

# **CHAPTER I**

## **INTRODUCTION**

This study is about the effects of emergence of community forestry in women's lives and the nature of women's participation in community forestry. Nepal's community forestry is taken as a good example of devolving natural resource management and use rights to local people (Agrawal and Ostrom, 2001; Adhikari, 2003; Bastakoti, 2005). The massive decrease of deforestation activities and easy access of forest resources available for the people residing by the forest area are attached with these success stories.

Separating women from the broad concept of people, this study explores the yet unexplored effects of emergence of community forestry in women's lives. The study among women users of 14 community forestry user groups (CFUGs), of Nawalpur area of Nawalparasi district, using household interviews, focused group discussions and observation reveals Nawalpur women lost a sphere(jungle Sphere) of their life as a effect of the introduction of community forestry (CF) in their area. This lost jungle sphere was refreshing, activities attached with it were entertaining, and this was the sphere of which women in Nawalpur were proud to be knowledgeable about. Besides causing a loss of sphere, emergence of community forestry has also opened a new sphere (public sphere) in women's life. The activities related to community forestry (meetings, AGM, committee, plantation activities, forest management activities etc) have come out to be a new space for women to participate. The participation of women in public sphere is opened by means of policy and legislative instruments, for example, participatory approach voiced by forestry sector under the tenth plan has reinforced this process of introducing new sphere in women's lives. Study of women users of Nawalpur area reveals that women are lost in this new sphere not being able to make sense out of things going on in this sphere. Community forestry paradigm assumes that introduction of CF fulfill the need of the people residing in the forest area, and this assumption highlight the material value of forests in women's lives. This study attempts to question this assumption by highlighting various other than the material values of forests in women's lives and also by presenting the rhetoric and

reality of women's participation in community forestry. It also adds a new understanding in knowledge related to women and ecology, more specifically, women and community forestry.

### **1.1. Problem Statement**

Women have a special connection with environment and their dependence on nature especially forest is due to the household level sexual division of labor (Leach and Green, 1995). They are 'the primary users of forest products' (Chhetri, 2001) and are responsible for collection of fuel, fodder, grass, etc., from forest for their survival. In this context, 'any activity relating to access and/or improvement in the condition of forest resources will invariably have a bearing on women as its users' (ibid). Thus, the assumption here is that women are the one who are affected by the changes in the forestry governance paradigm. The shifts in paradigm can have repercussions in women's life. This study, considering the shift towards or emergence of community forestry paradigm as a marking line, is exploring the repercussions of emergence of community forestry in women's life. And since community forestry paradigm 'accepts the involvement of local communities in the management of forests' (Kmeswari, 2002), and through various policy and legislative means women's role in forest management has been sought, this study also describes the nature of women's participation in community forestry. In this regard several research questions become pertinent to research problem.

Do women in Nawalpur visit forest? If yes, for what purpose?

On what grounds they are related/ dependent on forest?

How was the nature of their relation with forest before the emergence of community forestry?

What are their experiences in regard to changes (if any) occurred in their relation with forest after the emergence of community forestry?

Do women in Nawalpur participate in community forestry meetings and other activities/programs organized by community forestry?

Are they part of the CFUG committee?

Do they put forward opinions and raise issues in community forestry meetings?

Are opinions and issues raised by them heard and acknowledged by the committee?

Do they hold agreements (if any) and grievances (if any) about decisions made by the CFUG committee?

## **1.2. Objectives of the Study**

In line with the research questions mentioned above, the overall objective of the study was to understand the effects of emergence of community forestry in women's lives and nature of their participation in CF activities. There are two specific objectives of the study.

- ) To explore the effects of emergence of CF in life of women at Nawalpur.
- ) To describe the nature of participation of in community forestry activities in Nawalpur area.

## **1.3. Significance of the Study**

This study sheds light upon the issue of effects of the emergence of community forestry in Nawalpur women's lives and also discusses upon the nature women's participation in community forestry of Nawalpur area. All the attempts towards studying the consequences of the emergence of community forestry in women's life have focused upon women's role as a resource collector and those studies have taken other aspects of women forest closeness for granted. This study claims the domain of women forest closeness is not limited to women's role as resource collector. In this context, since this study attempts to examine women's closeness to forest not only as a resource collector, effects it has highlighted is an important contribution in understanding the issue of women in community forestry. The nature of participation, this study has highlighted are in line with the findings of several other similar studies (Nightingale, 2002; Bhattarai, 2064). Thus this study is not much ambitious towards

claiming its significance in this regard. However, it does definitely argues for its significance as it is a recent and updated study in the context of Terai forest, and the cases through which it has thrown light upon the nature of women's participation is unique and helpful in understanding the issue of women's participation in community forestry in a different.

#### **1.4. Theoretical Position**

There are mainly two arguments put forward behind the theoretical explanation of Women, Environment and Development (WED). First, improving the status of women will assist the solution of environmental problems (Jackson, 1993a). Second, within environmental projects, women's sole participation will lead to improve project efficiency. "Women's productive role", as Tinker puts in, "not their needs provide the justification for including them in forestry programs" (Tinker, 1994:370). The arguments of WED in favor of their theoretical explanation are: Women are more dependent on nature by virtue of the sexual division of labor. It is said that women are primarily responsible for the gathering of fuel, fodder and wild foods and the growing of subsistence crops for survival, whereas men are seen as mainly responsible for the growing of cash crops for profit (Leach and Green, 1995:7). Women are seen as being the 'most' appropriate participant in environmental conservation as the main victims of environmental degradation (Shah and Shah, 1995). Thus it is implied that women have a special connection with environment that are somehow close to nature than men (Shah and Shah, 1995; Leach and Green, 1995). The WED's understanding of women's relationship to the environment implies that the central issues for community forestry are formal provisions for women's representatives plus recognition of women's resource use roles and their special knowledge and values about the environment. The fact that women have a 'special' connection with the environment derives much weight for its explicit articulation in ecofeminism. It presupposes a direct connection between women's biology and women's relationship with the environment. In proposing a natural affinity between women and environment, ecofeminism has been seen as retrogressive by the women's movement, because it proposes a direct connection between women's biology and women's relationship with the environment (Locke, 1999). Whenever women reacted against ecological

destruction and chances of annihilation of life, they became concerned about the violence against them. Aggressionism against environment was perceived almost physically aggression against female body (Mies and Shiva, 1997). Though WED and ecofeminism both claim women has a special and close connection with the nature and in that the two approaches have strong similarities, WED does not explicitly subscribe to ecofeminism and has important differences from it. First ecofeminism emphasizes the natural and spiritual content of women's 'closeness' with nature (Locke, 1999:237). Second, in proposing a natural affinity between women and the environment, ecofeminism has been seen as retrogressive by the women's movement for it proposes a direct connection between women's biology and women's relationship with the environment. In contrast, the WED's position accepts the socially-constructed nature of women's role in resource-use, but assumes that women in their current roles are more informed and interested in environmental issues (Rocheleau et al., 1996) and are therefore a 'natural' constituency for conservation interventions (Jackson, 1993b:649; Leach and Green, 1995:2). Thus WED provides ideological support for environmental policies that uphold the given division of labor. Third, while WED is essentially an interventionist position, one that advocates participation, ecofeminism is much more radical political stance that argues for respect for women's indigenous environmental activities (Joekes et al., 1994:137- 38). Ecofeminism also points to women's activism in indigenous environmental movements as evidence of their altruism vis-à-vis the environment (Agarwal, 1992:147; Leach and Green, 1995:10).

My theoretical framework oscillates in between these. I, like the theoretical viewpoint of WED and ecofeminism, have recognized special relationship between women and environment or women's 'closeness' to nature on the basis of material role of women, and of natural and spiritual content of women's 'closeness' with nature. With this recognition, my aim here is to understand the effects of the emergence of community forestry in women's life. I have acknowledged the women's special knowledge and values of environment, as proposed by WED and ecofeminism. Similarly, I have also recognized the advocacy of both WED and ecofeminism for the participation of women in environmental projects. In this regard I have tried to explore the nature of women's participation in community forestry. During this exploration my theoretical assertion also reverberates with Chhetri's article titled 'The Rhetoric and Realities of

People's Participation in Conservation and Development in Nepal: An Anthropological Perspective' (1999). In this article Chhetri has argued that close observations of the implementation in the field of the principles such as participation, empowering the local people, involving the stakeholders in the decision making, etc, reveal that practice lags behind theory and often it is difficult to understand the nature of the gaps that lie between the rhetoric and realities. Acknowledging Chhetri's concept of rhetoric and reality of participation in conservation, my aim in this study is to analyze the nature of women's participation in community forestry by presenting rhetoric and realities associated with it.

## **CHAPTER II**

### **LITERATURE REVIEW**

#### **2.1. Community Forestry**

Community forestry (also known as social forestry and user group forestry) can be identified as the forest protected, managed and utilized by local user groups. Community forestry program is the total process by which the government makes community forest successful in rural communities in Nepal. Cernea (1991) defines community forestry program as including not only forestry engineering but also social engineering, that is, the group formation, leadership, participation in decision-making, intra-group structures, incentives, penalties, communications, and benefit distribution. Similarly FAO (1983:8) defines, community forestry as a radical departure from all previous conceptions of what forestry was about in that it centered on the idea of people's participation getting local populations to plan and execute their own projects on a self-help basis. This meant providing them with the advice and inputs needed to grow seedlings, to plant, manage and protect their own forest resources, and to extract the maximum benefit from those resources. Community forestry is dedicated to the idea of increasing the direct benefits of the forest resource to the rural people. The Forest Act 1993 states that community forest means a national forest handed over to a user's group under the act for its development, conservation and utilization for collective benefit.

