

## CHAPTER ONE

### INTRODUCTION

#### 1.1 Background of the Study

Large area of land thickly covered with trees, bushes etc, is called forest. Nepal is endowed various resources by nature. Forest is undoubtedly one of the major natural resources of Nepal. About 39 percent of Nepal's area is covered by forest. Unlike that of other country here, forestry is very closely associated with day-to-day activities of the people. In almost all villages of Nepal there is no alternative source of energy for cooking and heating except firewood. Forest provides significant support to animal husbandry and provides raw materials for small-scale industries. This is an important renewable natural resource, which can provide a sustained economic and social contribution for development of country. Besides this forest plays an important role in maintaining stable ecosystem and precipitation. In Nepal forest has an enormous role to play in protecting the hilly topography from natural disaster like floods, landslides and soil erosion.(Department of Forest, 2007)

Importance of forest in Nepal is often expressed by a common saying '*Hario Ban Nepal Ko Dhan*' which literally means that green forest is the wealth of Nepal. Nepal's forestry sector has been considered as a key contributor to the national development. Hand in hand with agriculture forestry plays a significant role in economic and social life to the rural people. (Lekhak, 2005)

Before 1957 there was no strict rule and regulation for the protection and use of the forest. It was managed and utilized in traditional way in the form of *Kipat, Raikar, Guthi and Birta*. This system relied on locally accepted rules through which a clearly fixed group of beneficiaries regularized forest use and excluded outsiders. These local systems were recognized by the Rana period under feudal system. In these system resources were held under the control of Subba, Jimmawal, Talukdar who were not only the land revenue collector of the government but also used to maintain law and order at the local level. They were responsible for the use of local resources. (Dahal, 1994).

Though Nepal was rich in forest resource, but it depleted very rapidly in the last few decades. Many acts were implemented (private forest Nationalization Act 1957, Forest Act in 1961, The Forest Protection Act in 1967) to protect forest resources. But these implemented Acts did not work and deforestation problem increased rapidly. Mainly decentralization Act 1982, the Master plan for forest sector Nepal 1988, The forest act 1993 and the forest rules 1995, all together require the basic change in forest management policies realizing the unsuccessful of the past rules and regulation about the forest sector.

In 1978 the government introduced the community forestry legislation with the provision that the government owned forest, which is accessible to the nearest village development committee could be handed community forests. The legislation established a framework where each Panchayat could be given official control over the local resources and is responsible for the implementation of scientific forest management plan prepared by district forest office (Kharel, 1993).

Community forest is the forest protected, managed and utilized by local forest user groups and its main objective is to achieve sustainable management of forest resources by converting accessible national forests into community forest into phase wise manner.

In Nepal community forest occupies 20.5 percentage of total forest area. According to national statistics 1190, 000ha national forest has been handed over to 14,337 user groups as a community forest. Total 1,650,000 households are included in such user groups. Among them 780 community forests are managed by women that covers 22,000ha land (Department of forest, 2007).

Periodic plans of Nepal have also taken community forest as an important program. Especially in 9<sup>th</sup> and 10<sup>th</sup> plan it is mentioned that community forest can contribute in poverty reduction and increase women participation in decision-making (Department of forest, Community Forest Bulletin, 2007).

One of the Field experiences of NACFP (Kharel, 1987) shows that women are taking part actively in every stage of forest management planning process. In the management executive committee women's representatives are in majority and male member only act as adviser when necessary. She concluded that to involve women in community forestry we first learn that we have to identify the priorities of women,

which may not be necessary directly related to forests. Secondly, these priorities are to be set as goals. Thirdly, a prescription to achieve the goals needs to be developed.

All the rules, acts and policies, related to forestry sector insist on participation the forest management but studies have shown that women participation on user group forest still needs to be encouraged. In Nepal, women play a key role in production activities as user of local resources. For centuries women have used forest products, they are the one who collect fuel-wood, fodder, leaf-litter and other non-timber products, but their work is often not recognized and therefore undocumented. “In Nepal women perform unpaid household chores for 15 hour a day” (11<sup>th</sup> plan, 2007), such types of heavy workload separate them from other development activities like forest management activities. Because of the deforestation it has become more difficult and time consuming for women to collect fuel-wood and other forest products. In Nepal 84 percent of fuel-wood is collected by women and girls (FAO, 1991; 35). This necessitates women to participate in the community forest user group. But Daniggelis (1994; 54) writes that women are usually not included in any decision making outside of household, she further suggests that this matter needs to be addressed by community foresters In this regard Dahal (1994:112) gives confusing remarks. In his word “In practice women are considered weak and are discouraged from being active members of forest user group. Locally there is no evidence that women’s participation will enhance collective activities and effective management of forest user groups.”

