems per hectare had increased by 51 percent, and the basal areas of forests had increased by 29 percent (Branney and Yadav, 1998). In the Kabhre and Sindhupalchok districts of central Nepal, a study found that shrubland and grassland had been converted into productive forests, increasing forest area from 7,677 to 9,678 hectares (Jackson, et al 1998). A study in a mountain watershed of Kabhre district in three different time periods (1976, 1989 and 2000)

spreading over 25 years showed that small patches of forests have enlarged and merged among themselves, which reduced the number of patches from 395 to 175 and increased net forest area by 794 hectares (Gautam et al, 2003). Thus, there is an overall improvement in forest coverage and condition contributing to local environmental conservation and increasing greenery.

Increased production of forest products

A study conducted among 1,788 CFUGs by Community Forest Division in 2004 and extrapolated for the countrywide user groups revealed that 10.9 million cubic feet of timber, 338 million-kilogram firewood and 379 million kg of grasses are produced each year from the community forests. Grasses were consumed locally; timber and firewood are consumed locally as well as sold outside by the user groups (Kanel and Niraula, 2004). Non-Timber Forest Products are also sold outside the groups.

Fulfilling subsistence need

Eight million cubic feet of timber, 335 million kg of firewood and 370 million kg of grasses produced from the community forests are used by local people for their internal consumption (Kanel and Niraula, 2004). These products are used to support subsistence livelihood needs of local people.

Financial support in livelihoods improvement

The CFUGs earned 383 million rupees from the sale of forest products outside the groups. Those earnings are used for different purposes like, 12.6 million rupees for pro-poor community forestry (Kanel and Niraula, 2004) including loans to the poor families, and training them in forest based income generation activities, etc.

Access to forest for income generation

Some user groups like Ghorlas of Mayagdi and Jhauri of Parbat are making sub-user groups of the poorest of the poor, who have no employment or income. These sub-user groups are given access to community forest to produce NTFP or medicinal plants and allowed to share the income. If this mechanism is replicated in a larger scale, its scope of additional contribution to the livelihoods is substantial.

Certification of community forests

Recently, the process of community forestry certification has started. Twenty-one community forests of Dolakha and Bhajhang districts have been certified under the Forest Stewardship Council (FSC) group certification scheme. The FECOFUN is the certificate holder or group manager of this process. The forest area certified is about 14,086 hectares.

7. Challenges and Issues

Although community forestry has led to the expansion and deepening of the greenery, and local communities are getting various benefits from forests and funds, many challenges also lie ahead of the program. These challenges include assessing the contribution of the program, pro-poor orientation, emphasis on income generation activities, focus on forest management for demanded products, involvement of local government, and good governance including transparency and inclusion. A brief discussion of the existing challenges is presented below.

Quantifying GDP contribution

Several micro-scale isolated case studies have shown that community forestry has significantly contributed to the Gross Domestic Product (GDP), sustainable forest management and good governance. However, there is a lack of concrete data to show the contribution and linkages of community forestry with these emerging themes. Therefore, sometimes, the program faces severe constraints in justifying the financial investment to continue the program.

Pro-poor orientation of major stakeholders

The community forestry process is successful in handing over rights and duties of community forest management to the local communities expecting that the main stakeholders will give emphasis on poorest of the poor. However, emerging evidence shows that CFUGs are not successful enough in addressing the concerns of weaker section of the community. It has been found that comparatively well off members influence the decisions of the user groups and committees benefiting themselves. Thus, making these institutions more accountable and responsible towards poor, disadvantaged groups and women is still the main challenge in community forestry.

Social and geographical coverage

A recent study has indicated that community forestry implementation has taken place in relatively accessible areas and remote areas have not come under the preview of community forestry interventions. The study further established that there was lower representation of socially disadvantaged groups (dalits) in CFUGs, larger scale membership duplication, and that nearer CFUGs from DFOs offices receiving better services (Anon 2004) compared to remotely located CFUGs.

Conflicts with the Local Self Governance Act

According to the Forest Act and Forest Rules, CFUGs are legally recognized by the DFO and they operate independently as autonomous self-sustained entities. However, local governments are not directly involved in community forest management. According to Local Self Governance Act (LSGA) 1998, the responsibility of managing natural resources within their jurisdiction belongs to the local government. Once LSGA becomes fully operational, the role of DFO will be limited, as they will have to work under the District Development Committees. Thus, the gradual process of transforming authority to local government is important and in the long run, effective involvement of local government in the community forestry is also a critical issue.

