

# **CHAPTER - ONE**

## **INTRODUCTION**

### **1.1 Background of the Study**

Forest is one of the most important natural resources of Nepal especially for the socio-economic development and people's livelihoods. Nepal has agriculture based economic system because of which management of forest is very essential. Nepal as a land locked country; most of the people are depended on forest based fuel for cooking and other primary need fulfillment.

Forest is one of the most essential natural resources in Nepal. Main purpose behind developing the forests in Nepal is to meet the requirement of timber, fuel wood, fodder and minor forest products. Similarly, soil protection, water conservation, wild life recreation and artistic values and maintaining ecological balance are environments purposes. Forest provides 81% of the fuel consumption (as fuel wood) and more than 50% of the fodder for. Forests have traditionally been used for cultural purpose. In recent years, some industries have developed, were use forest products as raw materials (CBS, 2015).

The participation of women in community forest management has been regarded as very essential. Community forest management and utilization of forest products by female has been changed the livelihoods of people in remote rural areas. After participation of women in community forest management there have been many changes because women always have been sincere for their work. After their participation protection and development of forest was found good. So, women play vital role for management of forest.

This study aims to assess whether women themselves considered them are co-manager of local forest resources, particularly the CF management or they are imposed to become the manager. Likewise, perception of women regarding the motivating factors and hindering factors that influences to involve in CF management to women. Finally, this study aims

to analyze the involvement of women in various dimensions of CF management such type of study is beneficial for developing practiced plan, particularly in the hilly region.

Women's lives are the most seriously affected by environmental damage and the shortage of forest products. Women, together with their children, are the main collectors of fuel and others forest products such as animal fodder and leaf compost. They also take primary responsibility for herding family livestock, including cattle, sheep and goats. Women's role in the content of their other household responsibilities.

While women are not as active in the cash economy as recent studies employing data on family time allocation have resulted in some realistic estimates of rural women's overall contribution to the household economy. In a study carried out in 9 users' groups. Women's total in village work was found to be approximately 11 hrs. daily, as compared to approximately 8 hours for men.

Several factors explain the differential between male and female workloads. First in addition to agricultural and animal husbandry responsibilities women have primary responsibility for food processing fuel and fodder collection, cooking and child care. Second, in many households' men have migrated to other parts of Nepal or to India in search of wage labor and temporary development to supplement household income. Women the must assume a greater proportion of the agricultural tasks as well.

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## 1.2 Statement of Problem

The number of women users' groups increasing enormous through out the Kingdom. It appears to play one of the leading roles to uplift the rural women and to stop the rapidly increasing deforestation process. It suddenly arises a challenging question to the nation is "what for the women community forestry and to when the program for it is for the real women other or for elite women of the community. So, documentation of the living standard of the people now and then the community forestry program launched in the study area is needed on the basis of agriculture, rural development, employment, child education and health. It is realized to how the people regarding the accessibility and individual fund raised now and before the community forestry program in a transparent manner. It is important to analyze the actual value of the forest against the subsidy given by the community forestry to control the over exploitation of the subsidy.

Nepal's women are known as the poorest and disadvantaged. So, women's participation in community forestry program is helpful to increase economic status of women in society. It could be good help to case of poverty alleviate in the country. Due to actual rural poverty in the hilly area, the community has extended pressure on the forest for timber and fuel wood collection. Forest is the source of livelihood for poor and marginal. People during dry season, they have no employment in farm land, so we might change in their profession being employed them in the forestry development activities through community forestry rather than poaching timber and fuel wood from the forest. Such employment program should reflect the community forestry strategies that can exactly uplift one rural livelihood with no less.

However, there has not been a systematic study in this regard in participation of women in national forestry District forest officers have started monitor of financial resources of FUGs. So, UFO can assess their financial status to support forest and other development activities. It is for the sustainable for rural women livelihood. So, the study intends to assess the present status of FUGS financial source fund mobilization and management system. Users group have accumulation fund and they have been using it for the varieties of purpose rather than the community prioritized development works. Are they utilizing

to obtain possible optimal output of the resources? Exploring these will give clear guidelines for fund mobilization in sustainable manner to support the women's livelihood.

Deforestation is the main problem in our country and women are the main users of forest product and to stop the illegal activities it is very necessary to participate for women in CF management. Some studies have been made in different parts of Nepal about people's participation in forestry but very few studies have been made on the women participation in forest management.

However there has only little study which examines the participation of women in the user group and same recommendation to improve the organization and participation of women in forest resource management so to till this gap, this study will play a vital role for forest management. This study has attempted to find out the solution of following research questions:

What is situation of women's participation?

What types of problems are there in the study area regarding forest management?

What is the role of women in community forest management?

### **1.3 Objectives of the Study**

The general objective of the study is to examine women's participation in community forestry management and in implementation of CF activities designed for the development and management to local forest resources and to determine the socio-economic condition of respondents at the study area, the specific objectives are as follows:

- i. To examine the situation of women's participation in community forest management.
- ii. To assess women's role and significance of community forest management.
- iii. To identify the problems and prospects of community forest management.

## **1.4 Significance of the Study**

The study on women's participation in community forest management system has its own significance. It examines the participation of women in the forest user group and one factor affecting their participation to fill this gap, this study will attempt to document the activities of women involved in forest resource management. The study shows how community forest management system has been going on in Rakha Bangel VDC of Khotang District, Nepal. It also studies how local community women are sensitive to the need of managing forest from which they get their forest supply. It is hoped that, finding of this study will help to make policy for forest user in forest development activities, for extension community forest in successful way, for similar field workers and agencies (NGOs and INGOs) who want to work forest management activities.

## **1.5 Limitations of the Study**

This study is based on or limited on Rakha Bangel VDC of Khotang District, Nepal. This study has focused only on the objectives of study of this particular area. Moreover, this study contains the following main limitations:

- The situation of community forest management differs from one community to other so research findings may not be valid to other parts of Nepal.
- The same forest management analysis may not be specifically valid to the communities out of the research area.
- This study was carried out for the partial fulfillment of the requirements for the Master's Degree of Arts in Rural Development. Therefore, it may be narrowing theoretical and trail & error based due to resources and time constraints.
- This study has been focused only management, attitude, decision making and implementation of the action plan by the women members of community forests.

## **1.6 Organization of the Study**

The study report is presented in the sequential flow of acknowledgment, table of contents, list of maps and illustrations and chapters. Chapter first covers introductory

portion including background, statement of the problems, objectives of the study and significance of the study.

Chapter second mainly deals the review of literature where all possible relevant information's was consulted and findings of the similar types of research have been cited. This chapter deals on the literature reviewed by the researcher related to the community forest for the upliftment of disadvantaged groups in the Nepalese society. Regarding the literature review a number of published and unpublished different reports and other books have been consulted to proceed this research. The conceptual and theoretical frame work and operational definitions also have been included in this chapter.

Chapter third explains methodology including research design, study area, universe and sample, nature and source of data, data collection, data analysis and presentation, limitation of the study.

Chapter four is related to general setting of the study area. Chapter five is related to the analysis and presentation of the data collected from different sources including both primary and secondary.

Chapter six includes summary, conclusion and recommendations of the study.

## **CHAPTER - TWO**

### **REVIEW OF LITERATURE**

The relevant literatures regarding forest resource particularly community forest management, people's participation and women participation in community forest mentioned in the published and unpublished documents is reviewed in this chapter. For this purpose, various books, magazine, working papers, plans thesis, reports, web sites etc. is consulted on the wholes, management issues on forest resource as well as people's participation are reviewed.