Rural women are among the most frequent and most important forest user in Nepal but still have a very marginal role in forestry programs. Although the government policy is to empower women to participate in community forestry planning and implementation process nevertheless, Nepali socio-cultural practices still seem to be reluctant to let women go ahead (Siddiqui, 1989).

Women participation in community forest management itself is a complex phenomena. Generally, participation includes different dimension such as decision making, implementation, monitoring, evaluation and benefit sharing process. Obviously decision making process experts women’s logical contribution in policy formulation, planning, designing right and responsibility in managerial aspects of CF management. Similarly, implementation process experts women’s physical involvement in silvicultural aspects of CF management. Under monitoring and

evaluation process women's analytical role is expectable in managerial and silvicultural activities. Likewise, equal/equitable sharing of benefits to be available from the CF desirable under benefits sharing aspect.

The involvement of women must be recognized as an essential element to achieve success in development work including community forestry. In community forestry, this means women's involvement in all activities, right from the formation user groups to the distribution of forest products. When women participate actively in all stage, only then it can say that, women are truly involved in community forestry, (Kharel, 1993).

Considering the multilateral significance of forest (e.g. subsistence, ecological balance etc) and vital role of women in CF management, this research was conducted to address some common issues in this regards. The research is related to the case study of Radhakrishna community forest user group. This CF lies in ward no. 7 of Dhanuari VDC of Dang district. This study focus on case studies concerning the women's participation. Such a study is useful for identifying the strength and weakness of women's mobilization and management practices of societies and for developing appropriate plan for future course.

This study aims at assessing whether women themselves considered them as co-manager of forest resources; particularly the Community forest management or they are imposed to become the manager. Likewise, perception of women regarding the motivating factor and hindering factor that influences to involve in CF management to women. Finally, this study aims at analyzing the involvement of women in various dimension of CF management.

## **1.2 Statement of the Problem**

Forest is a major conventional source of energy. It is depleting on an alarming rate and deforestation has become serious problem in Nepal. During 1990 to 2000, the forest area decreased at annual rate of 0.2 percentage and 0.1percentage in the world and Asia continent respectively. Obviously, the forest depletion rate is high in developing countries. Among the Asian countries, forest depletion rate is extremely high in Nepal (FAO, 2003). For rural women deforestation means more time and energy to be invested and spent on collecting and carrying fuel and other forest products (Gurung, 1987).

In Nepalese context, women are primary users of forest resources. Thus women are more victimized than male from the deforestation process, hence are equally expected to act as manager and to bear major responsibility for forest protection from its severe depletion.

Most of the development specialists recognize that women play a vital role in forest management. But their heavy involvement in household chores, illiteracy and socio-cultural norms and values make them unable to participate in other development activities. Nepalese women in activities related to forest resources such as fuel wood and fodder collection, fetching water, farming, grazing animals and cooking are more or just equally participate than males (New Era, 1983).

However, the government policy is to empower and encourage women to participate in community forestry program laws and policies are not end, they are only the means to achieve the goals. The rules and regulations must be followed and put into practice in order to achieve goals otherwise they will remain as the “*Showing teeth of elephant*” only.

People’s participation means to promote people’ involvement in program mentally, physically and economically for their common welfare (K.C., 1985). Otherwise it will be just collection of the individual according to the rules and regulations.

Though women are primary users of forest resources and they are directly victimized by deforestation, but their participation in forest management found to be low. From gender perspective, involvement and participation of women in the planning and decision making forum of CF programs were found to be minimal. They need to be supported from men and forestry institution.

Based on above-mentioned general problems, this study attempts to answer the following research questions.

- 1) What are the socio-economic characteristics of CFUG?
- 2) What is the local people’s perception about women’s role in community forestry?
- 3) What are the enhancing factors for women participation in forest management activities?