#### **2.2. Emergence of Community Forestry**

By the late 1960s, the conventional modernization development model, which was pro-industrialization and top-down, was being challenged. In this model it was believed that the fruits of development could be trickled down to the grass-root people and the development would transfer from specific centers to the surrounding peripheries. People's needs, aspirations, and socio-cultural realms used to be unidentified and denied by the development planners, project implementers and so forth. The development from above approach was questioned because it failed to meet

the needs of the poor of the world. The assumption that the benefits of economic development would trickle-down to the poor was mistaken. This top-down approach failed because the planners and experts at the top did not understand the people at the local level, their needs and socio-cultural realities. As a consequence, poor people remained poor, the problem of unemployment could not be solved and the gaps between rich and poor continued to become wider than before.

In response to these problems, new concepts of development began to emerge and these concepts were collectively called 'development from below' approach. This new paradigm emphasizes the participation of local people in identification of the problems and decision making in local development planning which would be able to meet their basic needs. The new approach holds the notion of planning for the people and by the people.

The evolution of ideas about development planning in the forestry sectors of Third World countries largely follows the shifts in thinking, which occurred in development planning in general. There has been a transition from top-down, pro industrialization approach to more of a development from below approach. In particular, the emergence of the concept of community forestry in the late 1960s and early 1970s paralleled the wider concerns of development planners with meeting basic community needs (Glimour and Fisher, 1991:4).

The emergence of community forestry in world arena is also due to the shift of thinking about local people, their relations with forest and its consequences. Studies in many developing countries in the past gave birth to the thinking that local rural populations are the primary destroyers of forest resources. This particular thinking had their influence upon the forestry legislations in many developing countries. In recent years some studies countering the assumptions of those thinking have pointed out that local population is not the sole cause of the environmental degradation in the Third World (Ives and Messerli, 1987). This particular shift in thinking and amendment of forest legislations due to this has also facilitated the emergence of community forestry in world arena more specifically in developing countries.

The paragraphs mentioned above provide a glimpse upon the context of emergence of community forestry paradigm. With this context, in the late 1970s, social or

community forestry evolved as a solution to improving forestlands by addressing the issue of people's livelihoods. It expressed an explicit concern for meeting the subsistence needs of local farmers for firewood, fodder, leaf litter, and small timber for agricultural implements and for developing farmers' rights and responsibilities for the forests.

### **2.3. Evolution of Community Forestry in Nepal**

Nepal's development planning and the forestry legislation could not remain unaffected by the shifts in thinking about development planning and the consequences of local population's relation with forest. The Private Forest Nationalization act of 1957 in Nepal was the move to give the forest department full responsibility to manage and protect all forestland. This move was guided by the findings which thought local population as the primary destroyer of forest resources and this particular action was to halt the destruction of forest resources by "local people". The shift in thinking mentioned above led Nepal to amend its legislations and policies and make it more plausible for local people to participate. The National Forestry Plan of 1976—an outcome of the national conference of forestry professionals in 1975—reflects the first step towards undoing the damage done by the Private Forest Nationalization Act of 1957. The National Forestry Plan in 1976 also recognized for the first time the need for community involvement in protecting forests.

Panchayat Forest and Panchayat Protected Forest Rules of 1978 were Nepal's first people-oriented forest policy and gave forest management responsibility and control to local Panchayats—the lowermost politico-administrative unit of the government led by elected representatives. The Sixth Five-Year Plan (1981–85) helped to operationalise community forestry by stating the need for people's participation in forestry in the forest sector of the plan, reinforcing the Panchayat forest policy. The Decentralization Act (1982) and its amendment in 1984 empowered Panchayats to form users committees for the protection and utilization of local forests and set terms for handing over control of the forests to the Panchayats.

Several challenges emerged with the Panchayat forests. The Panchayats did not necessarily represent the community or the users of a particular forest, and local

leaders tended to have control over the resources. The Panchayat forests and Panchayat protected forests that were handed over tended to be, respectively, mono-crop plantations and degraded forest. Neither forest type provided benefits for the communities and local people continued to use national forest land for fuel wood and fodder. Although well intentioned, Panchayat forest policies, as a result, contradicted policy objectives intended to return ownership of local forests to the community.

The Decentralization Act of 1982 tried to address some of these issues by introducing the concept of the “forest user group” and amending the Panchayat Forest and Panchayat Protected Forest Rules of 1978 in 1988. The seventh Five-Year Plan (1985–90) emphasized (a) fulfillment of people’s basic needs for forest products as the prime objective of the forestry sector, and (b) people’s participation in afforestation and forest management to ensure that their subsistence needs were met. This all led to development of the key community forestry policy: in the Master Plan for the Forestry Sector (1988).

This master plan further defined the concept of the community forestry user group and acknowledged the need to amend all existing forest regulations by introducing the concept of a user group. Main development imperatives of the Master Plan for the Forestry Sector were to (a) meet basic needs, (b) include local users in decision making and benefit sharing, (c) improve socioeconomic growth, and (d) encourage sustainable utilization of forest resources. The policy envisaged empowerment of those whose survival depends on the well-being of forests to take over their management. It gave priority to safeguarding livelihoods through community forestry to poorer communities and poorer people within communities. In this way, the forestry sector would play a significant role in poverty alleviation and strengthening of local economies. From a policy perspective, community forestry would facilitate a “common property institution” as a comparatively rational solution to curbing the problems of managing forests due to poverty and people’s dependency on forests.

The plan opened up the door for both Hill and Terai people, who traditionally depend on forests, to take over forest ownership and management responsibilities to the extent they are able and willing. It also recognized the role of government foresters as advisors and extensionists. As community forestry evolved, particularly after reinstatement of democracy in 1990, the definition of “community” changed from

political unit (i.e., Panchayat) to user group, that is, all users of a particular resource. Community forestry's "user group approach" extended the boundaries of existing administrative units to cater to the needs and aspirations of a group of people with a collective concern for forest and forest products.

The Forest Act (1993) and Forest Regulation (1995) further strengthened community forestry by repealing all previously existing forest legislations, providing a legal basis for implementation of community forestry, simplifying the hand-over process, and recognizing community forestry user groups as self-governing, autonomous corporate bodies for managing and using community forests according to a community forestry operational plan.

The government's principal strategy for the national development program is expressed in its Ninth Five-Year Plan (1997–2002). This plan follows the Master Plan for the Forestry Sector in making a commitment to continue with the principle of people's participation in forestry. To support this principal objective of the forestry sector, the plan cites creating employment opportunities, income generation, and sustainable management of forests to fulfill timber, firewood, and fodder requirements of local people. The Revised Forestry Sector Policy 2000 raises the issue of collaborative forestry and revenue sharing with local governments.

Following the policy statement of 2000 was the "Tenth Plan." The Tenth plan was prepared in the context of Millennium Development Goals, and is also considered as the Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper (PRSP). The plan had as its target the reduction of poverty in Nepal from 38% to 30% by the year 2007. It had four pillars for intervention - broad based high economic growth, social sector development, social inclusion/targeted programs, and good governance. In line with the overall objectives of the PRSP, the Forestry Sector under the Tenth Plan also had goals of reducing deforestation, soil erosion and the degradation of biodiversity as well as solving the problems of poverty and unemployment. Sustainable management and conservation in this case includes managing a supply of forest products while conserving the environment through management and enterprise development of forests, watersheds, plant resources and biodiversity. Poverty alleviation includes providing employment and income opportunities for the poor, women and disadvantaged groups using participatory approaches and expanding forest development activities, as well as

providing greater access to decision making in CFUGs. The plan also allows farming of NTFP and medicinal plants within community forest areas. Finally, the user group formation process will be monitored and improved to address the challenge of achieving equitable forest product distribution among community forest users.

From its inception in the late 1970s, community forestry has involved a dynamic learning process. Thus Community Forestry Program is one of the highest priority programs of forestry sector in Nepal. This has been widely recognized as one of the best policy examples of devolving natural resource management and use rights to local people (Agrawal and Ostrom, 2001; Adhikari, 2003; Bastakoti, 2005). Its success has led to improved forest condition, generation of substantial financial income from the use and sale of forest products and creation of a large number of effective grass root institutions (Kanel, 2004). Despite these successes, many studies have reported commonly the problems of social inequity and exclusion of the poor, women and other disadvantaged groups from gaining access to and control over community forest resources and incentive derived from it (Graner, 1997; Agarwal 2001; Rai and Buchy, 2004; Ghimire, 2005).

## **2.4. Review of literatures discussing various issues about women and community forestry**

Using the case study of a community forestry program in India, Gupte in her article ‘Participation in a Gendered Environment: The Case of Community Forestry in India’ (2004) shares:

*“Women are still marginalized in decision-making, even in participatory environmental policies. Gender stratification continues to impinge upon forms of democratic decision-making in developing societies”.*

Madelene and Baral, in their article ‘Local forest protection, gender and caste-Dhani Hill, Orissa, India’ (2000) share:

*“Women experienced more problems of restrictions caused by the protection and more threats associated with the forest than did men. Voting in meetings and a wish for more plantations was of greater importance for women than for men, while men*

*emphasized importance of co-operation with government. Direct involvement was very low among women, even though they were well informed about forest issues”.*

Through a questionnaire survey covering 35% of all households in five villages in a local forest protection group in Orissa, India their aim was to study dependency, involvement and attitude towards forest protection based on gender and caste. A conceptual model indicating differences between the groups was used by them as a base for their study.

The above two reflections based on study in India suggests rather than taking community forestry and the acknowledged benefits of community forestry for granted, we shall engage in constant analysis of the benefits of the community forestry in light with the empirical realities. Through this study a similar attempt, with the objective to explore the effects of CF in women’s lives, have been made in light with the realities of CFUGs at Nawalpur.