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

According to the New Forest Policy of 1990s, any part of forest can be handed over to local community for its management; conservation and utilization in which land is still owned by government and trees are owned by community. The community has full authority to control over resources and to decide conservation, management and utilization plan. Community has to prepare a simple operational plan in collaboration with District Forest Officer as well as Royal Chitwan National Park where major decisions are made by users themselves except some technical knowledge are borrowed from forest technicians. All the revenues and benefits derived from the community forest go to the community fund community can decide income and expenditure for the various rural development purposes without any approval of local authorities.

#### **2.2 Evaluation and Emergence of Different Forest Policy in Nepal**

##### **2.2.1 During Gorkha Empire (1768-1846)**

The period up to 1846 was ruled by Gorkha empires that later united the fragmented Nepal. As the Gorkha empire expanded there were inevitable conflicts between it and the British east India company. The forests of the Terai, the plain bordering to India were maintained as a physical barrier against possible invasion from the south by the east India company. Hill forests were used by local people to support subsistence needs. The state

asserted its ownership of natural resources to institutions and individual as a privilege. Birta, Dhorja and Rakam systems existed as a practice (Hobley, 1996).

### **2.2.2 Rana Regime (1846-1951)**

Rana empire ruled the country for 104 years and forest got severe impacts in these periods. In the first half of the twentieth century, forest exploitation, particularly in the Terai region, appears to have increased greatly. At the turn of the century, the British in India extended their railway network to Nepal's southern border, and the Rana government suddenly found that it could earn more revenue in the region bordering India by clearing forests and producing grain for export. They established a timber administration office, converted later in to the timber export office and employed British forestry experts from the Indian forest services in the 1920s to supervise felling and export of the Terai sal (shorea robusta) forests for the construction of the India railways (Hobley, 1996). In the hills of Nepal, different systems of forest management operated in conjunction with the Birta and Talukdari system in the eastern Nepal and Kipat system in the rest parts of Nepal. At the end of the Rana rule in 1951 at least one third of the forests of Nepal were under Birta tenure and three quarters of this land belonged to the Rana family (Regmi, 1978, cited from Hobley, 1996).

### **2.2.3 Nationalization of Forest (1951-1987)**

In 1951 the people's movement overthrew the Rana Regime and democratic government did exercise for 1 years. The first forest nationalization act was published 1957. Under this act all the forests of Nepal were nationalized and act regulated access to and use of the forests in attempt to regularize the revenue flow and control of forests in Nepal. The Birta abolition act was passed in 1959 and much of the forestland previously under this tenure now came within the review of the state. Although nationalization act was published, many people were not aware of this and continued to practice Birta system.

#### **2.2.4 Forest Under Panchayat Political System (1961-1990)**

The failure of the democracy movement and the reassertion of monarchical rule in the early 1960s, a new party less Panchayat system was introduced which was to remain in place until 1990. Many forest acts were passed and amended during the periods. Some of them were forest laws (1961), forest protection special laws (1967) and Panchayat (small administrative units of the district) forest (PFS) and Panchayat protected forest (PPFs) 1978. PFs and PPFs policy was considered to be a positive moment for forest protection as the rights of protection and utilization was decentralized to local level administrative unit. Under Panchayat forest system, any government forest in a part of it, which has been kept barren or contains only stumps, may be handed over by government to the village Panchayat for plantations for the welfare of the village community on the prescribed terms and conditions. Similarly, under Panchayat protected Forests, natural forest may be handed over to the Panchayat for protection and management purpose. In both systems, ownership of forest land remain with the government and control could be resumed when over the government deemed it necessary. The Panchayat had some powers to fine offenders. However, management decision remained with the government forest services (DoF, 2011).

#### **2.2.5 The New Forest Policy (1993)**

Nepal's forest sector policy was first declared in the sixth five years plan 1981 which emphasized community participation in the management, conservation and utilization of forest resources. The government prepared a Master Plan for forestry section in 1987. This placed greater emphasis on community forestry with 47% of proposed investment to the forestry sector in support of community forestry programmes.

Based on this policy and previous PF and PPF policies, a new community forestry policy was derived after democracy in Nepal in 1990. The main principle of that policy was to meet the basic forest product needs of local through community forestry and private planting by phased handing over of all accessible hill forests to the local communities to the extent that they are willing and able to manage them (Hobley, 1996).

The emphasis on users' groups rather than Panchayat or Village Development Committee emerged from the experiences gained from the implementation of community forestry between mid-1980s and 1990s. The user group as an organizing concept was formalized in 1990 in legislation and policy statement.

### **2.3 Importance of Community Forestry**

Some of the important features of community forestry policy are as follows:

- ) All the accessible forests can be handed over to users.
- ) The forests user groups (FUGs) have to manage the forests as per the approved constitution and operational plan.
- ) Any national forests suitable to be converted into community forest (CF) will not be assigned to other such as household forest.
- ) District forest officers (DFO) can land men forest to FUG.
- ) FUGs can use surplus funds in any kinds of community development works.
- ) The FUG can fix the price of forestry products irrespective of government royalty.
- ) The FUG can plant long-term cash crops without disturbing the main forestry crops.
- ) FUG can transport any forest products simply by informing the DFO.
- ) FUG will not be disturbed by political boundary while handing over the forests.
- ) The FUG can establish forest based industries.
- ) FUG can punish miss-gas who offend against the rules of the OP (Adopted from Joshi, 1997).

### **2.4 People's Participation**

People participation is the most essential features of community forestry. It is the principal aim of community forestry to involve people in all stages from decision making

to harvesting. Similarly, if goods and services derive from forest resources are made available for people especially rural poor in and around the forest, these people in turn are expected to cooperate in forest protection and management measures. The technique of using participating rural appraisals to assist for wide spread application in Nepal. By using these techniques when conducting investigations, the field worker will gradually develop a positive relationship, with the villagers.

By involving the users in all stages of information gathering, the collected information is more likely to be relevant to the needs of the users and hence useful for preparation of the operation plan.

This, community forestry development project is basically structured for local participation. Although social forestry is the active participation of local communities in planning and managing local forest resources, there is no attempt from the party of implements to improve opportunities and minimize constraints to people's effective participation in this sector. To promote participation, a deep study of cultural, historical, political and other socio-economic determinates of the people's participation is indispensable (Koirala, 1992).

Rural people's perception of social forestry cost and benefits of social forestry is a prerequisite for the study of popular participation.

## **2.5 Approaches of Women's Participation in Development**

As the development of concepts of peoples' participation, various approaches were adopted and experienced regarding the issues of women's involvement in development process. These approaches perceived women as passive recipients of development fruits/passive participant, active participation and recognized as social change agents respectively. These approaches are reviewed as.

During 1950s-1970s, the women in development (WID) approach emerged that encouraged women to integrate in development activities, reduce suppression and equal participation and improvement of life of women. The WID emphasized productive aspects of women's work instead of reproductive side. As a result, it mobilized women's equal role in the development of education, employment and health services. Likewise,

women and development (WAD) approach emerged in late 1970s, paid more attention to appreciation and recognition of women contribution, who have always been active participants in development. The gender and development (GAP) approach emerged during the late 1970s recognized the importance of social economic and political agents of actors in women's lives. The GAD is concerned with social construction (social relations between men and women) of gender equity and social justice (Shirgz, 1997). The GAD acknowledges women as agents of change rather from passive recipients of development services.