### **1.3 Objective of the Study**

The general objective of the study is to examine the women's participation in CF management at the study area. The specific objectives of this study are as follows.

- 1) To explain the socio-economic situation of the Radhakrishna Community Forest User Group.
- 2) To explore on local people's perception towards women's role in the community forest management.
- 3) To assess women's participation in decision-making, implementation, monitoring and benefit sharing process of CF management.
- 4) To find out the factors enhancing women's participation in community forest management.

### **1.4 Rationale of the Study**

This study argues that name of people's participation, whether men or women are equally involved in the forest management activities. Women as the primary users of the forest clearly know the problem of forest. Therefore, they should be involved in the forest management activities. Involvement is not only collection of individuals but it should be a group with collective behaviour and group consciousness regarding management of the community forest. Women's role in forest management includes activities carried out in the forest for the purpose of improving the forest conditions and future availability of forest product (such as weeding, singling, pruning, clearing and harvesting practices) and women's involvement in policy making.

### **1.5 Organization of the Study**

This thesis report is presented in the sequential flow of acknowledgement, table of contents, list of tables and illustrations and chapters. It includes six chapters, chapter first covers introductory portion including background, statement of problem, objectives of the study rationale of the study and limitation of the study.

Chapter second mainly deals with the review of literature where all possible relevant information are consulted and findings of similar types of research have been cited. This chapter deals in the literature reviewed by the researcher related to the

community forest for the upliftment of disadvantaged group 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 framework also have been included in this chapter.

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

Chapter four is related to general introduction of the study area including the setting and the general information about the Radhakrishna Community Forest User Group (introduction, objective, distribution and collection of forest product, punishment and penalties and use of fund). Chapter five deals with the result and discussion including general characteristics of the respondents and finding of the study with presentation and analysis of the collected data.

Chapter six includes summary, conclusion and recommendation of the study. Likewise, the last part of the research report covers Bibliography and Appendices.

## **CHAPTER TWO**

### **LITERATURE REVIEW**

The relevant literature regarding forest resources 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, and web sites etc are consulted. On the whole, management issues on forest resources as well as people's participation are reviewed.

#### **2.1 Forest management practice and people's participation**

The forest is also called mother of nature, various environmental consequences such as ozone layer depletion, global warming, acid rain, loss of bio diversity etc are emerging with the depletion of forest resources. Realizing this international community has emphasized in forest resource management.

Like in Europe and America, forest protection with the involvement of local people initiated since 1980 in south Asia. For example, under the joint forest management (JFM) in India, the degraded forests were given to communities for management and regulation.

According to FAO, 2001 involvement of communities in forest management is now in significant features of National forest policies and practices through out 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. Community based management system are still very much in a state of evolution. In fact Community approach is as 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.

#### **2.2 Evolution of Community Forestry concept**

It is widely recognized that local communities have historically played an instrumental role in forest management as an indispensable common property (Uprety, 2000). Management of common forest resources was well developed in



England by middle age with clearly use and ownership right and such rights already dated from time immemorial (Rackham, 1986). Thus far from “community Forestry” being a modern concept; it is in fact a very old one; another case of “old wine in a new bottle” (Gilmour et. al; 1991).

The prevailing development paradigm was a pro-industrialization top down, which has been characterize as the development from above approach (Stohr and Fraertylor, 1981). By the late 1960, the development paradigm changed to the “Development from below” (Chamber, 1983) because of the criticized of the “Development from above”. The emergence of new approach did not replace the old one. Both approaches did not continue to exist side by side in general development. In 1895 to 1970 forest was used as a source of industrialization and economic growth. This led to the poverty increased in third world. The rural poor were getting poorer. In the late 1970s two major roles of forest recognized are i) provide forest products and trees for rural people who no longer had access to them and ii) find ways of increasing the benefits of the forest resources to the people who lived in or near forest. As a result the concept of community or social forestry came after the release of the landmark (FAO, 1978). FAO defined CF as any situation which intimately involves local people in forestry activities. The legitimating of the concept was also boosted by the adaptation of “Forestry for people” the theme of the eight-world forestry congress in Jakarta in 1978. By the 1980s, the concept of CF had become major program within the community forestry policy of many developing countries.