Revenue sharing

Local people use the forest products for their subsistence needs. But, community forests also have surplus forest products like timber, firewood, medicinal plants and other NTFPs. Until July 2003, local user groups used to pay 40 percent of their income from the sale of surplus timber (from the Terai and adjoining districts) to the government. This is now reduced to 15 percent from the sale of surplus timber only from two species (*Sal and Khair*) through the financial bill enacted in July 2004. So far local government does not get any share from this income. According to LSGA 1998, management of natural

resource lies within the jurisdiction of the local government. Thus, additional discussion is needed to come to agreeable revenue sharing mechanism acceptable also to local government.

Inclusion of distant users

In the Terai, most of the traditional users of the forest live farther away from forests. Still, forests are the source of livelihood for many distant users. Over time, forests were cleared to make room for resettlements. Presently, new settlers are living adjoining to the forests. Naturally, these households adjoining to the forests become the members of community forest user groups, and the forests are handed over to them as community forests. The issue of including and involving distant users in community forestry has been a topic of long debate and remains a contentious issue.

Backlog of operational plans

The CFUGs are expected to prepare their forest operational plans and manage the forests according to these plans. The preparation of operational plans and their renewal is getting slow due to the mandatory requirement of forest inventory in the year 2000, and also due to increased workload of technical staff (Acharya 2003). The Forest Act and Regulations requires CFUGs to prepare their operation plans themselves. Yet, many of them still depend on DFO staff for preparing the operational plans. Moreover, the current insurgency within the country has made it difficult to interact within the members of the groups and to enter the forests during the plan preparation and revision. As a result, there is backlog of a large number of operational plans needing preparation and revision. Due to the absence or expiration of the valid time period of operational plans, most of the activities of CFUGs in relation to community forests are slow in implementation. This has led to adverse impact on sustainable forest management and its potential support to livelihoods of local communities, which would have been possible otherwise.

Difficulties in applying improved silvicultural management techniques

The emerging evidence indicates that CFUGs are reluctant to apply improved techniques of forest management thinking that they might destroy the forests. The concept of active forest management and optimum production for fulfilling the needs of local community and sale of surplus forest product is comparatively new for CFUGs. Thus, considering a larger number of user groups, reluctance to apply improved silvicultural techniques is also a challenge in community forestry.

Transforming technical forestry into a local knowledge

The CFUGs are the real managers of community forests. As more than 1.2 million households organized into 14,300 CFUGs are involved in the forest management, it is not possible to train many of them on topics related to community forestry like in formal education such as universities. Thus, transforming technical forestry into the forestry of local people is a difficult topic. Learning by doing as a substitute to formal training is a slow process to enhance productivity by encouraging multiple forest management leading to sustainable forest management.

Focusing forest management to the need of users

Most of the operational plans prepared to manage the community forests are based on conventional knowledge of timber production. However, in the villages the poor people least use the timber. Poor people need more grasses as animal feed or bedding, poles as constructing materials for houses, huts and shades, and NTFPs for domestic consumption or for income. These criteria of producing products required by poor people have not yet been incorporated widely in the dimension of sustainable forest management.

Focus on income generation programs

The community forests annually generate about US\$ 12 million from the sale of forest products. However, CFUGs have experienced difficulties in investing their fund in right kind of activities. They are

now spending 36 percent of their expenditures in community development activities such as school, road, health post and other development activities (Kanel and Niraula, 2004). The benefits from those activities are minimal to the poor. About three percent is spent on pro-poor programs. Additional spending on the livelihood improvement of poor, disadvantaged group and women is a big challenge in community forestry.

Supporting women, poor and disadvantaged group

An unequal relationship exists between the oppressed and the oppressor groups in a village (Luitel, 2006). As a result, the local community leaders and elite groups mostly dominate decisions of the user groups; fulfilling the concerns and needs of poor and vulnerable groups is still a difficult practice in community forestry. Thus, supporting poor and disadvantaged groups for their livelihood sustenance is a big challenge in community forestry.

Monitoring and evaluation

The community forestry process is facing problems of appropriate monitoring and evaluation systems in terms of its impact on poverty reduction. The linkages between results and impacts, and poor documentation or synthesis of CF lessons learned; and weak non-participatory approaches are some key areas for consideration.