Since when women’s participation with legal provisions has been welcomed in community based Natural resource management, several enquires have followed towards exploring variety of aspects related to issues of women’s participation. Bhattarai and Khanal in their 2005 book *Communities, Forests and Law of Nepal*, talks about the efforts which have cumulatively encouraged the participation of women in community forestry. According to them the amendment to the community forest development guidelines 2001, which made it mandatory to include, in the constitution, the participation of one male and one female from each household, is one of the efforts. FECOFUN’s emphasis upon the equal participation is another effort. But they also say that there is, however, ‘a long way to go to ensure their effective participation and independent decision making in benefit sharing in community forest management’ (ibid).

Through their sharing it can be concluded that, though several encouraging efforts towards ensuring women’s effective participation are there, the ground realities could be different. For example, in a policy brief (2008), an outcome of research entitled “Decentralization and Promotion of Women’s Rights in Nepal: Exploring constraints, Opportunities and Intervention Avenues”, Luintel and Timsina provides a glimpse of

status of women's participation in the context of forestry decentralization process, particularly community forestry in Nepal. They share:

*“Though the trend of women's physical participation seems to be increasing over time, often they are treated as show-case either to fulfill the legal requirement or to draw the attention of the donor-funded projects and state forestry officials. Evidences show that more than 50% women who have participated in the general assemblies did not table any proposal and remained silent. Although few women are in vital posts of CFUGs, they are often unheard during the meeting.”*

Several possible social reasons and constraints resulting to the reality shared by them have also been explored for example, Chhetri in her article entitled “A social and Cultural Perspective of Women and Community Forestry in Nepal” (2001) discusses some of the constraints of women's participation in forest management activities in the context of social, cultural and economic realities of Nepali society. She shares:

*“women generally do not appear in the meetings/ gatherings because they have heavier workload; are normally not invited; do not have a say in decision making because of their lower representation; are scared of being teased by fellow villagers (people hold such discouraging behavior or negative attitude towards women's participation); and are not expected to attend formal meetings”*

Chhetri, in the same article, also suggests some practical strategies to eliminate those constraints. She says:

*“They would happily take part in any development endeavors or status raising activities in their villages if they receive strong support and motivation from male members of their community. Mass awareness generating and training to sensitize men and women will promote support from the males. Involvement of women in development activities should not merely be understood in terms of their physical participation or getting nominated into committees. It is more critical that men and women share power and authority in decision-making from the household-level upwards. Sharing of responsibilities and benefits as well by both men and women would be equally important for the success of rural development program like community forestry in Nepal”.*

Through this study an attempt to explore the current nature of participation in community forestry have also been made.

## **CHAPTER III**

### **RESEARCH METHODS**

I Stayed in Nawalpur area for one and half month as a base line data collector for the RPIS (Reducing Poverty through innovation system in forestry) Program in 14-CFUGs of Nawalpur area. I took this very opportunity to gather information to produce my thesis. Thus, the process I went through and information I gathered there were also guided by the end I wanted to reach through my thesis. For the base line data collection purpose I conducted two focused group discussions, one with women and another with the socially excluded groups, in all 14 CFUGs. I conducted household interviews in 7 CFUGs and the number of household interviews I conducted from each CFUGs was 16. Among the 16 household, 8 belonged to the socially excluded group (SEGs include women, indigenous people, Janajati, Madhesi, Dalit, and other ethnic minorities) remaining 8 from non-socially excluded groups. I also referred to the meeting minutes, constitution, operational plans and other registers of 14 CFUGs, as per RPIS baseline's information demand. Besides these, I was also engaged in several enduring informal conversations both with women and men of Nawalpur area and I also participated in various events of CFUGs organized at the time of my field stay. My daily maintained field diary ensured to record synopsis of informal conversations I had, my field experiences and some of my interesting field encounters reflecting women's issues in community forestry. For my thesis purpose those informal conversations I had with people of Nawalpur area and my field encounters were of much importance. Thus my thesis is an outcome of those informal conversations, field encounters and information gathered for the RPIS baseline. Besides all these, extensive literatures related to community forestry, issue of participation in community forestry, women and environment, women and development, research methodology and much more were dealt throughout the research process.

#### **3.1. Rationale of the Selection of Study Area**

The main project sites for RPIS project are Lamataar cluster of Lalitpur district, Nawalpur cluster of Nawalparansi district and Kusmi-Sera cluster of Baglung district. These three sites cover all the three geographical regions of Nepal, namely Terai, Mid

hills and High hills. Among these I chose to collect baseline information from Nawalpur cluster of Nawalparasi district of Terai. As a research demands resources, and my involvement in RPIS program would support me with funds, I considered it as an opportunity thus decided to write my thesis through the study conducted in Nawalpur. Being a novice researcher, I also thought that my involvement in the program also provides me with opportunities to learn from senior researchers involved in the same project. This is how Nawalpur became my study site. Upon my inquiry with the authorities of RPIS program, the three sites already have at least one research based governance related innovation, which can be promoted directly to other CFUGs. But this has nothing to do with my study. The sole reason behind me selecting Nawalpur as my study area is the one I mentioned earlier related to fund and opportunity.

### **3.2. Nature and Sources of Data**

This study is an outcome of both qualitative and quantitative information generated in the field. The proportion of use of qualitative data in this study is higher than the use of quantitative data. To deal with both the objectives of this study, I have heavily relied upon the qualitative data collected in the field through informal conversations and observations. In other words, primarily this study has sought the answers to what, when, where, how, why, etc. questions and answers to how many, what percentage etc. in limited proportion. For this study, people's perception, opinion, ideas, and ways of thinking were of much more importance compared to the statistics. Only to deal with the second objective I have relied upon the quantitative data generated through the household interviews conducted for base line purpose. This tendency of relying more upon qualitative data than quantitative data is not only due to the end I wanted to reach through this study but also due to my orientation in anthropology which says that anthropological data and analysis should rely more on quality rather than quantity.

Primary Sources of data I collected to respond to my research problem are the people of Nawalpur who are the users and committee members of the CFUGs I studied and the social settings and social interaction in Nawalpur, where, when, people in Nawalpur were engaged in activities and conversations related to forest. Besides these primary sources, I also referred various literatures pertinent to my research problem,

which included articles on community forestry, specific articles dealing with aspects of women forest relations, articles incorporating policy reviews, and obtained information through those reviews.

### **3.3. Techniques of Data Collection**

The main data collection techniques used for RPIS baseline purpose were interviews, group discussions and observations. Using the same techniques I gathered information for this study. Besides these, informal conversations I was engaged in with people of Nawalpur during my stay and various situations I encountered in Nawalpur were of primary importance to write this thesis. Because I have used information collected for the baseline purpose to complete this study, the description of various techniques I used to collect the baseline information are provided in the following paragraphs along with a brief explanation of what sort of information generated using those methods were useful for this study.

#### **3.3.1. Household Interview**

I conducted household interviews in 7 CFUGs and the number of household interviews I conducted from each CFUG was 16. Among the 16 household, 8 belonged to the socially excluded group (SEGs include women, indigenous people, Janajati, Madhesi, Dalit, and other ethnic minorities) remaining 8 from non-socially excluded groups. Collected household level information was related to general knowledge on management and good governance, enterprise, fund of CFUGs, networking, etc. Questions I used during household interviews for the base line purpose are provided in appendix 1. I must mention that these questions did not restrict me to listen to the spontaneous responses relating to women's issues and ask further questions to dig more into those issues.

**Table 1: Selection criteria and number of sample households taken from 7 CFUGs**

| Social group/ Status |          | Non-poor |        | Poor |        | Total |
|----------------------|----------|----------|--------|------|--------|-------|
|                      |          | Male     | Female | Male | Female |       |
| Social groups        | SEGs     | 2        | 2      | 2    | 2      | 8     |
|                      | Non SEGs | 2        | 2      | 2    | 2      | 8     |
| Total                |          | 4        | 4      | 4    | 4      | 16    |

For the purpose of this study the information provided by women informants at the household level was of much importance. That information took me to the repercussions of the emergence of community forestry in their life. To inquire upon the nature of participation of women in community forestry, information provided by female informants was of relevance.

### 3.3.3. Focus Group Discussions

I conducted two focus group discussions, one with women and another with the socially excluded groups, for all 14 CFUGs. There were women participants as well in the group discussions with socially excluded groups. The average number of participants in the group discussions was 8. Collected group level information was related with forest management, governance, enterprise, networking and so on. Questions I asked during focus group discussions are provided in appendix 2, and here also I was consciously flexible in asking and recording responses related to women's issues in the context of the end I wanted to reach through this study.

### 3.4. Data Analysis and Interpretation

I have already mentioned that this study is an outcome of the information collected for baseline research of RPIS program and informal conversations I had with people of Nawalpur and situations I encountered there during my stay. I had maintained a field

diary which helped me to keep record of those field encounters I had and those informal conversations I was engaged in. Information collected for the base line purpose was recorded in spiral banded copies. I was supposed to submit information collected for RPIS program in the format they had provided. So after the field work while recoding the information in the RPIS format, I could sort out information which I thought would be relevant for my study. Among that relevant information the one generated through household interview were tabulated. I did not segregate the information based on the respondents' belongingness to different CFUGs while tabulating that information. I analyzed that information through the calculation of percentage. Now for the purpose of analysis and interpretation of qualitative information, I started going through the qualitative information, both collected for the base line purpose and recorded in my field diary, again and again. I tried looking for trends, patterns, relationships, systems, etc., and simultaneously I also started intensive readings on the topic related to my study. Through these readings I could establish a framework for analysis. Now, having framework at hand, information I had brought started speaking to me.

### **3.5. Ethical Considerations**

I took consent of my respondents mentioning my affiliation and objective of the study, in the language they could understand as far as applicable, before I conducted interviews with them. I have highly respected the confidentiality of people of Nawalpur.