Community forest is a partnership program between government and community organization in which government staff play a role as facilitator and catalyst to identify real user groups, to prepare operational plan of forest and constitution of groups and in implementation of CF activities, where community (user group) is responsible to manage, protect and utilize the forest on sustainable basis (MPFS, 1988). Community forest is a part of national forest that has given to the users only use right but not land tenure ship and there is provision of the back from users do not follow the rules of operational plan of forest. This provision has made some doubt towards the government from local people (Fisher and Gilmour, 1999).

### **2.3 Community Forestry Program in Nepal**

Community Forestry is one of the major strategies of Nepal's forest policy. The community forestry program resulted due to the failure of forest nationalization act 1957. This nationalization act ignored traditionally managed communal forest, which act came into conflict with the traditional type of community management of forest resources (Dahal, 1994). Difficulties of supervision from the center bureaucratic practice and lack of ownership feeling of people, who were the direct beneficiaries of the forest, led to failure of the nationalization policy.

In 1975, a conference was held in Kathmandu to consider issues related to management of forest in Nepal. Divisional Forest Office from throughout the country and senior members of Department of Forest and Ministry of Forest were the participants of this conference. The planned three days meeting was extended to 23 days, because of the great interest and desire to make a strong statement to address deteriorating condition of country's forest. The National Forestry Plan (NFP) 1976 was formulated by this conference. NFP recognized that the Department of Forest had ignored forest of hills which led to the deterioration of watershed. The concept of "Panchyat Forest" had come to overcome this problem, which aims plantation on the bared land. NAFP provided base for the formulation of Panchayat Forest and Panchyat Protected Forest Act, 1978. Thus it can be said that the Community Forestry Program in Nepal formally commenced in 1978 (Gilmour et. al 1991).

Community Forest Program was launched in 29 districts up to 1980s. Initially, Panchayat Forest and Panchyat Protected Forest were handed over to the local political body "The village Panchyat" that was responsible to take care of the forest. In 1980 the concept of User Group was introduced. After that Community has been handed over to local users irrespective of political boundary and political body.

According to Community Forest Bulletin, 2007, The community Forest program has been recognized as one of the most successful program in Nepal making it standing example in the Asian region. It has now become an integral part for managing natural resources through the active involvement of local people. Because of its benefit to the local communities, especially in hills and mountains, large area of national forests has been handed over to a large number of local people as community forests making almost over 33 percent of the country's population a member of the Community Forest User Groups. It has been well documented that

after the initiation of CF program, most of the handed over forest have been well protected and managed properly leading to a significant improvement in the condition of forests.

At present, Community Forestry Program covers almost all hilly districts of Nepal. Most of the forest areas were handed over to communities and its considerable success in the hills earned a lot of recognition internationally (Joshi, 1997) whereas the picture in the Tarai is different. The reason for not gaining momentum of Community Forestry in the Tarai could be due to different socio-economic and resource practice. Most of the settlements around the tarai forest are of new origin with heterogeneous society, which may cause difficulties to bring them under one umbrella (Upadhyaya, 1997).

Acharya, (2001) says the forest act 1993 with the first amendment 1999 and the forest regulations 1995 are the main legal instruments that govern functioning of community forest in Nepal.

The decentralization act 1997 had introduced the concept of user group for controlling resources management and development by local people (FAO, 1997) describes that community forestry programs built on local peoples and technicians knowledge using the participatory approaches, improve the organizational structure and management of tree and forest resources.

Although, Community Forestry Program is effective participatory program of Nepal, It is not out of debate. One of the major issues of debate is revenue from forest especially in Tarai. Baral, Subedi and Pokharel had discussed the issue of revenue from Tarai forest in the process of Community Forestry Program. They argued that there is a need of a new model of forest management in Tarai. They suggested a new model should ensure Community forestry's contribution to the national treasury without effecting local enthusiasms for participation. Success can be achieved through the joint efforts with community and Department of Forest. This could be done by sharing the revenue between two parties (Pokharal, 1999). But Federation of Community Forestry User Group (FECOFU) is in against of sharing of revenue through any model of participatory forest management. They argue "Tarai people want an area that would be enough to match needs and be granted the right according to the provision of forest act 1993 (Aryal, 2000).

Next debate is about land tenure. Government has given full use right of forest products to users but not land tenure. This provision may develop low confidence towards Community Forestry Program. Users may feel whether government take the Community Forestry back from the users group and revert to national forest (Shrestha, 1996).