Hunting and wildlife farming in community forests

Many kinds of wildlife especially deer are seen in many community forests. Wildlife farming and using the products for meat and other trophies, and souvenirs can be attractive income for many community members. But due to the lack of clarity in the legislation, this potential has neither been explored nor used.

Forest certification

Many community forests have medicinal and aromatic plants. The products from these products are even exported outside by private companies. Therefore, some efforts on forest certification have been initiated as a pilot program in some user groups. However, there is a dearth of knowledge and skill about the availability and the biological cycle of these species, and their sustainable harvest levels.

8. Lessons Learned and Future Directions

Denuded forests have regenerated, the condition of forests has improved, and certain level of sustainable forest harvesting has increased due to the implementation of community forestry program. Timber, firewood, fodder, grasses, medicinal plants and other non timber forest products produced by the users are mostly used by the user group members themselves and the surplus is sold in the market or outside the user groups. The income from the sale and distribution of forest products is used for conserving forests as well as for undertaking community development activities. In spite of these achievements, more could be done for poverty alleviation as targeted by the Tenth Plan or PRSP, and the millennium development goals. Besides, there are also challenges to increase productivity of forest and strengthening good governance for equitable sharing of benefits. Major lessons learned from community forestry in Nepal include the following:

POVERTY REDUCTION

Incorporating the needs of the poor in the operational plan

While formulating the objectives of community forest management, the need of local poor and disadvantaged group must be identified and incorporated in the operational plan. If their need is grazing, then operational plan should include systems of grazing. If their demand is firewood and poles, then operational plans should give emphasis in short rotations of tree management. Similarly, if their livelihoods depend upon forests, the operational plan should target for the products, they use such as NTFPs and MAPs. Thus, while formulating objectives and prescribing silviculture systems, community forest operational plans should consider and incorporate the need of local people.

Increasing CFUG fund for pro-poor activities

The CFUGs should identify locally suitable income generation activities depending upon the comparative advantage of the locality, which can be implemented by focusing poor and disadvantaged groups. The CFUGs should implement and invest more on those activities so that local poor, women and disadvantaged group will be able to get real benefits from community forestry program in their livelihood sustenance.

Sensitizing user group members in pro-poor issues

The main activity, which would create favorable situation for helping the poor, women and disadvantaged group is to sensitize other user group members on pro-poor issues, and to develop a feeling to help the poorest section of the society among them. Once such a feeling is developed and a critical mass is developed among the group members, certain percentage of user group funds could be spent on pro-poor activities. Appropriate forest areas inside the community forest could be handed over for income generating purposes strictly to the poor in a sub-user group. Likewise, they can be trained in different income generating activities.

GOVERNANCE

Initiating poor and disadvantaged group focused legal awareness

All projects and program documents of community forestry, Ninth Plan (1997-2002) and Tenth Plan (2002-2007) have clearly mentioned the imperatives forestry initiatives for poverty alleviation. However, this has been difficult to achieve partly due to the lack of awareness on the government policy. Especially the poor and disadvantaged groups, who are the ultimate targets of the program lack awareness. Policy advocacy on pro-poor orientation, providing awareness on the government policies, legal rights and responsibilities appears to be important factors. Implementation of these activities will help to develop more positive feelings among local communities towards the poor and disadvantaged groups, who are the main focus of the community forestry program.

Involvement of local government in community forest management

When the Local Self-Governance Act 1998 is fully operational, the local government will be responsible for the management of natural resources in its area of jurisdiction. It is necessary that they participate in the process of community forest management. A directive has been approved by the Ministry to form District Forestry Coordination Committees (DFCCs) so as to involve local governments in forestry development. The process of their involvement in program formulation, monitoring, coordination and conflict resolution in community forestry has yet to be seen in the future.

Sharing income with local government

In future, local government will be involved in program formulation, monitoring, coordination, conflict resolution and other possible activities. Hopefully, they will be interested in investments in the community forestry as well. Local government is also responsible for community development, and they also invest in these activities, which are not in the vicinity of community forests. Thus, in order to maintain equity between those who have community forests and those who do not have, and to ensure long term support from local government, some percentage of community forest income could also be allocated to the local government.

Motivating to include distant users

There are some CFUGs, which have also included distant users as members in the forest user groups. Since distant users have been using the local forests from long time, and considering their traditional practices and rights, proximate users should be encouraged to involve distant users. The process of involving distant users in the formation of CFUGs will have to be learnt, and the CFUGs have to be encouraged to devise appropriate methods to include these distant users.