### **3.6. Limitations of the Study**

While collecting information for RPIS baseline study, I was simultaneously collecting information for this study, this act of stepping on two boats at the same time must have implications on the depth of the information I collected and analysis I presented. The fact that women can belong to number of heterogeneous groups—differentiated on the basis of caste/ethnicity, class, religion, their position in the family, age, education etc., has overlooked by this study. This act might have limited the analysis I have presented through this study. The analysis I have presented also has not recognized their belongingness to 14 different CFUGs covered by this study. This study is the first independent study of this kind conducted by me. I being a novice

researcher also might have implications again on the depth of the information I collected and analysis I presented.

### **3.7. Organization of the chapter:**

This study has been presented using seven chapters. The first chapter introduces the study to the readers. The second chapter includes substances generated through the review of literatures close to the research I investigated upon. The third chapter presents the methodology employed to conduct this study. The fourth chapter provides the general information of study area (Nawalpur area of Nawalparasi District) and the CFUGs covered by the study. The fifth chapter presents the repercussions of the emergence of community forestry in Nawalpur women's life. The discussions in the fifth chapter are supported by and associated with several reflections from Nawalpur area to deal with the first objective of the study. This chapter is helpful to draw attention of the readers to important but yet unexplored effects of the introduction of the community forestry in women's life. The sixth chapter presents the nature of women's participation in community forestry in Nawalpur area. Again, the discussions in this chapter are supported with the findings and reflections from the Nawalpur area. The seventh chapter presents the conclusions reached through this study.

## CHAPTER IV

### THE NAWALPUR AREA

The wider area, which ranges from Narayangarh in the east to Daunne hills in the west is known as Nawalpur area, and is about 60km long and 12km wide, and is now the north-eastern part of the Nawalparasi district. It is located about 50 Km northeast from the Headquarter of Nawalparasi district. The area is located from about 200 to 1700 meters' elevation from the sea level. This study covers 14 community forests including 10 community forests of plain land and 4 community forests of Siwalik range.

Settlement of people in this region is dense in Nawalpur area. As the region is located mostly in plain land, flow of migration is also higher here. Some of the community forests cover wider area of forests as well as number of users is large. The table below shows the caste/ethnic composition of users of the studied CFUGs in Nawalparasi.

Table 2: Caste/Ethnic-wise user households and population of studied community forests in Nawalpur area:

| <b>Name of CF</b>      | <b>Brahmin<br/>Chhetri HH</b> | <b>Janajati<br/>HH</b> | <b>Dalit<br/>HH</b> | <b>Total<br/>HH</b> | <b>Male</b>  | <b>Female</b> | <b>Total<br/>population</b> |
|------------------------|-------------------------------|------------------------|---------------------|---------------------|--------------|---------------|-----------------------------|
| Amar                   | 1064                          | 430                    | 281                 | 1775                | 5557         | 5336          | 10893                       |
| Bhedabari              | 85                            | 59                     | 19                  | 163                 | 517          | 529           | 1046                        |
| Binai                  | 65                            | 77                     | 21                  | 163                 | 527          | 517           | 1044                        |
| Binai Bagar            | 149                           | 114                    | 59                  | 322                 | 809          | 821           | 1630                        |
| Dusheri                | 291                           | 157                    | 126                 | 574                 | 2173         | 2175          | 4348                        |
| Jyoti-Kunj             | 96                            | 26                     | 26                  | 148                 | 500          | 535           | 1035                        |
| Bartandi               | 4                             | 24                     | 2                   | 30                  | 111          | 114           | 225                         |
| Mukundasen             | 96                            | 25                     | 42                  | 163                 | 529          | 527           | 1056                        |
| Narayani               | 51                            | 32                     | 14                  | 97                  | 501          | 449           | 950                         |
| Paheli Vitta           | 33                            | 46                     | 26                  | 105                 | 208          | 302           | 510                         |
| Jharai                 | 76                            | 38                     | 11                  | 125                 | 355          | 395           | 750                         |
| Shankadev –<br>Hasaura | 109                           | 65                     | 38                  | 212                 | 501          | 504           | 1005                        |
| Sital                  | 85                            | 23                     | 28                  | 136                 | 520          | 560           | 1080                        |
| Sundari                | 605                           | 95                     | 295                 | 995                 | 3674         | 3688          | 7362                        |
| <b>Total</b>           | <b>2818</b>                   | <b>1231</b>            | <b>996</b>          | <b>5045</b>         | <b>16627</b> | <b>16603</b>  | <b>33230</b>                |

Source: Field Survey 2009

The Nawalpur area lies in the northern east side of the district as well as in the northern parts of the East-West High Way. The region is located in sub-tropical climate and therefore the main five forest species in the plain lands are Sal (*Shorea robbusta*), Sissau (*Acacia cathu*), Saaj (*Terminalia alata*), Karam/Karma (*Adina*

cordifolia) and Jamuna (*Syzygium cumini*). The main five species found in the Siwalik hill regions are Sal (*Shorea robbusta*), Dhayaro (*Woodfordia fruticosa*), Sindure (*Mallotus philippinensis*), Kyamuno (*Careya arborea*) and Bakaino (*Melia azedarach*). However, each of the above mentioned species are found in both the area - plain land as well as in Siwalik Hills. Out of the 14 community forests, eight are mostly natural forest (Sundari, Amar, Bhedabari, Dhuseri, Mukundasen, Sankhadev-Hasaura, Binai, Bartandi CFs), five are recently growing natural and plantation forests (Jyoti-kunja, Paheli- Vitta, Jharai, Sital and Narayani CFs) and Binayabagar is the huge grassland and contains recently planted tree species. The forests of Nawalpur range post are good in condition. The community forest was introduced in the region since 1995 and all these community forests were handed over to local users in between 1995 to 2000.

The general information of studied community forests in Nawalpur is shown in table 3 below.

Table 3: General information of the studied community forests in Nawalpur cluster of Nawalparasi district

| Name of CF   | VDC/Wards                | Handed over date | Forest area in ha. | Nature of CF         |
|--------------|--------------------------|------------------|--------------------|----------------------|
| Amar         | Dibyapuri 1,9            | 1996             | 360                | Natural              |
| Bhedabari    | Harkapur 3,4,7           | In process       | 300                | Natural              |
| Binai        | Dumkibas 1,9             | 2007             | 63                 | Natural              |
| Binai Bagar  | Dumkibas 1,5, 6,9        | In process       | 29.5               | Plantation           |
| Dhuseri      | Rajahar 1,2,8            | 1997             | 205.15             | Natural              |
| Jyoti-kunja  | Sibmandir 1,2 Kawasoti 6 | In process       | 50                 | Natural              |
| Jharai       | Dhobadi 7                | 2007             | 50                 | Natural*             |
| Mukundasen   | Mukundapur 5,6           | In process       | 627                | Natural              |
| Narayani     | Gidaha 9                 | 2001             | 20.25              | Plantation           |
| Bartandi     | Dhobadi 7                | 2006             | 20                 | Natural*             |
| Paheli Vitta | Dumkibas 1, 2            | 2007             | 64                 | Plantation           |
| Sankhadev    | Sibamandir 9 Dhobadi 7   | 2009             | 198                | Natural              |
| Sital        | Amarapuri 5              | 1998             | 45                 | Plantation + Natural |
| Sundari      | Amrapuri                 | 1999             | 384.75             | Natural              |

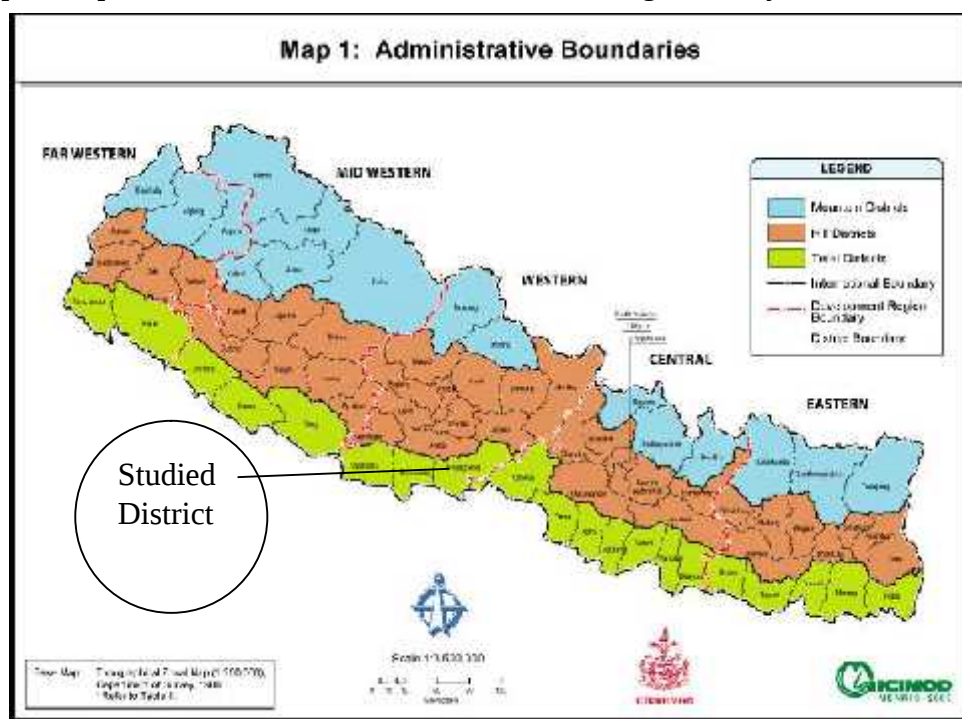
Source: Field Survey 2009

The studied community forests of Nawalparasi district have good earning. Some are earning good amount of money and spending the money for forestry and community development activities. Five of the studied CFUGs have their own office building which includes Shankadev-Hasaura, Dusheri, Bartandi, Sundari and Amar. Among

the remaining CFUGs Binai, Bhedabari, Jyoti-kunj, Jharai, Mukundasen have managed office rooms by hiring office staff. Among these Jharai and Bhedabari are in the process of building their own office building. Binai-bagar, Paheli-vitta, Narayani and Sital have their office documents safe in a trunk in one of their committee member's home. The CFUGs with good earning are spending annual earning for forest development and community activities. Among the studied CFUG Binai-bagar is the only women's CFUG. The number of women committee members in the remaining CFUG ranges from two to six. Jyoti-kunj and Mukundasen CFUG have women office secretary. In the Shankadev-Hasaura one girl was applying for the vacant post of office secretary along with few men.