Along with WID, WAD and GAD approaches and women's experiences such as the chapter movement, greenbelt movement, women for peace movement and eco-feminist movement, "The women and environmental development (WED)" approach emerged. Eco, Eco-feminist action is aimed at the preservation of the life present and future generations, in a human perspective and in a wide biological and cosmic perspective and in a wide biological and cosmic perspective. The WED approach covers a variety of areas including forestry, agriculture, irrigation, and water systems. The WED includes women's relationship between harmful effects of environmental degradation and women' lives (Shiraz, 1997). The WED approach seems most relevant are because it is based on experiences and strength of grass roots level women.

## **2.6 Forest Management Practices and Peoples Participation in the World**

Forest is the major natural resource of the world. The forest is also called mother of nature. Various environmental consequences such as ozone layer depletion, global warming, acid rain, loss of biodiversity etc are emerging with the depletion of forest resources. Realizing its seriousness, international community has emphasized in forest resource management.

Like in Europe and America, forest protection with the involvement of local people initiated since 1980s in South Asia. For example, under the joint forest management (JFM) in India, the degraded forests were given to community for management and regeneration. Similarly, in Africa (Gambia and Tanzania), attention was shifted to

community based natural resource management. The emerging trend in Africa was to support the custodial interest of the forest adjacent community.

Involvement of communities in forest management is now a significant feature of national forest policies and practice throughout the world. Government of various countries are increasingly decentralizing and turning to local communities to assist them in protecting and managing state-owned forests. Governments of various countries have supposed greater reliance on resources at community levels is a potential solution to a growing resource problem (FAO, 2001), community based management system are still very much in a stage of evolution. In fact, community based approach is an major challenge in many places due to little experience in collaborative management particularly in mobilization of people in decision making and implementation at local level.

### **2.6.1 Women's Participation**

Involvement of women is crucial for the success of community forestry women are the major collectors of forest product such as fuel wood, fodder, fruits and grass etc. They cook and do most of domestic works. Therefore, it is they who suffer the social and economic consequences, of deforestation, most directly having to spend more and more time and walk longer distances in search of this essential forest product. However, they should not be considered in isolation and total community participation should be affected (Kaystha, 1991).

If the forests are to be successfully managed by local users, then women mostly participate, they are responsible for collecting most of the fuel wood, fodder, leaf compost and bedding, as well as controlling grazing. The men, on the other hand generally take care of cutting and selling timber, and of administrative decisions about the forests.

Women have worked successfully on both annexed and all female forestry committees in Nepal. Village men and women, and professional farmers generally agree that women are capable of doing committee work or of learning how to do it.

Sildigi (1989a) indicates that women's participation will help the forests first and women second, women will have to give to forestry before forestry gives to then Siddique (1989a) further writes that, given that it is essential to involve in developing and implementing workable management plans, there has to be targeted effort to draw them. Because of nature of Nepalese society and one position of men and women in it, often strategies be un workable.

Siddigi (1992) further writes, following the recent concern of development professionals and environment activities regarding effectiveness and sustainability forest programmes. The participation of women in forestry is being recognize essential to forestry. By the same taken, forestry is increasingly being seen as essential to the advancement of women in rural community, where life and subsistence are directly dictated by nature and quality of available renewable natural resources women for forestry and forestry for women both are valid, highly desirable and non-introductory concepts.

Insera's (1988), experiences are that women have worked successfully in both mixed and all female forest committee in rural Nepal. Village men and women and professional foresters now generally agree that women and capable of committee management. She recommends that women's membership of forest committee be promoted primarily through extension activities. According to her, women should participate as much as possible in forest management committee.

Prasai (1987) presents a case study on "women's participation of forest committees in which is an attempt to understand what kind of factors influence the effectiveness of forest committee and to encourage women to be involved. In the strategy developed for improving the effectiveness of forest committees, the following aspects are discussed:

- Discussion prior to formation
- Motivation
- Selecting committee members
- Entering good making procedures
- DFO support
- Improving attitudes

- Motivating women
- Defining the role of women
- Selecting appropriate women numbers
- Despite common greets and interest, women suffer disadvantages in level of exposure to education, employment and formal decision making in Nepal.

Kharel (1993) reveals that if women are involved in every stage of CF management planning process, the chances of their voices, voicing their opinion and making people listen to them are increased. When committees are formed without female representation decisions usually fail to recognize women's needs and constraints.

Chhetri and Rana (1995) write that women's participation in CF has so far mostly in terms of labour contribution. They were not formulated Brahman and Chhetri women development division (1999) writes that women participants have removed all male members from the community forestry user group in word member 4 of makes VDC. They again may that forest is small and the community forest user group was organized some years ago there almost all the members were men and they were managing it. But nobody was taking care of it. However, woman groups? Committees were organized through production credit for rural women and had noticed that trees were illegally cut down and sold in the market. As a result, trees for fodder and fuel were decreasing and sufferings of women were increasing. The committee started to watch and took help from some male as well.

Forest act, 1993 defines "community forest means a national forest handed over to user group or its development, conservation and utilization for the collective interests". The act has given priority to the CF as "National forest suitable to hand over to the user's group a CF shall not be handed over as leasehold forest". Similarly, the act has provided major status and role to the FUG. The FUG is a registered group in district. Forestry office (DFO). The user group is an autonomous corporate body having continuous session. Hence, it can prepare work plan for the development and conservation of the

forest and utilizing selling and distributing the forest produce by maintaining the environment balance.

The CF approach has streamlined the users in FRM at local level. By following its unique philosophy, women came in front line regarding FRM in different parts of the country. First of all, women of 29 hrs of Bartheli VDC of Kavrepalanchok district forest all women FUG and managed 2.9 hectares of land in Bisthodhar Pokhar as CF at 046 BS. In 017 VS, and all women FUG of Chhahare Siureti, Bokhim VDC of Bhojpur district, male take 11.9 ha forest for management successively, the rate of formation of all women FUG and women member in mined group increased significantly. Women have Managed Smallest (0.22 ha in Bedikhel, Lalitpur) to biggest (527 ha in Budhabare, Dhankuta) CFS as their needs and managerial capability (Gautam, 2059 B.S.).

Regarding women's participation, data (HMG/DOF 2003) shows that currently 613 (4.8%) FUGs are handling by all women group. Similarly, 33567 (21.5%) women are working EC member in different FUGs. The number of formation of all women FUGs is higher (97 FUGS) in FY 053/054 and higher in percentage (9%) in FY 2058/059. The percentage of formation of all women. FUG is optimistically increasing in recent years Nepalese women have shown equal concern in forest resource and environmental management. For example, women handled FUG, named Malati of Saptari district showed capability and won ward Ganesh man Singh ran Puraskar, by conserving the CF efficiently (ibid).