Using non government organizations as service providers

Forest inventory is an important instrument to prepare an operational plan. However, it takes time and efforts to collect and process the forest inventory data. Simple and feasible methods of assessing sustainable levels of extractions are to be developed and practice. In addition, local non-governmental organizations, which have the capacity for work performance in forestry, should be used to speed up management of community forests. This has been implemented as pilot activity in some hill districts including Palpa and Nuwakot.

RESOURCE MANAGEMENT

Building confidence in using improved techniques through observation

The community forestry program was initiated with the conservation of forests. Users are reluctant to apply improved techniques thinking that it might destroy the forests. In order to initiate and adopt better techniques, study tours for users to show areas of improved management practices or demonstration plots should be arranged. Such study tours will help in increasing confidence of local communities to adopt better silvicultural techniques.

Blending local people's knowledge and technical forestry

Forestry is an established technical knowledge, and there are many schools throughout the world teaching technical forestry but limited persons get such knowledge. However, in Nepal one third of population is involved in community forestry today. Giving sophisticated forestry knowledge to them is not possible. Therefore, practical forestry technology must be developed blending local people's knowledge, which will be simple and practical in the local context to use in the community forestry. Thus, collaboration and adaptive research with local users should be promoted in community forests.

Developing data for forest certification

One of the major problems in the initiation of forest certification is the lack of sustainable harvest data and identification of biological diversity in the existing forests. This information should be developed to initiate forest certification process in community forests.

In summary, it can be expected that by adopting these lessons, community forestry could contribute in eradicating extreme poverty and hunger, which is the first goal of Millennium Development Goals (MDGs). However, to improve its effectiveness in contributing towards poverty reduction by community forestry, the Government of Nepal needs to concentrate on small scale forest based enterprises, lobbying for receiving environmental benefits post 2012, and value addition in the forest products generated by the community forests. The program is also expected to contribute in the promotion of gender, equity and empowering women as well as ensuring environmental stability. Therefore, it is expected that community forestry will act as focal point for village development, environmental stability and contribute to sustainable development of nation itself.

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Annex 1: Progressive Changes in Forestry Regulations

Issues	1978		1979 amendment		1987 amendment		Act amending some forest acts, 1991/92	Forest Act 1993 and 1995 regulations	Forest Act 1993, first amendment 1999	Present, effective from July 2004 Financial Ordinance and forest policy 2000
	PF	PPF	PF	PPF	PF	PPF	CF (PF/PPF)	CF		
Forest area	<125 ha	<250 ha	<125 ha	<500 ha	No limit	No limit	No limit	No limit	No limit	No limit in hills but only small and isolated patches in Terai
Forest condition	Degraded forest and plantations	Any condition	Degraded forest requiring 66 % of plantations	Any condition	Degraded forest and plantations	Any condition	Any condition	Any condition	Any condition	degraded forests and shrub lands
Geographical variation	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	No	No	No
Benefit to the community (%)	100	40	100	75	100	100	100	100	100	100 % in hills and 15 % from sale of sal and khair outside the CF
Fund mobilisation	50 % for forestry	Not mentioned	50 % for forestry	Not mentioned	100 % for forestry	100 % for forestry	Local development and forestry	Local development and forestry	Local development and forestry	25 % for forestry development
Price fixing	Panchayat	Govt rules	Panchayat	Govt rules	Panchayat	Govt rules	Govt rules	Govt rules	CFUG	CFUG
Plan prepared by	DFO	DFO	DFO	DFO	Panchayat	Panchayat	CFUG	CFUG	CFUG	CFUG
Plan approval	Conservator	Conservator	Conservator	HMG	DFO	DFO	DFO	DFO	DFO	DFO
Forest boundary	Politico-administrative boundary	Politico-administrative boundary	Politico-administrative boundary	Politico-administrative boundary	Politico-administrative boundary	Politico-administrative boundary	Politico-administrative boundary	Politico-administrative boundary	Traditional use rights	Traditional use rights
Management authority	Panchayat	Panchayat	Panchayat	Panchayat	Panchayat	Panchayat nominated user committee	CFUG	CFUG	CFUG	CFUG
Technical issues	Not included	Not included	Not included	Not included	Not included	Not included	Not included	Not included	Included	Included
Government role	Decisive	Decisive	Decisive	Decisive	Decisive	Decisive	Facilitation	Facilitation	Facilitation	Facilitation