Women in the Nawalpur area are mostly housewives. Their day is busy doing household and agricultural activities. Few are working as wage laborers in the manufacturing industries in Nawalparasi district. Some women in the urban location nearby highway are into business as well (for example owning a retail shop, hotel etc.). A number of them are also working as wage laborers in the NTFP plantation area in their CF. Besides their belongingness in CF women in Nawalpur area have also formed various formal and informal women's group, '*Bhaisi Palan Samuha*', '*Bhakra Palan Samuha*', women's cooperatives etc. are few examples.

Map of Nepal with administrative boundaries showing the study district:



Courtesy: ICIMOD

## **CHAPTER V**

### **THE EFFECTS**

Women in Nawalpur area are responsible for most of the works in private sphere. Their day is busy taking care of household and agriculture work. They shared that they are responsible for collecting the forest resources to fulfill their resource need. This particular role they have, due to division of labor at the household level, has brought them close to the forest. Forest is always a part of Nawalpur women's life. This "women forest closeness" has been historically influenced by various policy level interventions by the government. The changes in paradigms dealing with forest governance have been historically influencing their relation with forest and thus ultimately have some consequences in their life. The conversion of forests in their vicinity as community forestry and emergence of new paradigm of forest governance associated with it has also influenced the "women forest closeness". This influence has brought several consequences in Nawalpur women's life. This chapter aims at discussing some of the consequences of emergence of community forestry in Nawalpur women's life. This discussion is due to the followed field reflections.

#### **5.1. The Fun Part Gone Away**

Nawalpur women's historical closeness with forest shows forest as a sphere where their various memories of fun are associated. The moments they spent in the forest were worth remembering not only because of the hardships associated with it but also due to various fun parts attached. During a household interview, a woman sharing about the benefits she is getting from CF pointed her finger towards easy access to grass and firewood. Showing to the far across forest (according to her it is government forest) she started sharing the hardships she and her friends used to have while depending on that forest for resources. Enquiring upon the moments of her forest visit she shared few of the fun part associated with it.

*"My late husband used to drink liquor a lot; he used to beat me and used to irritate me a lot. Those moments when my husband was at home were all irritating. He was*

*not like that before; after he started drinking he always used to have “tedo tedo” conversation with me. There was no place to escape from those irritating conversation of him, children were also irritated from him, the only time I was away from him were those time of my jungle visit and while I visited my maiti (once or twice a year). I, at least for few moments used to feel refreshed. The songs we sang, the chats we had, all those ladies talks...and many more funny conversations, were all refreshing and helpful to decrease my irritation. We could do anything we wished. It was not only me my friends also used to enjoy. Kasaile sasu ko kura kattthe (some used to backbite their mother-in-law). It was actually fun and refreshing as well, besides the hardships.”*

Though the earlier part of her sharing related with her husband was typical to her case only, the fun part of her sharing was similar to lots of other Nawalpur women's experiences. I found that the fun part associated with her forest visit before the emergence of CF was valid in large extent and can be generalized for most of the women of Nawalpur area. Myself, grown up in a village where forest is nearby also had several such experiences. I still remember the moments of my childhood when I used to visit forest with my friends. I have heard several laughs and songs of women visiting jungle. I also remember my mother's excitement to visit the forest with her friend even when there was plenty of firewood stock at my home.

After the user groups were handed over with the forest, new rules for the distribution of the forest resources were formed. Now more effective watchmen with little area to watch over were appointed to ensure that rules are being followed. The CFUG committee announces the dates to collect the forest products. For the grass, which some of the users require daily, the user has to get a ticket paying certain fee allotted. The resources which were scarce before are now plenty in quantity. In this context I asked the very women to share about the current moments of her forest visit.

*“Now days we cannot visit the jungle anytime we wish. We cannot go just like that. There has to be a purpose, for that we have to wait for the day when the jungle is open. Even to collect the grass there are lots of formalities. “Ticket katnu parcha”(we have to get ticket). At the time when jungle is open it is filled by all the villagers (both men & women), the committee forms different groups and allots the area within the forest, the group has to collect the resources from within the allotted area. The*

*committee members are always around with lists of dos and don'ts to ensure that nobody is violating the rule. How can these days be similar to those days?"*

Women in Nawalpur area are definitely benefited by the plenty of forest products available due to the introduction of community forestry in their vicinity. As they are the one who are responsible for collecting those resources due to this easy access, they, now, do not have any experiences of hardships they had before the emergence of CF. In the mean time Nawalpur women are also missing the fun part associated with the forest visit. The fun part associated with their jungle visit is gone away, and this I consider is one of the repercussions of the emergence of community forestry in Nawalpur.

## **5.2. 'Women's Knowledge': what is the Use?**

Again due to the same historical women forest closeness, women in Nawalpur area are knowledgeable about their forest. This is similar to what the WED has recognized (women's special knowledge and value about the environment). Nawalpur women's closeness and continuous visit to forest, their several experiences in forest have made them knowledgeable about different animal and plant species available there. They are also knowledgeable about different trails inside the forest. Based on their experiences in forest they have developed several principles about forest protection. They shared several experiences about their efforts towards protecting forests. The users of the Shankadev user group shared their courageous effort to protect their forest from fire. They shared that at the time of emergency in the night time when all of them went to put off the fire an army helicopter shoot them thinking them as terrorist. Women of Shankadev area actively participated in that incident. That was just an example. Women in Nawalpur area have had several experiences where their knowledge was applicable in protecting forest along with plant and animal species there. I myself encountered a situation in the very first day of my Nawalpur visit. I believe it is worth mentioning here:

On the very first day of my Nawalparasi visit, I was supposed to meet the chairperson of Binai CFUG who would arrange for my living there. When I arrived at Dumkibas, I tried calling the chairperson on his mobile, but I could not reach him. With the help

of a shopkeeper I straight away went to his home. There, the chairperson's wife told me that he had gone to the community forest as a Rhino visited their forest so he was there along with officials from national park and DFO trying to locate the Rhino. Leaving my bags in the chairperson's home I went to the forest. I found them in the forest with the help of people passing by. The forest was near the highway and I met them on the way in the forest which leads to a village. Introducing myself I asked for the permission to observe the things going there. The chairperson warmly welcomed me. I was excited because I was about to see a Rhino in its wild habitat. Listening to their conversation I could get information about their failed attempts to locate the Rhino. In the mean time a woman passed by, she greeted the chairperson and asked about the reason of their forest visit. The chairperson told her about the Rhino's visit in their jungle and their effort to locate it. She then left, but after few moments she came back hurriedly and informed us that she located the Rhino. She led us silently to the place where Rhino was. It was a water hole within the forest where the Rhino was resting. I could also see the Rhino. We ensured that our move was not disturbing the Rhino. Forest officials took pictures of the Rhino. On our way back I asked the chairperson about the reasons behind locating the Rhino. He informed me that since it is an endangered species, the authorities should always be informed about its where about so that they can minimize its killings by smugglers.

From the chairperson I came to know that the woman is one of the members of their CFUG. With the information about that woman from chairperson I visited her home after 3 days of the incidence. I could know from her that, it was not for the first time a Rhino visited their Jungle. That day, she was on her way to home, when she knew from the chairperson about Rhino's visit she decided to check for Rhino in a water hole near to her way back to home. She silently checked there and when she saw the Rhino she informed us. She even told me about three water holes in their forest where Rhino visits. She even shared her knowledge about what it eats, where it comes from, and frequency of its visit in their jungle. She even told me that the then seen Rhino was a male one and was also old one. I could also know from her that the knowledge she has is due to her long experiences in and closeness with, the forest. This incidence that I encountered in the field shows an example about knowledge women have accumulated due to their closeness with Forest.

Women in Nawalpur revealed that their knowledge about forest is not recognized during forest management. This tendency has caused to grow germs of feeling among women in Nawalpur area and now they feel that their knowledge about forest is worthless. It is also due to the fact shared by the women there that their opinion guided by their knowledge is not acknowledged and listened in community forestry management. Among several experiences when women in Nawalpur area shared this feeling I want to mention one woman's sharing where she has directly talked about it. The followed woman's sharing also represents several of my similar experiences where women were sharing how their knowledge has proved worthless.

As per the baseline's requirement, I requested the local resource person (LRP) (appointed to help me for my study), who is also a committee member, to take me to a Dalit Household. LRP took me to a Dalit woman's home. The door was locked, LRP searched for the household head. Manamaya was on her field nearby, we went there and my LRP introduced me as a student wishing to ask her about the community forestry.

*"How can poor illiterate women supposed to know anything about community forestry? You (LRP) should have taken to samiti members, I know nothing about the forest, and it is worthless asking me anything"*

"Aama don't you really know nothing?" haven't you ever visited the forest? Don't you recognize the species available in the forest?" were my question after listening to her.

*"I do definitely recognize most of the species available in the forest. I know about different animals and birds available in the jungle. I know different trails within the jungle. But what is the use of all these knowing. This knowledge is all seemed to be useless. I am aware of the fact that jungle needs to be protected and I am also aware about the benefits that we are getting from the forest, which won't be there if jungle is destroyed. We are not the one who is responsible for the destruction of the forest. It was all the "Taskars" and corrupt forest officials."*

You seemed to know lot many things but how come you are saying you don't know anything?