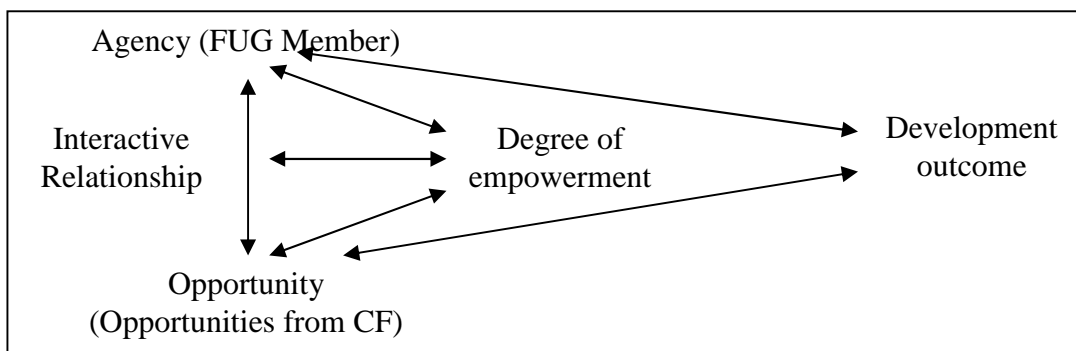
Number of studies has been conducted in different part of the Nepal looking at women's participation in forest management on the basis of previous studies, we can say that women are the real used and manager of the forest resource trend of women's involvement and capability has been increasing in CF management. Except some successful examples, they need support from men and forestry institution. Present study area, there is not conducted any study focusing purely on women's participation. So, it is expected that, this study will fulfill the gap of the study.

## 2.7 Empowerment and Opportunities

Participation and empowerment are highly interlinked processes to each other. Empowerment is always perceived as a strategy to promote participation. UNDP– 2004 states that empowerment involves restructuring of opportunities for both supply side that of national action to make state institutions more responsible to people and removing existing social barriers and discrimination. And the demand side – the initiative taken by the poor themselves through social mobilization at the grass-roots level. Empowerment is about enhancement of assets and capabilities of diverse individuals and groups to engage influence and hold accountable institutions which affect them. Empowerment is non-ending process and always operates 'from below' (Online Encyclopedia, 2073).

In this context, opportunities for poor people and other excluded groups (including Dalits) in decision-making process are critical and bring about changes in their commitment. However, sustaining inclusion and informed participation usually requires changing the rules so as to create space for people to debate on issues and participate in local and national level priority setting and the delivery of basic services (UNDP, 2004). Nepal-Australia Community Forestry Project, (1996) defines empowerment as a process of obtaining power, access to resources and the opportunities to make decisions and take action on their own behalf, by people who previously lacked such power.

A conceptual framework on the basis of Giddens analysis on the theory of structuration has been designed. Giddens theory of power argues that power is intrinsic to human agency.



Agency is defined as an actor or group and its ability to make purposeful choices of which empowerment can largely be predicted by their assets endowment. Assets are the stocks of resources that equip actors to use economic, social and political opportunities, to be productive and to protect themselves from shocks (Swift, 1989).

The assets requiring measurement or consideration in operational work include psychological, informational, organizational, material, social, financial and human assets. Actors need a raised level of consciousness if they are to translate their assets into choices i.e. to become agents. Assets interplay with each other and opportunities structure influence the accumulation and use of assets stocks. Opportunity structure comprises these institutions, which enable to choose options effectively for an actor. Prerequisite to empowerment is an opportunity structure that allows people to translate their assets based into effective agency through equitable rules and expanded entitlements. In this context, equity and distribution of product is a major factor impinging on any resources management system. Dani and Campell framed the following hypothesis: "Increased equity distribution of resources benefits within the limits of social acceptability encourages greater participation by user groups (Regmi, 1986).

By utilizing the community forestry, the overall aim should be of community forest is to decrease the socio-economic hardship of the people living in the area. In this perspective, Dalits of the lowland area suffer from acute poverty and their basic needs must be met so that they can live better life. Both forest and agriculture practiced as balanced land-use system posses the unique quality of removing poverty.

Kayastha argued that forest creates ample job opportunities for employment and income and therefore can change the socio-economic status of people towards positive direction. A good number of village people are employed in logging timber forest industries and afforestation activity. A lot of people in the villages become self-employed by making bullock carts, tools and furniture from timber. Some people even specialize in manufacturing wooden handicrafts and can earn good income by selling them. Similarly, a lot of poor families in the village collect fuel wood from the forest and sell them in the nearby markets and towns. It brings significant income in the village (Kayastha, 1991).

Malla (1970) viewed that the empowerment of rural disadvantaged groups of people especially women, poor and landless and low caste is also realized by the new extension method. Dahal viewed that involving women poor, low caste people in development activities is problematic. Therefore, they are taken as a disadvantaged group to development activities as well as Community Forestry Program (Dahal, 1994).

## **2.8 Operational Definitions of the Variables**

**Community Forestry:** Forested or degraded forest level owned by the government but formally handed over to a group of villages for its protection, management and utilization.

**Forest Management:** It is defined by Fisher: as a set of technical and social arrangement involvement in the management of forest including the protection, consumption and distribution of forest products.

**People's participation:** People's participation is the involvement of people in the substantive and procedural process of assessing, monitoring and evaluating the project and activities that affect and benefit them. In other words it is the intended beneficiaries' involvement in decision making process is called people's participation.

**Household/family:** Household or family has been used interchangeably. It is a social group consisting of married couple and their children living together and sharing a common kitchen.

**Forest users group:** All members of community that regularly use a forest to meet their household needs, organize themselves as a group to protect, manage and utilize the forest.

**Users group assembly:** It is a gathering of the people, who are the direct users of the forest to discuss or prepare a plan or to discuss forest management activities.

**Users committee:** It is a committee formed from the users groups to protect, develop and utilize the forest products.

# **CHAPTER - THREE**

## **RESEARCH METHODOLOGY**

### **3.1 Research Design**

This study is carried out on the basis of exploratory cum descriptive research design and case study types of research because the study has been focused on to find out the role of women in community forest management in Rakha Bangdel VDC of Khotang district, Nepal.

### **3.2 Universe and Sampling**

The total population of Rakha Bangdel VDC of Khotang district is 2525 and total households are 548. Out of total wards, 5, 6, 7, 8, and 9 wards contain this community forestry. These wards contain 1475 total population and 220 households, these households are the universe of this study. This study has been carried out on the basis of purposive sampling, under this method; 20 households from each ward, a total of 100 households including 60 females and 40 males were selected purposively for the study.

### **3.3 Nature and Sources of Data**

This study aims to find out the role of women in community forest management in Rakha Bangdel VDC of Khotang district. This study has been generated both primary and secondary data for the completion of this study. According to need both qualitative and quantitative data were collected. Primary data were collected from the direct interaction with respondents and secondary data from different published and unpublished written books, articles, journals, reports etc.

### **3.4 Data Collection Tools and Techniques**

To generate the primary data, CF members households were assessed with structured questionnaire and field observation with check list. Some of the senior citizens well known were also interviewed based on the contents of structured questionnaires.

### **3.4.1 Questionnaire**

Structure questionnaire was prepared to generate the realistic and accurate data from the field. The community forest users were surveyed with the structured questionnaires. The respondents were requested to fill-up the questionnaire, in case of the respondents who cannot fill-up the questionnaire, questions were asked to the respondents and the answers were filled-up by researcher herself.

### **3.4.2 Observation**

Each community forest and the households of respondents was visited and observed based on the observation list. The data were recorded while observing community forest and households of forest users' group.

### **3.5 Data Analysis**

To analyze the generated data the help of computer software program i.e. MS-Word, MS-Excel etc. has been taken and simple statistical tools like table, graphs and diagrams are used for data analysis; descriptive method was used for the analysis of qualitative data.

## **CHAPTER - FOUR**

### **SETTING OF THE STUDY AREA**

#### **4.1 Geographical Location of the District**

Khotang District is a part of Sagarmatha Zone in eastern part of Nepal, is one of the seventy-five districts of Nepal. The district, with Diktel as its district headquarters, covers an area of 1,591 km<sup>2</sup>. Khotang is part of the area traditionally called Majh Kirat/Kirant (middle Kirat), home to indigenous ethnic Kirat Rai people. Apart from Rais, other ethnic groups and hill castes live in Khotang.