(Source: modified from Acharya 2002)

Annex 2: Institutions involved in Community Forestry

Government Institutions

Ministry of Forests and Soil Conservation
Singha Durbar, Kathmandu Nepal
Phone 4221936, Email: mfsc@mail.com.np

Department of Forests
Phone: 4227574, Fax: 4227374, Email: dof@col.com.np
Babar Mahal, Kathmandu

Community Forest Division
Phone: 4247599, Fax: 4229013, Email: cpfd@wlink.com.np
Babar Mahal, Kathmandu

Department of Forest Research and Survey
Phone: 4220482, Fax: 4220159, Email: dfrs@ecomail.com.np
Babar Mahal, Kathmandu

Department of Plant Resources
Phone: 4251161, Fax: 4251141, Email: bnaspati@flora.wlink.com.np
Thapathali, Kathmandu

Tree Improvement and Silviculture Section
Phone: 44434504, Fax: 4434546, Email: tisc@mos.com.np
Hattisar, Kathmandu

Projects

Hill Leasehold Forestry and Forage Development Project
Phone: 4257870, Email: hlffdp3@enet.com.np
Babar Mahal, Kathmandu

Nepal Australia Community Resource Management and Livelihood Programme
Phone: 4372092, Fax: 4373267, Email: info@nacrlp.org.np
Maharajganj

Nepal Swiss Community Forestry Project
Phone: 5551702, Fax: 5551701, Email: nscfp@wlink.com.np
Jyawalakhel

Livelihood Forestry Programme
Phone: 4411022, Fax: 4410469, Email: @
Baluwatar

Biodiversity Sector Programme for Siwaliks and Terai (BISEP-ST)
Phone: 4267632, Email: bisepst@wlink.com.np
Babar Mahal, Kathmanu

Training institutions

Institute of Forestry
061-520469, Fax: 521563
Pokhara, Nepal

Kathmandu Forestry College
Koteswar, Kathmandu

Training Section, MFSC
Phone: 4223731
Babar Mahal, Kathmandu

Regional Training Centre
All regional head Quarters

Civil Society Organizations

CARE Nepal
Patan Dhoka
Phone: 5523717, Email: care@carenepal.org,
Website: www.carenepal.org

ForestAction
Phone: 5550631, Email: forestaction@wlink.com.np,
Website: www.forestaction.org

Asia Network for Sustainable Agriculture and Bioresources (ANSAB)
Baneswor, Kathmandu
Phone: 4497547, Fax: 4476586, Email: ansab@ansab.org,
Website: www.ansab.org

Women Acting Together for Change (WATCH)
Baneshwor, Kathmandu
Phone: 4492644

NEW ERA
Phone: 4413603

Local Initiatives for Biodiversity Research and Development (LIBIRD)
Phone: 061-526834
Pokhara

Nepal Agroforestry Foundation (NAF)
Phone: 4475043
Nepal Forum of Environmental Journalist (NEFEJ)
Phone: 4261991, Fax: 4261191

Nepal Foresters' Association (NFA)
Phone: 4268193, Email: nfa@mail.com.np
Babar Mahal, Kathmandu

Nepal Rangers' Association (NRA)

Phone: 4224775

Babar Mahal, Kathmandu

Networks

Federation of Community Forest Users, Nepal (FECOFUN)

New Baneshwor, Kathmandu

Phone: 4485263, Fax: 4485263, Email: fecofun1@wlink.com.np

Website: www.fecofun.org

Nepal Forest Resources User Group (NEFUG)

Baneshwor, Kathmandu

HIMAWANTI

Phone: 5542717, Fax: 5542717

COFSUN

Phone: 4485953, Email: cofsun@wlink.com.np

Private Sector

SCHEMS

Lazimpat, Kathmandu, Nepal

Nepal Forest Research Institution (NFRI)

Patan

Research Institutions

International Centre for Integrated Mountain Development (ICIMOD)

Patan

Phone: 5536743, Fax: 5524509, Website: www.icimod.org

The World Conservation Union (IUCN)

Patan

Phone: 5528781, Fax: 5536786,

Centre for International Forestry Research (CIFOR)

www.cifor.cgiar.org

Regional Community Forestry Training Center (RECOFTC)

Bangkok, Thailand

Website: www.recoftc.org

King Mahendra Trust for Nature Conservation (KMTNC)

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World Wildlife Fund (WWF)

Baluwatar, Kathmandu

Annex 3 Community Forestry Programs and Projects

There are many projects and programs, which were operational years back, and some of them are operating presently. Almost all of these projects and programs give emphasis on community forest based pro-poor livelihood, governance of forest user groups, technical enhancement and sustainable forest management, and creation of national level enabling environment. A brief description of these projects is given below.