*“Well! Actually that is how we are treated. People think that they know everything. They never visited jungle before. We have spent most part of our life in the jungle. We have always shown our concern about protecting the forest. But once samiti is formed, they appeared in the arena as if they know everything. ‘batha tatha’ village members and politicians came in the front line. May be because there is money there. I don’t know... fine it is good that the forest is cared properly but it is not true that they are only responsible for this.”*

On our way back I came to know from the LRP that in one of their previous AGMs Manamaya gave her argument against their proposed program of NTFP plantation, as an income generating activity, in their forest. According to LRP she was saying that if NTFP were planted in the proposed land it would be hard for the villagers to gain grass. She was not against the NTFP plantation but she was not willing to accept the proposed land for plantation, mentioning that the land was productive for grass to grow and was providing them with easy access of abundant grass ultimately helping their livelihood through animal husbandry. The LRP also told me that her voice was not acknowledged that day and she stopped attending CF meetings then on. LRP also told me that she was true about the easy access of grass from that land.

Women in Nawalpur area, especially during FGDs I conducted, had several similar grievances to share. The ‘elite capture’ (Garner, 2007) of the forests in their vicinity and their un-comfortableness to adjust with the rules of forest governance developed by those elites have made them marginalized in the community forestry. The inflow of scientific knowledge of forest management in Nawalpur and the women’s experiences of moments when their suggestions/ opinions were unheard and unacknowledged, the knowledge of women about forest accumulated through the historical process of women forest closeness have proved worthless.

### **5.3. Perpetuation of “Traditional order of men”**

Historically the sphere of “Chulo-Chouka” (the kitchen sphere) belongs to the women in Nawalpur and it is due to the household level division of labor. All the activities in the kitchen sphere are under women’s control. Similarly, the forest sphere is also of women due to the same household level division of labor. Historically women in

Nawalpur are responsible for the collection of resources from the forest. Household level decisions in regard to collection of resources from forest are made by women. After the emergence of community forestry paradigm, the community level committees were formed. Now the authority of decision making shifted to the user group committee. The elite male members of the committee make the committee level decisions. The male member of the family participates in the meetings of the community forestry (more of these phenomena are reflected in upcoming chapters). This reflects the perpetuation of traditional order of men in women's know how sphere. During one of the FGD I conducted these all things were reflected in one woman's sharing.

One FGD was scheduled at eleven in the morning. Kalpana a committee member of one CFUG was requested by the chairperson to help me to conduct that FGD. I reached Kalpana's home; she took me to the nearby village where ten women were waiting for us. I had asked Kalpana to remain silent and let other women answer the questions during the FGD. Discussion begin, I started getting "*we don't know*" answer to most of the questions I asked. In the mean time while answering my question to know whether they attend any meetings of community forestry, one woman said: "*first of all nobody informs us about the meeting, even if we participate we can't make sense out of the things going in there. Because we, except few like Kalpana, are illiterate, we are not able to understand things.*"

Kalpana couldn't remain silent and with her loud voice:

*"Nothing but the feeling like yours has made women backward and marginalized. Who stops you from going to meeting, who stops you for asking questions and understanding things going around you? Weren't the women sole users and masters of the forest? But see what has happened these days all the male who never used to go to the forest are the chairperson of the forest. If things remain same they will come to your kitchen and kick you away from there as well and your life will be miserable, that time also women will be saying we are illiterate and don't know anything that's why we are kicked away from the kitchen by the men."*

#### 5.4. We too love our Forest

To ensure that rules of the community forestry are followed by the users during their forest visit, all the CFUGs under study in Nawalpur have appointed watchman. Watchman watches over the activities of users to ensure their accordance with the rules. Anyone not following the rules is punished according to the provision made by the committee. As women in Nawalpur are responsible for the most of the collection of resources from forest, they are the one mostly watched by the watchmen. This tendency of watching over women's activities over forest has indirectly blamed women as the cause of forest destruction. This tendency has also come forward as an evidence for women to suspect/believe that community forestry paradigm considers women as destroyers of forest.

During one FGD taken among Brahmin women the last question I asked was *"Is there anyone who is punished by CFUG?"*

All the women remained silent for some moments and with a laugh one woman said Sharmila was once punished. Others except Sharmila also laughed.

*"Shut up you"* Sharmila with her angry voice shouted.

*"What was you punished for Sharmila didi (sister)?"* I asked.

There was a moment of silence.

*"I had done nothing actually. I was in the forest to cut grass. Anyone can go and cut the grass. I had cut few lahara because I had found my cattle liking that. They (Indicating Committee members) took my aarsi and I never went there to bring that back"*

*"Because she feels shy"* another woman shared.

*"Shut up! What is there to be shy about? I just didn't like them punishing me for that. I had bought several of those lahara before as well, nothing has happened till today, rather I believe the tree it was surrounding has been freed and thus will grow further. They can do whatever they wish but they punish us for nothing. This is not fair. Why are they growing NTFPs in the land from where we get grass for our cattle? They can do whatever they wish if they find it beneficial for them. But they punish us and don't*

*even listen to us that nothing will happen cutting the lahara rather the act is beneficial for the tree... It's been 17 years after marriage I have been living in this place and visiting that jungle). CF is the source of their income. There is a rumor in the village that Ramu (pseudo name) (previous secretary current FECOFUN district committee member) had misused huge amount of money. That is why they pretend loving the forest, we too love our forest but ours is the true one. ”*

Sharmila's anger is due to the lag between her knowledge about forest and the committee's forest management provisions. This reflects that the policies, programs of forest management are not tailored according to local conditions. Before the emergence of community forest paradigms women during their jungle visit were rarely watched over, but women there shared that even though the situation was so they never used that situation as an opportunity to destroy the forest massively. At this point it is worth remembering what many people in Nawalpur shared: *“Taskers were/are the one who destroyed/destroying our forests, our acts of bringing small amount of resources never cause the destruction of forests”*. Sharmila's concern about the decision of NTFP plantation reflects that decisions made in CF are still top down in nature. The decisions made are not tailored to local aspirations especially of women.

### **5.5. The Growing Feeling of Inferiority**

Chautari CFUG was not willing to incorporate itself into the RPIS program at the time of my first visit to Nawalpur area. Later I was informed by the authority of RPIS program that Chautari had agreed to incorporate itself into the program. I called the chairperson of Chautari for his interview and he called me the next afternoon in user group's office. I reached early there, only the office secretary was in the office. I found the office one of the best among the CFUGs I visited. I waited for him trying to know something about their CF from the secretary. After around half an hour the chairperson came. I introduced myself to him. He gave few minutes to the office secretary and engaged himself with the official work for some time. In the mean time few students (in their school dress) entered the office with a letter in their hand. They submitted the letter to the chairperson. I came to know from their conversation that

the students were requesting for some fund for their educational tour. The chairperson promised them to help and the students left.

*“Ok! Mr. Luitel, tell me how can I help you?”*

I was telling him about the RPIS program but he stopped me and said he was already aware about the program. He asked me to come straight to the point. I informed that their CFUG is one of the 15 selected for the baseline thus I requested to get some information about their CFUG for that purpose.

*“Our constitutional provision does not allow us to participate in the program unless we approve it through AGM. It will be around ‘Magh’ thus you inform your authority if they can wait until then.”*

I was speechless; I remembered my hard cycling to reach for that appointment.

*“If you want to know my opinion, under my chairmanship I never wished to involve in that program or any other program whatsoever. We don’t need others help to protect our forest. We are able to do it ourselves. We also don’t want them to create obstacles on our way, people like you come to our place and conducts research and in the name of conducting research yaha ka manche haru lai bhadkauchau. I don’t know what you guys say and ask them during research, but that breaks our unity towards protecting forest. You talk with dalit, women and all and they suspect us, and we have seen several situations where our village women and dalit discouraged in the forest protection process. Fine if they want to earn dollar we don’t say anything but we don’t like them disturbing our unity. ”*

I was again speechless.

*“How much do you earn from this research?”* he asked me.

I said, “I am just a student who has to finish his thesis for his masters and this visit is for my thesis purpose. They have supported me by providing traveling and few other expenses during this process.”

*“What is your thesis about?”* he inquired me further.

I said, “My thesis will focus on women’s issue.”

*“Because you are a student I tell you about women in this community forestry. Women and men both together struggled to make this forest a community forest. We together moved ahead towards protecting and managing this forest. I can still remember women’s excitement during those days; women were more excited than men. There was no sense of inferiority and superiority among each other. Yes, it was true that some were more active than others during that process it is because no two individuals are similar every one have their own expertise on knowledge. But their activeness had never made them superior than other. The motive to protect our forest brought us together and our unity was built on the trust that we had for each other. Later on gradually the researcher like you started coming and the questions that you asked made them inferior and entered a sense of suspect in their mind and thus our unity broke. And the broken unity is reflected these days during the CF activities...Because you belong to the RPIS, I cannot help you even though you are a student. If you are really willing to help us by doing research for us, come independently, we tell you where are we facing problems and on what aspects we want information through research for our efficiency and effectiveness. We cannot give you money but can assure you a sound sleep and mitho dal-bhat(meal) during that process.”*

He then left to attend a program in Dusheri CF.

On my way back my mind once again was struck by the answers ‘don’t know’ and ‘how can women know’ I had been getting for the lots of questions I asked the women users of community forest in Nawalpur area. This particular reflections and the sayings of the chairperson made me think about how we take development for granted and do not consider the possible effects of development. The chairperson, while sharing about the broken unity, was indicating the implications of activities that entered into Nawalpur along with community forestry. Various researches focusing on the women’s issue in community forestry have highlighted women’s inferior position in the society and their marginal position in the community forestry. These and similar other conclusions have worked as stimulus to grow a feeling of inferiority among women. I considered the answers ‘I don’t know’ and ‘how can I know’, I got from Nawalpur women as symptoms of this ‘flowering’ of ‘germs of inferior feeling’ among them.