Khotang district is not only rich in nature and cultural heritage but also has significant religious values in the lives of people living in Nepal. Apart from being in a hill region, there are also certain difficulties of transportation on the way to Khotang, however, that does not affect the high religious importance the place holds. There are various temples and religious sites in Khotang district. Halesi Mahadev is one of the most famous religious place in Khotang district.

#### **4.2 Physical and Social Condition of the VDC**

Rakha Bangdel VDC currently Ainselukharka Rural Municipality Ward No. 1 has been located on 16 Kosh far in the northern side of district headquarter of Diktel. It has been surrounded by Sungdel, Rakha, Dipsun villages in the East, Bakachol and Ainselukharka villages in the West, Sotang village in the North and Baksila and Sapteswor villages in the South. It has diversity of climate, it has incorporated lowest land of producing paddy plants and snow-capping mountain peaks on the other side. Rakhabangdel contains various villages within it such as Bangdel, Sokhu, Modi, Khiru, Toribari in the north. Gurung gaun, Bhadaure, Pheparku, Koldanda, Pipicha in the West, Sorachhu, Bahune, Sibdu in the East and Hara, Sumtel, Badsku, Lathasku in the East. This VDC is not only diversified on the basis of geography but equally to the people inhabited. Rakhabangdel has also the diversity of plants and wild animals which are the parts of adding beauty of this VDC.

Rakha Bangdel contains people of different castes and ethnicities. The list of different ethnicities of the VDC are mentioned based on Wards. Ward No. 1 contains Niraula, Jogi, Khulal, Kirati, Bhattarai, Adhikari, Basnet, Koirala etc. Ward No. 2 contains, Damai, Kirati, Bhramin, Gurung etc. Similarly, Ward No. 3 contains Kirati, Brahmin, Sarki, Damai, Kamai, Kami, Kshetri, Newar and Sanyasi. Ward No. 4 has the least diversity of different castes and ethnicities such as Sunuwar, Kirati, Tamang and Kshetri.

Ward No. 5 contains Sherpa, Kirati, Tamang, Kshetri and Sunuwar. Likewise, Ward No. 6 has Sherpa, Kirati, Tamang, Kshetri, Brahmin, Jogi and Sunuwar. Ward No. 7 has the least diversity of different castes and ethnicities such as Kirati and Kshetri, Ward No. 8 contains just Kirati only and 9 contains Kirati, Sarki, Damai, Kami and Sanyasi. This figure indicates that people with huge majority are Kirati.

### 4.3 Ward Wise Population Distribution of the VDC

**Table 4.1: Ward Wise Population Distribution based on Age Groups**

S.N.	Age Group	Male	Female	Total	Percentage
1	0-5	136	149	285	9.13
2	6-10	158	174	332	10.64
3	11-15	165	181	346	11.93
4	16-20	152	164	316	10.13
5	21-25	146	149	295	9.45
6	26-30	127	131	285	9.13
7	31-35	143	156	229	9.58
8	36-40	117	112	239	7.66
9	41-45	59	70	129	4.13
10	46-50	51	70	121	3.87
11	51-55	71	73	144	4.61
12	56-60	57	59	116	3.71
13	61-70	68	66	134	4.29
14	70 Above	59	46	105	3.36
Total		1509	1610	3119	100

Source: VDC Profile, 2072

#### 4.4 Sirukharka Kahule Community Forest

Table 4.2: Sirukharka Kaule Pakha Community Forest

S.N.	Name of Forest	Location	Current Chairperson	Area in Ha.
1	Sirukharka Kaule Community Forest	Rakha Bangdel 5 and 6	Laxmi Nath Ghimire	202

Source: VDC Profile, 2072

Figure 1: Map of Khotang District



Source: DDC Khotang, 2073

**Figure 2: Sketch Map of Sirukharka Kahule Community Forest**



Source: *VDC Profile, 2072*

Sirukharka Kahule Community Forest has an area of 202 Ha. it covers about 20 percent total area of the VDC. This community forest contains diversity of forest plans which are useful for the CFUGs and other people of the area for timber, firewood, non-forest materials such as leaf, litter, soil, and others. This forest contains major trees as Pine trees, Sal, Uttis, Chilaune, Katus, Phalat, Angeri, Gurans, Laligurans, Shimal, Lotsalla, and Bushes as Ghangaru, Chutro, Aiselu, Dhupi etc. Similarly, this forest contains some special herbs such as Lothsalla, Padamchal, Haraja, Ou Aalu, Sarpagandha, Chismeto, Bagrechauli etc.

The CFUGs of this community forest manage the timber and non-timber products based on the value and need of the products. The intellectuals of this area are incorporated in the forest management committee. They make special forest management and resources collection and distribution plans because of which forest has been enriching day by day with diversity of forest products.

## CHAPTER - FIVE

### PRESENTATION AND ANALYSIS OF DATA

#### 5.1 Structure of the Respondents

##### 5.1.1 Age Structure

The age structure of respondents is as presented in the following table.

**Table 5.1: Age Structure of the Respondents**

Age Group	No. of Respondents	Percentage
Up to 20	18	18
21-30	40	40
31-40	28	28
41-50	10	10
Above 50	4	4
Total	100	100

**Source:** *Field Survey, 2017*

The respondents of different age group are taken for the study. Age groups of up to 20, 21-30, 31-40, and 41-50 and above 50 years are respectively 18, 40, 28, 10 and 4 respondents. It indicates that economically active age group people of the area are taken as respondents.

##### 5.1.2 Gender Composition of the Respondents

The gender composition of the respondents is presented in the following table. The female are 20 percent more than male respondents.

**Table 5.2: Gender Composition of the Respondents**

Female	Percentage	Male	Percentage
60	60	40	40

**Source:** *Field Survey, 2017*

On the above table, the number of female is greater than male. The total of 60 female and 40 male respondents are taken for the study from each of household.

### 5.1.3 Educational Status of the Respondents

The educational status of respondents in the study area has been found as mentioned in the following table.

**Table 5.3: Educational Status of the Respondents**

Education	Total No.	Female	Male	Percentage
Illiterate	9	6	3	9
Literate	91	54	37	91
a. Primary Education	49	37	12	49
b. Secondary Education	26	14	12	26
c. Higher Secondary Education	12	2	10	12
d. Higher Education	4	1	3	4

**Source:** *Field Survey, 2017*

Above table shows that the number of illiterate female respondents is 6 and male 3, it indicates that the number of illiterate female in the VDC is more than the male. The attainment of primary education of female is more than the male. The higher education attainment of female is very low than male in the VDC.

### 5.1.4 Occupational Composition of the Respondents

Agriculture is the main occupation of Nepal. So, the same condition has been found in this study area. The number of respondents involved in agriculture is greater than other. The following table shows occupational composition of the respondents in the study area.

**Table 5.4: Occupational Composition of the Respondents**

Occupations	No. of Respondents		Total Percentage
	Female	Male	
Agriculture	42	21	63
Wage labour	4	3	7
Business	4	4	8
Traditional Profession	6	4	10
Service	4	8	12

**Source:** *Field Survey, 2017*

Above table shows that the main occupation of the respondents is agriculture where 63 percent respondents are involved, the second occupation of the respondents is service on which 12 percent respondents are involved. The third, fourth and fifth occupations of the respondents according to their involvement percent are respectively traditional profession, business and wage labour.