Hill Community Forestry Project

Hill Community Forestry Project was initiated in 1978, and continued till June 1999 in 38 districts with the financial support of World Bank. The project continued with the support of DANIDA from July 1999 till 2005 July, and was named as Community Forestry Field Implementation Component (CFFIC).

Natural Resource Management Sector Assistant Program

Natural Resource Management Sector Assistant Program (NARMSAP) was supported under grant assistance (US \$ 6.4 million) from DANIDA. The Community and Private Forestry Component (CPFC) and the Tree Improvement and Silviculture Component (TISC) were components of NARMSAP with support of US \$10 million from DANIDA, which supported activities through direct funding and technical expertise. The program also supported district level community forestry training and Regional Training Centres. TISC is the continuation of the Tree Improvement Project (1992 to 1998), which carried out activities related to silviculture, forest management, genetic improvement of important tree species and their seed collection. NARMSAP was terminated in June 2005.

Nepal Australia Community Resource Management and Livelihood Project

The Nepal Australia Community Resource Management and Livelihood Project (2003 to 2006 July) is being implemented in two hill districts, namely Sindhu and Kabhre. The grant assistance is US \$ 10.6 million.

Churia Forestry Program

The German government through GTZ provided support (US\$ 3.0 million) to three Terai districts, namely Siraha, Saptari and Udayapur, in implementing community forestry program mainly in Churia hills. The project was operational from 1994-2004.

Nepal Swiss Community Forestry Project

The Swiss Development Corporation (SDC) is providing grant support worth US \$ 2.7 million to implement community forestry program in three hill districts (Dolakha, Ramechhap, and Okhaldhunga) from 2000 to 2004. The project is now extended from 2004 July to June 2008.

Livelihood and Forestry Program

The United Kingdom's Department For International Development (DFID) is supporting the Forestry and Livelihoods Program (2001 to 2011) in twelve hills and three Terai districts with a grant of about US\$ 26.9 Million.

SAGUN Forestry Programme

The USAID is supporting (US \$ 2.4 million) the Strengthened Governance of Natural Resources and Selected Institutions (SAGUN) project in one hill and three Terai districts. The project period is from 2002 to 2007.

Biodiversity Sector Assistance Program for the Siwalik and Terai

The Dutch government (through SNV) is funding a Bio-diversity Sector Program for Siwalik and Terai (BISEP-ST) in eight Terai districts. The Community Forestry is one of the big components of the programs, and it has been implemented since 2002, and will continue until 2009.

Terai Arc Landscape Program

Terai Arc Landscape (TAL) is a landscape conservation program being implemented through funding (US \$ 6.0 million) from the World Wildlife Fund (WWF) Program. The program duration is from 2001 to 2006.

Annex 4: Data on Community Based Forest Management Models

A Community Forest User Groups

District	No of CFUGs	Area Covered	No of Households
BISEP-ST			
Bara	13	1818	4,138
Chitawan	24	9293	12,652
Dhanusha	29	8032	4,806
Mahotari	53	1150	8,878
Parsa	25	102	3,484
Rautahat	15	1050	3,945
Sarlahi	31	2940	6,986
	19	24,384	44,889
ChFDP			
Saptari	105	12,925	17,081
Siraha	80	10,087	12,479
	185	23,012	29,560
LFP			
Baglung	3,376	12,,288	41,257
Bhojpur	383	32,963	35,269
Dang	373	6,625	62,468
Dhankuta	329	24,427	33,877
Kapilbastu	24	1,455	5,394
Myagdi	256	19,781	29,774
Nawalparasi	34	2,638	7,975
Parbat	287	7,892	31,656
Pyuthan	299	35,894	37,876
Rolpa	223	13,145	20,427
Rukum	228	8,566	21,922
Rupandehi	55	8,094	32,099
Salyan	260	22,168	5,921
Sankhuwasava	235	27,094	21,776
Tehrathum	293	12,294	21,726
	3,616	294,947	409,415
NACRMLP			
Kabhrepalanchok	411	18,995	36,097
Sindhupalchok	428	23,622	48,566
	839	42,617	84,663
NARMSAP			
Achham	264	26,936	37,187
Arghakhanchi	258	10,255	25,246
Baitadi	296	24,383	29,068
Bajhang	272	10,587	19,720
Bajura	218	11,729	24,302
Bhaktapur	54	1,835	7,370
Dailekh	217	14,767	23,489
Dadeldhura	306	20,582	23,215
Darchula	228	20,128	15,263
Dhading	498	19,808	50,106
Dolpa	48	14,681	3,199
Doti	209	32,373	20,923
Gorkha	348	15,820	42,120
Gulmi	264	10,417	37,447