The above mentioned field reflections are the representatives of several of my encounters in the field. As per the first objective of my thesis, these reflections I witnessed during my field visit indicate towards some of the effects of the emergence of CF in women's life.

I shall not miss explaining easy access of forest resources as one of the important outcome of emergence of CF in Nawalpur women's life. Women in Nawalpur area, before the emergence of CF, had to depend upon far across forests for their forest resources need. CF has provided them with easy access of grass, firewood, fodder etc. This issue was shared by women participants of the FGD I conducted and also shared by women and committee members I interviewed. Besides this there are several other consequences as well. Women benefited by revolving fund provision of Binai CF, the changes in women's life after participating in various training (e.g. tailoring) given by CF are few other examples. But still the consequences indicated by the above reflections are there. Due to emergence of CF women's fun part associated with their forest related activities have gone away. Their knowledge of forest has considered useless or let's say has proved worthless.

The concept of scientific forest management entered into Nawalpur valley has denied validity of women's knowledge on of forest. The NGOs, INGOs and forest professionals have come out as a mediator in this process. CF has become catalyst in supporting the male encroachment in women's know how sphere. The committee's constant watch over women's forest activities has once again blamed indirectly the women as destroyer of the forest. Several activities and studies after the emergence of CF has established women as a separate category and their conclusions have made women as an inferior group in the society.

## CHAPTER VI

### THE NATURE OF PARTICIPATION

Besides making women to loose jungle sphere, CF has also introduced a new sphere (public space) in women's life. With the legal policy for women's participation in community forestry ( For example, Master Plan for Forestry sector 1989 has made provision for women's participation in CF process) and various programs, with an aim to increase women's participation in forest governance, introduced by many governmental and non-governmental institutions, women' role in conservation and development has been sought. The participation of women in public space opened by means of policy and legislative instruments in the forestry sector must certainly be considered a positive development.

However, in Nawalpur it is revealed that women are not being able to make sense out of the things going around in this sphere. And because they are not being able to make sense out of many things going around in this sphere women's participation in community forestry is rhetoric. One can counter argue upon the findings of this study if they look at the lists of committee members of the CFUGs studied and they can even point their finger to one of the CFUGs which is women's CFUGs. They may even base their argument to women's massive participation in clearing and thinning activities. With some of the field reflections and findings through focus group discussions, household interviews and several informal interviews with women, this study argues that the layers that they are pointing at does not reflect the true nature of Nawalpur women's participation in community forestry. This chapter attempts to draw attention to several other layers, unfolded in Nawalpur, which are close to the reality and are helpful in reflecting the true nature of Nawalpur women's participation in community forestry.

An important phenomenon I found in Nawalpur is that women of Nawalpur massively participate in the 'Katani Chatani' work in their community forest. They also participate actively in the plantation activities. Among 112 women respondents during household interview, 100% said that they participate in the clearing and thinning work in their community forestry. Women are the free labor force used during these activities. Trying to explore the reason behind women's massive participation in clearing and thinning activities, it was found that the rule of community forestry for

mandatory participation was one of the reasons. Besides this, it was found that women took this as an opportunity to fulfill their resource need. The provision there among the community forests was that the resources extracted through the activity were distributed among the participants. It must also be mentioned here that the date for clearing, thinning, and plantation activities is never decided by women. And during those activities also they are influenced by dos and don'ts developed by the committee. Even when their knowledge about forest do not agree with some of the dos and don'ts provisions they have been following it. Previously mentioned Sharmila's experience can be reviewed here as an example of women's disagreement to the rules set by CFUGs and cohesive nature of it. As they are not contributing in the process of decision making regarding how, when, where etc. associated with clearing and thinning activities, their massive participation does not reflect the true nature of participation.

During the household interview with 112 women respondents, 92.86% of the women said 'No' and 'don't know' when asked to know whether they are aware about the rights of the users of the community forestry. 7.14% of the women who are familiar with few rights of the users said their familiarity is due to their participation in the trainings organized by their CFUGs. If majority of the women are not aware about the rights of the users their active participation cannot be expected and even when they sometimes are engaged as one of the parts of certain activities related to community forestry their engagement cannot be labeled as participation or let's say genuine participation.

61.61% respondents during household interview do not recognize all of their CFUG committee members. Among these more than 50% knows who the chairperson of their community forestry is. This phenomenon at Nawalpur raises one important question: Do women participate in activities related to the formation of the CFUG committee? In the CFUGs covered by this study, committees are generally formed in/through annual general meeting (AGM). 91.07% of women I interviewed said that they have participated in AGM at least once. Remaining 8.93% of women said that they have never participated in AGM. This is despite the fact that 87.50% of the women shared that male member of their family goes to the CFUG meetings. But during AGM they said if time permits they also take part.

Women shared that they do not understand things going on there in AGM. May be this is the reason that they were remembering the AGM as a '*Bhatter Khayeko Din*' (a picnic day) and 89.29% of the women do not know how the CFUG committee is formed. Besides this 88.39% of the women are not aware of the situation (sources and uses) of fund of their CFUG. My informal conversations and interviews with the chairpersons of the CFUGs, this study has covered, revealed that it is during AGM the annual budget which includes sources and uses of the fund is presented. I also found few women talking about the corrupt behavior of some of their committee members but they have kept it within themselves not knowing what to do with this. Another important phenomenon reflected through household interview is that 79.46% of the women do not know what FECOFUN is. During an informal conversation one of the authorities of FECOFUN district committee, Nawalparasi was sharing with me that one of their representative are always present in the AGMs of CFUGs in Nawalparasi District. This reflects that women in Nawalpur are 'just sitting in rather than participating' (Nightingale, 2002) in AGM. The above mentioned reflection helps to establish the argument that women do not understand the things going around in the public space introduced for them after the emergence of community forestry. To further support this argument I wish to present two of my field encounters which are helpful in providing the glimpse of the Nature of women's participation in Nawalpur:

Binai Bagar CFUG is the only women's CFUG among the CFUGs covered by this study in Nawalpur area. The chairperson's home was near by the guesthouse I was staying. In the very morning she had called me for tea where we could discuss about her CFUG. With my note copy, I went to her home. I was sitting on her guest room, her husband was also there. She bought me tea and we started having conversation. I wished to see the various documents related to CFUG as well. The thing that I encountered there was informing me something about the nature of women's participation. All the questions I asked to the chairperson were answered by her husband (Village politician). It was her husband who showed me all the documents and briefed me about it.

In the beginning I remembered my teacher's saying that the setting of the interview should be appropriate to obtain the reliable information. I thought the presence of her husband was not the appropriate setting, thus I couldn't get her answers to my questions. After we were done there, she took me to the village near by and to the

forest as per my request to help me to show me village where users were residing. It was around 30 minutes walk; on the way when we two were only there we started having more conversation about her CFUG. I wanted to know that whether the previous setting was bad or not. On the way she told me that as she can't understand lots of issues thus her husband helps her in making decisions and all. This particular situation encountered in only women's CFUG under study informs about a caution we are required to take before we conclude anything on the issue of participation of women in community forestry, just counting their head in the committee. Even when they are part of the committee they do not understand lots of things going around there related to community forestry. This fact is validated through several other informal conversations I was engaged in with women members of the committee some of them were LRPs appointed to help me.

In another CFUG where the chairperson is a woman I encountered similar situation. I was interviewing her and it was in the CFUG office. Office secretary was also there. The women chairperson, the way she answered my questions, was unaware of lots of facts related to her CFUG. For every question I asked her, she was depended on the secretary. With my request they allowed me to stay in their CFUG office for four nights. I established a friendly relation with the office secretary during that time. The friendship was pretty helpful for me to know lots of CF related issues of the Nawalpur area.

On our one conversation he was feeling proud that though he is just a secretary he is more powerful than the chairperson. *"you know women, they are not much clever, same is our chairperson, just because we thought that lets have women chairperson this time, we have her as chairperson"*. I asked him about other women committee members as well. *"Because there is the government policy that there should be women in the committee... they are more sort of ceremonial type, major decisions are taken by previous chairperson (male) who are really very smart and intelligent"*. I asked him about whether they participate in meetings and all? *"They do participate in the meetings but their participation is not much with strength, nobody posses gut and intelligence to put counter argument to the previous chairpersons"*. These is another case of 'elite capture' (Garner, 2007) and 'male domination' (Bhattarai, 2064BS) in CFUGs and it is because women do not understand the things going around even

when they are securing an important position within community forestry. Because of this, their involvement is ceremonial and their participation is not a genuine one.

## **CHAPTER VII**

### **CONCLUSIONS**

#### **7.1. The Lost Sphere**

Women in Nawalpur area claim that they were never the cause behind the natural forest destruction there before the emergence of CF. They claim that small amounts of grass, firewood, fodder etc. they brought from the forest can never be responsible for the massive destruction of forest. They said that they love their forest and are always concerned about protecting it. Mahonk Mountain Conference 1987 and its one of the conclusions that subsistence farmer are not the sole cause of deforestation (see Metz, 1989) has validated their claim. Bahuguna's (Ives et.al., 1987:335 in Metz, 1989) and Gurung's (Blaikie and Brookfield, 1987:42 in Metz, 1989) claims that villagers know exactly what needs to be done, but lack the means to do it, also supports the Nawalpur women's claim.

My study in Nawalpur area showed that it is mostly women who are responsible for most of the collection of grass, fodder, firewood etc. for domestic use both before and after the emergence of community forest. Referring to chapter 5 and the theoretical explanations that depend on Ecofeminism which emphasizes the natural and spiritual content of women for women's 'closeness' with nature, my conclusion here is that after the emergence of community forestry women have lost a sphere of their life (the jungle sphere). This lost jungle sphere was refreshing, activities attached with this were entertaining, and this was the sphere of which they were proud to be knowledgeable about and never felt inferior in.