### **5.1.5 Land Holding Pattern of the Respondents**

The land holding pattern of the respondents has been found in the study area as mentioned in the following table.

**Table 5.5: Land Holding Pattern of the Respondents**

<b>Land Area (in Ropani)</b>	<b>Number of Respondents</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
Landless	0	0
0 – 5 Ropani	9	9
5 – 10 Ropani	20	20
10 – 15 Ropani	35	35
15 – 20 Ropani	19	19
20 – 25 Ropani	6	6
25 – 30 Ropani	4	4
30 – 35 Ropani	3	3
35 – 40 Ropani	2	2
More than 40 Ropani	2	2

**Source:** *Field Survey, 2017*

Above table shows that more than 60 percent respondents have the land below 15 Ropani, 35 percent respondents have the land of 10 to 15 Ropani. Above 35 Ropani of land occupy by only 4 respondents. It further indicates that the land distribution in the VDC is vary among the people.

## **5.2 Forest Protection Activities**

The user committee members and/or households are found very active to protect the forest. They have been charging the fine if forest products are harvested illegally. The forest products and non-timber forest products they distribute equally once a time of a year including grass, firewood, dry leaves etc. The general protection system of community forest users' committee is mentioned in the below table.

**Table 5.6: Forest Protection Activities of Users' Committee**

<b>Description</b>	<b>Protection Activities</b>
Fire	No permission to enter the forest taking matches, penalties if anyone set the forest fire.
Grazing	Penalties if anyone graze cattle without permission.
Tree Spices Protection	Prohibition to cut trees without permission of users' committee.
Forest Patrolling	Patrolling is done turn by turn by the users.

**Source:** *Field Survey, 2017*

The users' make a decision about the forest protection once a year. If the rules and regulations do not work properly then they could make the next effective rule about the forest protection based on their experiences.

### **5.3 Women's Participation in Forest Protection**

The level of women's participation has found good for the forest management and protection. The levels of women's participation with respect to works are mentioned in the table here under.

**Table 5.7: Level of Women’s Participation in Forest Management and Protection**

Nature of Works	Level of Participation			
	Very Good	Good	Satisfactory	Weak/Need to Improve
Forest Protection	39	28	19	16
Decision Making about Forest Protection	27	29	24	20
Meeting	24	26	22	28
Forest Products Collection	23	31	29	17
Community Development Activities	21	29	23	27

**Source:** *Field Survey, 2017*

The level of women’s participation in forest protection related activities are found good in average. The respondents who are not satisfied with their level of participation are only 16 percent. Decision making of women has also found good only 20 percent respondents are disagreed with the current decision-making system. The timely meeting of women has found comparatively good because 28 percent respondents only are agreed about the improvement of current system. Forest production collection and distribution activities of women are also found good in average. The percent of respondents who are disagreeing with current system are only 17 percent. The women’s participation on community development activities are also found good. Only 27 percent respondents are recommended to improve.

#### **5.4 Sustainability in the Use of Forest Resources**

The level of sustainability in the use of forest resources has been mentioned in the following table with respect to forest products.

**Table 5.8: Level of Sustainability in the Use of Forest Resources**

Description	Level of Sustainability			
	Very Good	Good	Satisfactory	Weak/Need to Improve
Firewood Collection	24	32	22	22
Timber Use	19	36	24	21
Grass Collection	29	31	33	7
Dry Leaf Collection	27	26	28	19
Grazing	21	25	34	20
Forest Management	22	29	32	17

**Source:** *Field Survey, 2017*

Above table shows that the level of sustainability in the use of forest resources, sustainability of firewood collection has found good in average, only 22 respondents are recommended to improve the current system. The use of timber has also found good in average, only 21 respondents are not agreed with the current system of use. The grass collection, dry leaf collection, forest management and grazing system are also found good in average. The grass collection has the higher sustainability in use according to the survey of respondents.

### **5.5 Level of Quality Improvement of Forest**

The level of quality improvement of forest according to the survey of respondents has been mentioned in the table here under.

**Table 5.9: Level of Quality Improvement of Forest**

Description	Level of Sustainability			
	Very Good	Good	Satisfactory	Weak/Need to Improve
Tree Plantation	21	31	24	24
Diversity Improvement	19	28	32	21
Control of Forest Fire	29	31	32	8
Control of Illegal Grazing	23	26	24	27
Herbs Protection and Use	21	24	21	34
Control over Illegal Firewood Collection	27	23	21	29

**Source:** *Field Survey, 2017*

Above table shows that the level of quality improvement of forest has found good in average, tree plantation has found good in average, diversity improvement has also found good in average only 21 respondents are not satisfied with the current system of forest management. The control of forest fire in community forest has found good in average where only 8 respondents are not satisfied with the current system. Control of illegal grazing, herbs protection and use and control over illegal firewood collection are found good in average. The herbs protection and use has found comparatively weak than other activities.

## **5.6 Forest Management (Environment Vs Livelihood)**

Literatures show that the history of emergence of community forestry program in Nepal was from environmental issue when government failed to control over reckless deforestation process. When the government formalized the Community Forestry Program in Nepal, since then, many more efforts of CF program has been associated with forest protection. It is very controversy to say that whether the community forest management practices should pay the priority to livelihood issue or environmental issue. The respondents were asked to answer the question. Most of them argued that it depends upon the condition of forest and has two options:

- i) If the condition of forest is worse and environmental threatening is a rising at an alarming rate, the forest management practice must prioritize environmental issue rather than livelihood issue and
- ii) If the environmental quality of the forest is reasonable and acceptable, the forest management practice must prioritize livelihood issues rather than environmental issue.

However, for the national policy, the opinions of respondents are as follows:

**Table 5.10: Distribution of Respondents according to View in National Policy of Community Forestry Program**

S.N.	Opinions	Population	
		Number	Percent
1.	Should prioritize livelihood issue	70	70
2.	Should prioritize environmental issue	30	30
	Total	100	100

*Source: Field Survey, 2017*

The Table 5.10 shows that, out of the total respondents, 70 percent argued that the national policy for Community Forestry Program must prioritize livelihood issue than environmental issue if poverty is to be reduced from community forestry program in a real sense.

#### **4.6.1 Forest User Group**

When Community Forestry National Policy was introduced in Nepal, the CFUG members were formed haphazardly without properly addressing the real beneficiaries of the CF program. Till now, the process for refinements and updating in identifying the CFUG members has, so far, been neglected area. Almost of the key informants argued that there is an urgent need to pay greater attention in this matter because of following reasons'.

- i) There are so many CFUG members (particularly rich) who are not dependent in forest products to run their livelihood directly because they have many

- alternatives to survive (like business, sufficient land, enterprises etc) and are still playing influential role in CF management.
- ii. On the other hand, there are so many poor (including Dalits) who find hardship to run their livelihood and are totally dependent in forest products and still, are not the CFUG members. To be the member of CF, they have to pay high charge, which is beyond the affordability of such groups. This situation enforces them to conduct illegal activities to derive forest products either from community forest or from national forest.
  - iii. To avoid the duplication of CFUG members
- These arguments of the key-informants made the researcher to conclude that there is urgent need for the refinements of CFUG members from national level so that poor (including Dalits) can get the inclusive environment in CF program.