District	No of CFUGs	Area Covered	No of Households
Humla	56	21,571	4,028
Illam	179	43,585	27,067
Jajarkot	181	13,621	16,532
Jumla	101	15,215	8,574
Kalikot	99	6,769	11,518
Kaski	409	14,096	34,476
Khathmandu	148	4,684	18,589
Khoitang	216	32,275	36,363
Lalitpur	170	9,645	11,759
Lamjung	255	14,222	20,768
Makawanpur	258	38,338	40,778
Manang	19	6,738	1,129
Mugu	72	8,042	6,016
Nuwakot	268	20,275	29,458
Palpa	475	22,239	37,087
Panchthar	135	11,126	14,434
Rasuwa	63	2,580	4,972
Sindhuli	223	36,711	23,290
Solukhumbu	122	25,115	15,723
Surkhet	199	31,540	31,089
Syanja	395	9,556	41,725
Tanahu	358	22,506	36,241
Taplejung	79	4,472	5,401
Udayapur	161	34,065	28,358
	8121	683,287	858,030
NSCFP			
Dolakha	280	29,901	41,229
Okhaldunga	219	19,678	31,119
Ramechhap	339	26,862	39,546
	838	76,442	1,11,894
Sagun			
Banke	73	8,367	12,614
Bardia	163	7,528	22,401
Kailali	128	10,590	27,176
	364	26,484	62,191
Terai			
Jhapa	28	7,685	17,478
Kanchanpur	36	4,686	10,627
Morang	28	3,260	8,127
Sunsari	13	217	3,365
	105	15,849	39,597
Total	14,258	11,87,022	16,40,239

B. Leasehold Forests Groups

HLFFDP	No of groups	Area Covered	No of Households
Panchthar	40	154	275
Tehrathum	30	56	272
Bhojpur	23	63	127
Khotang	31	44	232
Okhandhunga	24	123	227
Ramechhap	215	1,117	1,728
Dolakha	33	154	291
Sindhupalchok	216	851	1,685

Kabhre	232	1,139	1,626
Sindhuli	214	1,050	1,541
Makawanpur	278	1,166	1,718
Dhading	243	811	1,915
Chitawan	195	814	1,285
Lamjung	38	155	266
Tanahu	257	803	1,430
Gorkha	90	320	643
Pyuthan	23	89	178
Salyan	23	61	185
Rolpa	00		
Rukum	26	78	164
Dailekh	17	93	123
Jajarkot	22	57	213
Accham	21	41	136
Doti	33	64	280
Dadeldhura	21	48	196
Baitadi	15	40	122
Bajura	11	60	107
	2,371	9,450	16,965
WUPAP			
Humla	15	299	176
Jumla	27	229	236
Bajhang	37	571	475
Bajura	51	474	456
	130	1,574	1,343
BISEP-ST			
Dhanusa	00		
Mahotari	00		
Sarlahi	12	37	108
Rauthat	00		
Bara	00		
Parsa	00		
Makawanpur	00		
Chitawan	4	6	21
	16	43	129
Government Program			
Sankhuwasava	00		
Bhojpur	00		
Tehrathum	00		
Dhankuta	00		
Nawalparasi	5	38	45
Rupandehi	00		
Kapilbastu	00		
Baglung	2	4	14
Parbat	00		
Myagdi	00		
Dang	00		
Pyuthan	00		
Rolpa	00		
Rukum	00		
Salyan	00		
	7	42	59

	2,524	11,109	18,496
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C. Buffer zone Community Forest User Groups

Protected Area	No of UGs	Area Covered (ha)	No of Households
Bardia National Park			
---Banke	3	359	901
---Bardia	33	9,508	9,794
Chitawan NP			
---Chitawan	11	5,770	7,423
---Nawalparasi	6	214	1,001
Parsa Wild life Reserve	4	73	243