#### **7.2. Lost in New Sphere**

The emergence of CF and the participatory approaches backed by forest policies added a new sphere in women's life. They are the new managers and users of the forest in their vicinity. Referring to the findings mentioned in chapter 6 the conclusion

here is: majority of the women users of the Nawalpur are lost like the crow in the mist, just because they are not being able to make sense out of the things going on in this sphere. Since this research has just explored the lost situation as one of the consequences of emergence of CF, the social causes behind this lost situation can be another potential research area.

### **7.3. Questioning the Assumption:**

Community forestry paradigm assumes that introduction of CF fulfill the need of the people residing in the forest area, and this assumption highlight the material value of forests in women's lives. This study questions this assumption by asking "*How about the women's emotional need?*" And "*How about the dignity in women's life?*" supported by the highlighted (in chapter 5) various other than the material values of forests in women's lives.

### **7.4. Rhetoric and Reality:**

My attempt to review the evolution of community forestry paradigm in Nepal as presented in the literature review section in the first chapter shows it to be a progressive and a dynamic learning process. Chhetri in his 1999 article argues people's participation; putting people first, empowering the locals, bottom up approach, community participation, etc., have been cited as essential parts of the strategies for conservation and development or in administrating all sorts of programs and projects in Nepal also. However, things may not always have been done right while putting such principles into practice which makes many people think that peoples participation is perhaps treated as rhetoric in this country. Similarly referring chapter 6, mentioning the nature of women's participation in CF activities in Nawalpur area, progressive forestry policy backed women's participation in CF activities can be treated as rhetoric. The conception of community forestry as a successful example of people centered development approach or bottom up approach can be treated as rhetoric in the context of field reflection presented in chapter 5.

## **Glossary of Nepali Terms and Phrases**

Aarsi: A traditional instrument used to cut grass

Batha Tatha : A phrase used to indicate knowledgeable and clever people

Bhadkauchau: An act of wrongly influencing

Bakhara Palan Samuha: Livestock (Goat) Group

Bhaisai Palan Samuha: Livestock (Buffalo) Group

Dal Bhat : Rice and pulse (indicating Meal)

Didi: Sister

Chulo Chouka: Phrase used to indicate kitchen sphere

Kasaile: Indicating some others (people)

Kura Katthe: an act of backbiting

Katnu Parcha: have to get (used for ticket)

Lahara:

Maiti: woman's maternal home

Manche Haru: People

Mitho: Tasty

Samiti: Committee

Sasu: Mother-in-law

Taskar: Mafia

Tedo Tedo: used to indicate arguments, which does not make sense rather acts as stimulus for a fight.

Yaha: Here

## **List of Abbreviations**

AGM: Annual General Meeting

CF: Community Forestry

CFUG: Community Forestry User Groups

FAO: Food and Agriculture Organization

HH: Household

HMG: His Majesty's Government

LRP: Local Resource Person

NTFP: Non Timber Forest Product

PRSP: Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper

RPIS: Reducing Poverty through Innovative System

SEG: Socially Excluded Group

VDC: Village Development Committee

WED: Women, Environment and Development

## References

- Adhikari, B. (2003), *Property Rights and Natural resources: Socio-economic Heterogeneity and Distributional Implications of Common Property Resource Management*, Working Paper 1-03. Kathmandu Nepal: SANDEE (South Asian Network for Development and Environment Economist)
- Agrawal, A. and E. Ostrom (2001), *Collective Action, Property Rights, and Decentralization in Resource Use in India and Nepal*, *Politics and Society* 29(4): 485-514
- Agarwal, B (1992), *The Gender and Environment Debate: Lessons from India*, *Feminist Studies*, 18 (1): 119-58.
- Agarwal, B. (2001), *Conceptualizing Environmental Collective Action: Why Gender Matters*, *Cambridge Journal of Economics* 24:283-310
- Bastakoti, R. R. (2005), *Evaluation of Collective Action in Forest User groups (Case study from Dhading District, Nepal)*, M. Sc. theses submitted for the partial fulfillment of the examination requirement for the academic degree of M.Sc Technical University, Dresden, Germany
- Bhattarai A.M. and Khanal D.R., (2005), *Communities, Forests, and Law of Nepal: Present State and Challenges*, FCOFUN and Pro Public publication
- Bhattarai, B (2064BS), *Baddho Mahila Sabhagita: Bhram ra Yetarthata*, in *Hamro Ban Sampada*, in *Forest Action Journal*, Year 5 Vol 1, Forest Action
- Cerne, M M, (ed.) (1991), *Putting people first: sociological variables in rural development*, Oxford University Press, 2nd Edition.
- Chhetri, G. (2001), *A social and cultural perspective of women and community forestry in Nepal*, In *Contributions to Nepalese Studies*, Vol 28, No1 (January, 2001), 53-72, CNAS/ TU
- Chhetri, R.B. (1999), *The Rhetoric and Realities of People's Participation in Conservation and Development in Nepal: An Anthropological Perspective*, SASON, Kathmandu, Nepal
- FAO (1983). *Forests, trees and people*. FAO Forestry Topics Report, No. 2, Food and Agricultural Organization of the United Nations, Rome.
- Ghimire-Bastakoti, K. (2005), *Gender Analysis in Farm Forestry and Community Forestry. Case study from Dhading district, Nepal*. M. Sc. theses submitted for the partial fulfillment of the examination requirement for the academic degree of M.Sc Technical University, Dresden, Germany
- Gilmour D.A. and Fisher R.J. (1991), *Villagers, Forests and Foresters: The Philosophy, process and Practice of Community forestry in Nepal*, Sahayogi Press Pvt. Ltd., Kathmandu

Graner, E. (1997) *The Political Ecology of Community Forestry in Nepal*, Saarbrueleen, Verlagfur

Gupte, M. (2004), *Participation in a Gendered Environment: The Case of Community Forestry in India*, In Human Ecology, Vol. 32, No. 3, June 2004

HMGN, 1956. *Private Forest Nationalization Act 1956*, Ministry of Law and Justice, His Majesty's Government of Nepal.

HMGN, 1961. *Forest Act 1961*, Ministry of Law and Justice, His Majesty's Government of Nepal.

HMGN, 1967. *Forest Protection Act 1967*, Ministry of Law and Justice, His Majesty's Government of Nepal.

HMGN, 1976. *National Forestry Plan 1976 (2033BS)*, Ministry of Forests and Soil Conservation.

HMGN, 1978. *Panchayat Forest and Panchayat Protected Forest Rules 1978*, Ministry of Law and Justice, His Majesty's Government of Nepal.

HMGN, 1989. *Master Plan for the Forestry Sector*, Forest Sector Policy, 1989, Ministry of Forests and Soil Conservation.

HMGN, 1993. *Forest Act 2049BS*, Ministry of Law and Justice, His Majesty's Government of Nepal.

HMGN, 1995. *Forest Rules 2051BS*, Ministry of Law and Justice, His Majesty's Government of Nepal.

Ives, J.D. and Messerli, B. (1989), *The Himilayan Delimma- Reconciling Development and Conservation*. The United Nations University and Routledge, London and New York.

Jackson, C. (1993a), *Questioning Synergism: Win-Win with Women in Population and Environmental Policies?*, In *Journal of International Development*, 5(6): 651-68.

- (1993b), *Environmentalisms and Gender Interests in the Third World*, *Development and Change*, 24 (4): 649-77.

Joekes, S, N Heyzer, R Oniango and V Salles (1994), *Gender, Environment and Population*, *Development and Change*, 25(1).

Kameswari V.L.K. (2002), *Gendered Communication and Access to Social Space: Issues in Forest Management*, *Economic and Political Weekly*, Vol. 37, No. 8 (Feb. 23 - Mar. 1, 2002),

Kanel, K., (2004), *Twenty Five Years' of Community Forestry: Contribution to Millennium Development Goals*. Paper presented in the fourth national workshop on community forestry. 4-6 August, 2004, Kathmandu, Nepal

Leach, M. and C. Green (1995), *Gender and Environmental History: Moving Beyond the Narratives of the Past*, Contemporary Women- Environment Policy Debates, Sussex.

Locke, C. (1999), *Gender Policy in Joint Forest Management* in R Jeffery and N Sundar (eds), Sage Publication, New Delhi.

Luitel H. and Timsina, N.P. *Making forestry decentralization effective in empowering women agencies* In policy brief- forest action Nepal

Madelene, O. and Baral, R. (2000), Local Forest Protection, Gender and Caste: Dhani Hill, Orissa, India, Human Geography, Vol. 82, No. 3, Blackwell Publishing on behalf of the Swedish Society for Anthropology and Geography

Metz, J. J. (1989), *Himalayan Political Economy: More Myths in the closet*, In Mountain Research and Development Vol 9 no. 2, pp, 175-186

Mies, M. and Shiva, V. (1997), *Ecofeminiisn in Feminism*, Oxford Readers.

Nightingale, A.J., 2002. *Participating or Just Sitting In? The Dynamics of gender and Caste in Community Forestry*. Journal of Forest and Livelihood Vol 2 (1).

Rocheleau, D, B Thomas-Slayter and Wangari, E. (1996), *Gender and Environment: Feminist Political Ecology Perspective* in D Rocheleau, B Thomas-Slayter and E Wangari (eds), *Femninist Political Ecology: Global Issues and Local Experiences*, Routledge, New York.

Rai (Paudel) B. and M. Buchy, (2004). *Institutional Exclusion of Women in Community Forestry; Is Women-only Strategy a Right Answer?* Paper presented in the fourth national workshop on community forestry.4-6 August, 2004, Kathmandu, Nepal

Shah, M K and Shah P (1995), *Gender, Environment and Livelihood Security: An Alternative Viewpoint from India*, IDS Bulletini 26,75-78.

Tinker, I (1994), *Women and Community Forestry in Nepal: Expectations and Realities*, Society anid Natural Resources; 7(4): 367-81.