### **5.6.2 Operational Plan Formulation/Preparation**

Operation plan is the major document of a Community Forest. Various short-term and long-term objectives are mentioned for the operation and management of CF. Promoting participation of all the FUG members during the preparation of operational plan formulation can help to develop the plan more inclusive for all (including Dalits). Almost all the respondents viewed that the following major aspects should be covered in operational plan after broader discussions:

- ) Proportionate representation of all ethnic groups in FUG committee.
- ) Accountability of CFUG committee towards FUG members.
- ) Transparency in benefit sharing.
- ) Equity concept for providing opportunities for poor (including Dalits).

### **5.6.3 Coordination and Cooperation**

It is also realized everywhere that development cannot progress in isolation. Still knowing this truth, various CF in Nepal are working in isolation. Almost all women

respondents suggested that for the effectiveness of CF program, the CF program from national level should seek the viable options with various development departments, line agencies, institutions, I/NGOs, CBOs. etc. This will naturally lead the CF program to develop in coordinated and inclusive approach.

#### **5.6.4 Social Mobilization and Empowerment**

Most of the respondents perceive social mobilization and empowerment as key processes to bring Dalits from inactive stage to active stage. During the visit of the researcher, the respondents (key-informants) suggested researcher that empowering Dalits to claim their rights can be fruitful in CF management practices. For it, providing various opportunities for Dalits from community forestry like for income generating activities, job-opportunities, capacity building opportunities, skill development training, awareness raising training and exposure training for leadership development can empower Dalits people.

#### **5.6.5 Removing Discriminatory Practice**

The view of respondents is that the practice of untouchability deeply rooted in caste based discrimination is the major cause for fragmenting our society since history. It is almost true that overcoming the problem of untouchability and discrimination is problematic and cannot be changed overnight. However, they perceive that there are many more opportunities in community forestry to overcome the problem of discriminatory practices. They further elaborated that this problem cannot be overcome until and unless those who develop the practice of untouchability and discrimination remove such thoughts from their mind and attitude. They suggested that if CF provides certain environment for intermixing between Dalits and non-Dalits, by organizing various programs like celebrating party at feasts and festivals, involving them in breakfast, dinner etc. or worshipping god together in temple will gradually lead to develop social capital for collective action. This process will naturally lead to overcome the problems posed by discrimination and untouchability.

### **5.6.6 Motivation**

It is interesting to say that all the women respondents responded that working with poor women and Dalits is very problematic because of following reasons.

- ) They have tendency to claim their rights but forget their duties and responsibility.
- ) Social elites do not like to see uplifting women and Dalits to their status. If Dalits and women are progressing, the elites start to interlink their progress with their social prestige and try to suppress them.
- ) Women themselves do not like to make their progress. If some opportunities are provided to them, they become to think it in skeptical manner.

Therefore, they must be empowered and motivated appropriately within limits of social acceptability. Excessive motivation and empowerment may lead to raise their expectations. If their expectations are not met, it may raise conflict.

Considering these valuable information, provided by the key informants, an attempt has been made to develop a conceptual framework to summarize this valuable information for making community forestry program more inclusive for poor women and Dalits from national level as well as at local level.

### **5.7 Role of Women to Improve Community Forestry**

The villagers cut down trees and cleared up the jungle day by day. So, they had to go farther forest area year by year to fetch their regular necessary forest products like, firewood, fodder, grass, leaf litter, timber and so on. So, there were only barred grazing land, rocks and only few old trees near by the village especially the area of present Rakha Bangdel CF ten years before. That caused soil erosion and landslide occurred here and there. Gradually people felt the importance of forest and convinced to protect and grow the forest. They prohibited to cattle grazing, established nursery, construct wall fence, plant and grows trees. They came together to form organization as community forest users group and registered in DFO. The DFO handed the forest over them as community

forest. Year by year green vegetation grows more and more. Now the barred land has changed in green forests. They can collect most of the forest products from the forest nearby the village. Before they used to keep their livestock in the far jungle and used to migrate one grass land to another but nowadays they keep near their house or in their farm. This has made not only easier for animal husbandry but also the productivity of land has risen.

In their opinion, the main reasons of this change are:

- Awareness raised in the local people/ positive change in villagers' mentality.
- Contribution of local stakeholders viz; CFUGs, Range post, DFO, NGOs, Animation program, LFP etc.
- Contribution of VDC for the further management of this community forestry.

## **5.8 Problems and Prospects of Sirukharka Community Forest**

### **5.8.1 Problems of Sirukharka Community Forestry**

After assessment of the Sirukharka community forestry the following were found as the problems of forest management:

- Some of the CFUG members have no special knowledge of community forest management and punctual use of it;
- This community forest has the dispute of boundary specially among the people of Ward No. 5 and 6;
- CFUGs had very low level of awareness regarding forest management and their rights;
- CFUGs had no technical knowledge regarding diversifying the forest products;
- Theft cases of forest products such as timber, animals, herbs and woods;
- Uncontrolled grazing of the livestock;

### **5.8.2 Prospects of Sirukharka Community Forestry**

- Rich and diversified forest products of the forest;
- Increasing role of women regarding forest management;
- Fine system for theft cases;
- Transparent account keeping system of CFUGs;

- Equity based distribution of forest products to the consumers;
- Trend of solving disputes based on consensus of the consumers;
- Increasing trend of awareness raising activities based on need of consumers;
- Diversified forest sources identified such as firewood, resin, herbs, leaf, litter, timbers etc.

# **CHAPTER - SIX**

## **SUMMARY, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION**

### **6.1 Summary**

The general objective of the study is to examine women's participation in community forestry management activities and in implementation of CF activities designed for the development and management to local forest resources and to determine the socio-economic condition of respondents at the study area, the specific objectives were to examine the situation of women's participation, their role and significance and to identify the problems and prospects of community forest management.

Before 1957 forest was not nationalized. Under the forest nationalization act of 1957 HMG nationalized all of its private forest. The act was passed to good faith to protect and manage the forest and government expected co-operation from the people. However, the government failed to explain the act to the rural people and the result was more destructive. Private owners converted forest into agricultural land. So, the forest was destroyed day by day.

The government could not succeed to protect and develop the forest. Then the government amended the act of 1961 and made forest act 1967. The government could not fulfill its objective by this act also. In 1978 a real change of forest policy was initiated with two new categories like the Panchayat Forest (PF) and Panchayat protection forest rules (PPF). They were intended to involve local communities and private interests in the management of forest. Through the forest act of 1979 community forest program were initiated to develop and manage both PF and PPF in hilly district and 13 Terai district with support from World Bank and other donor agencies.

The government also established the Community Forest and A Forestation Division (CFAD) under the department of forestry to support community forest program. Thus, in 1980 the community forestry development project (CFDP) was set in the hilly districts with the assistance of World Bank. So, the community forestry development program is a national level program. The need of program was realized by central level program. In

community based program which is one of the most important and very popular program during recent years. Women's on it is equally important. Based on this background the researcher selected the Sirukharka Kahule Community Forestry as case of the study of Women's participation and role of community forestry management.

Based on the field assessment through questionnaire and observation the following points are summarized as summary of the study:

- The total of 60 female and 40 male respondents are taken for the study from each of household.
- Based on the year the age groups of up to 20, 21-30, 31-40, and 41-50 and above 50 years are respectively 18, 40, 28, 10 and 4 respondents. It indicates that economically active age group people of the study area were taken as respondents.
- The main occupation of the respondents is agriculture where 63 percent respondents were involved, the second occupation of the respondents was service on which 12 percent respondents were involved. The third, fourth and fifth occupations of the respondents according to their percent of involvement were traditional profession, business and wage labour respectively.
- More than 60 percent respondents had the land holding of below 15 Ropani, 35 percent respondents had 10 to 15 Ropani. Above 35 Ropani of land occupy was only of 4 respondents.
- The CFUG make a decision about the forest protection once a year. If the rules and regulations do not work properly then they could make the next effective rule about the forest protection based on their experiences.
- The decision making of women had found good only 20 percent respondents were disagreed with the current decision-making system. The timely meeting of women has found comparatively weak because only 28 percent respondents were not satisfied about the current system.
- The control of forest fire in community forest had found good in average where only 8 respondents were found not satisfied with the current system. Control of illegal grazing, herbs protection and use and control over illegal firewood collection

were found good in average. The herbs protection and use had found comparatively weak than other activities.

- Out of the total respondents, 70 percent argued that the national policy for Community Forestry Program should prioritize more livelihood issue than environmental issue, if poverty is to be reduced from community forestry program in a real sense.
- The forest management practice of women of this community forestry has added the value because of which VDC and DFO has supported for the further management practices through women. These offices supported for the planning, management and empowerment of women.
- Based on the assessment of technical knowledge the respondents were found less aware for plantation, thinning, silviculture, collection, distribution etc.
- The major prospect of this community forest was found participatory practices. Both male and female do the planning, collection and distribution of forest resources mutually based on consensus.

## **6.2 Conclusion**

Community Forestry is the main strategy in Nepal's forestry sector policy. Over the past 25 years continuous shifts in policy and legislation have occurred to empower users as managers of forests. The study about community forest management trace out that, in most of the activities of community forestry, women's attitude was found positive rather than negative and are motivated by self-interest, social, political and economic condition. Most of the women always attend the meeting of community forestry. The women used to present their logic or idea in the meeting. They sometimes discuss and generate the idea for the better management of the forest.

Women are illiterate but not enough knowledge in forest management based on the government policy. The Male respondents expressed the need of women participation more but practically they do not help women in household activities. Lack of education of women as of male found one of the bottlenecks of the enhancement of forest management. Gender based biasness was also found among few of the male respondents.

Community Forestry is a multidimensional approach had facilitated to increase the level of awareness, income, self-confidence, interaction and biodiversity. Increasing greenery, biodiversity and healthy environment and networking between and among the CFUGs, DFO, rangers and other stakeholders were also the result of CF. To sum up, it has provided several incomes generating activities thus, the individual income level and CFUG fund had also increased in Sirukharka Kahule Community Forest User Group of Khotang district. The generated CFUG fund has been used to develop community infrastructure and to manage forest further.

### **6.3 Recommendations**

Based on findings of the study, the following are made key recommendations for the further enhancement of women's participation and role of forest management:

- As government has not much focused on women's empowerment education, about 25 percent of the fund collected from community forestry would be ideal to use in their education to increase the level of technical knowledge.
- FUG need to encourage towards agro-forestry practices because of which they could benefitted more.
- Continue and regular visits by Banrachhak, Ranger, and other forest related agencies should be increased.
- People should be encouraged to use improved cooking stove, biogas, and solar energy to reduce the consumption of fuel-wood.
- The co-ordination between local government and local political body should be increased based on the need of community forestry management.
- FUG should keep their relation with local NGOs to get support in forest activities.
- Community forestry programs should provide training, seminar, workshop, tour, visual program, research program. These types of program should be concentrated in the protection, management and conservation of forest resources with gender sensitivity.

- Common sentiment of the user group should be taken into consideration rather than the petty political interest.
- The rate of some of the forest resources was found very high and expensive so, they should be available in special discount rate for the user group who are the protectors themselves.

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3.4 Why did you join FUG? Specify

- a. Religious reason [   ]
- b. Under social pressure [   ]
- c. Other causes [   ]

3.5 Do you know rules of FUG about utilization conservation/ protection and management?

If Yes, specify rules

.....if no, why?

3.6 Do you use to involve in implementation part of CF management?

If Yes how?

- a. Plantation [   ]
- b. Thinking [   ]
- c. Bush clearing [   ]
- d. Product collection [   ]
- e. Others [   ]

3.7 Have you get opportunities to participate in training, workshop, visits?

Yes [   ]                      No [   ]

If yes, specify

Name of activity:

Organizer:

3.8 Do you use to involve in forest products distribution?

Yes [   ]                      No [   ]

Yes how?.....

No why? .....

3.9 Do you know the community development social activities conducted by CFUG?

- a. School building [   ]
- b. Drinking water [   ]
- c. Road [   ]
- d. Bridge [   ]
- e. Irrigation [   ]
- f. Temple [   ]
- g. Others [   ]

3.10 Are the women equally benefited from community developmental activities?

Yes how?.....

No why?.....

3.11 How did you motivated to involve in CF management

Interview Schedule for key information

1. What was condition of the jungle for ten years? What are the main reasons for it?

.....

2. What has present executive committee been done? What has been produced form the jungle?

.....

3. Does the forest consumer committee take part in activity of forest?

.....

4. Is forest consumer committee powerful to manage it? How does it?

.....

5. Do all women of committee participate to manage the forest researches?

.....

6. Are there any obstacles to increase the women participation? If they are, what are they?

.....

7. Is there any social and cultural factor for the management of the forest?

.....

8. How has present forest user's committee participated in their activities?

.....

9. Do the women participate in the committee's activity? If they don't participate, what are the main factors?

.....

10. How can women participate for the management of all forest?

.....

3.12 Have you get family support to involve CF management activities/

If yes, how?.....

If n, how?.....

3.13 Are you facing any problem to involving in CF management?

If yes, specify the problem and reason.

a. Individual Problem.....

b. Problems related to family members.....

c. Social Problem. ....

d. Legal Problem.....

e. Others: .....

3.14 What do you feel about community forest?

a. Positive [ ]

b. Negative [ ]

3.15 What is your attitude about community forest activities?

a. Quality of forest .....(i) Good [ ] (ii) Not good [ ]

(iii) I don't know

b. Collection time..... (ii) Good [ ] (ii) Not good [ ]

(iii) I don't know [ ]

c. Protection ..... (ii) Good [ ] (ii) Not good [ ]

(iii) I don't know [ ]

d. Benefit ..... (ii) Good [ ] (ii) Not good

(iii) I don't know [ ]

**The End**

## Annex-2

### **Women's Participation in Forest Management:**

#### **A Case Study of Sirukharka Kahule Community Forest of Khotang District**

### **OBSERVATION**

#### **Check List**

Name of the Village:

Name of the Household head:

1. Household facility i.e. toilet, water tap, separate kitchen etc.
2. Use of fuel i.e. LPG gas, firewood, electricity, solar etc.
3. Type of kitchen stoves: smoking or smoke less (improved cook stove)
4. Number of households of the village using improved cook stoves
5. Type of house- kachhi, pakki, semi-pakki etc.
6. Number of livestock i.e. goats, buffalo, cows, sheep, hens etc.
7. Livestock keeping practice; management of shed and collection of livestock manure
8. School facility i.e. distance of school, number of kids going to school
9. Facility of farming land i.e. khet, bari, pakho etc.
10. Observation of record keeping; income and expenditure
11. Visit to the community forest area:
  - Diversity of plants,
  - Forest management practices
  - Diversity of herbs
  - Practices of forest resources collection; both timber and non-timber