Next major debate is about nuclear guideline where the objectives of Community Forestry is only to fulfill subsistence need of forest product or whether it may commercialize the Community Forestry by permitting installation of wood based industries in sustainable way (Shrestha, 1996). The sustainability of Community Forest Management in Nepal depends upon economical, social and cultural diversities of Nepal. Diversities of social cultural setting make diverse natural resource management practice and sometime it may bring conflict in resources use. In Community Forestry conflicts are seen within a Forest User Group, between two or more Forest User Group or between Forest User Group and District Forest Office (Shrestha, 1994).

Although, there are some debate and conflicts during the process of Community Forestry in Nepal, the Community Forestry Program in general is one of the successful forestry programs in Nepal (Joshi, 1995). The improvement of the forest of nation and meeting the basic forest products to the need of local forest users are the two major objectives in Community Forestry Program in Nepal.

Community Forestry Program is a partnership program between local communities and the staff of Department of Forest (DFO) for management of locally accessible forest. Community involves the control and management of forest either natural or planted by user group. Several amendments in community forest policies were made supporting for better people participation. The term forest management encompasses both technical and social arrangements. Forest management includes the planting, protection, harvesting and distribution of forest product (Community Forest Bulletin, Department of Forest, 2007).

#### **2.4 Women's participation in forest resources management**

From the very beginning, women were as the real users of the natural resources. As other natural resources, forest products such as fuel wood, fodder, leaf-litter, herbals, wild vegetables so on are very much essential and need by women in their daily routine in subsistence economy. Besides this, various participatory approaches

emerged during the course of time, UN's provision regarding women participation etc. boost up to women's involvement in FRM in various countries. In order to describe women's relation to the forest products, some movement, which were organized by women for protection of the forest and environment, carried out in neighboring countries, are emphasized as:

### **The Chipko movement of India**

The Chipko movement was against odd official forestry policies of government and mainly concerned with local employment. Initially, Chipko workers were both men and women. Later, more women joined the movement when they realized that the recurring floods and landslides from which they were suffering were caused by deforestation. When the forest department announced an action of 2500 trees in the Reni forests was overlooking the Alaknanda Rivers, which has already flooded disastrously, then women started to embrace trees to prevent them being felled from the company that won the auction. They physically prevented the tree felling and thus forced the Uttar Pradesh Government to investigate. Two years later, the government placed a ten years ban on all tree felling in the area. After that women prevented felling in many other forests all along the Himalayas. They have also set cooperatives to guard local forests, and to organize fodder production at rates that will not harm the trees. Within the Chipko movement, women have joined in land rotation schemes for fodder collection, helped replant degraded land and established and nurseries stocked with species they select. Actually, the Chipko movement was a movement of subsistence economy, reaction of women against government's unfavorable policies, and reunion of women with nature (Borg, B.V.D, 1989).

In 1974, women of Honduras showed serious response appealed by government to plant the destroyed areas caused by the Fifi hurricane. Women introduced new techniques to build terraces and reforestation rather than the traditional one. Similarly, in the Republic of Korea, women planted tress as a source of income. For this, they raised and sold thousands of seedlings, which played a key role in successful Korean program to re-green the countryside. In case of Kenya, women have played a major role in greenbelt campaign, nurseries, the planting of memorial trees, and growing and distributing seedlings for other women's groups to plant (ibid).

Molnar (1992) studied the condition of women in different parts of Nepal. She found women under the burden of environmental degradation caused by erosion. During her study she gathered women's interest, successes and ambitions regarding participation on FRM from different hilly districts Nepal. In Ilam, after the project intervention in a community, women become interested in forestry activities, particularly, become enthusiastic in tree plantation. She started to campaign for plantation. Similarly, in Dadeldhura, a motivated member of a local women's organization, approached both district office and project staff to request support for carrying out forestry extension, especially to increase female participation in forestry activities. In a case from Kaski district also a committee has planted 3500 seedling in one degraded area of their village.

## **2.5 Women's participation in community forestry**

Most development specialists recognize that forest plays a significant role in rural women's life and rural women play a vital role in forest resource management. However at the early stage of emergency of community forestry, women's participation on this sector as well as other development sector was neglected. In this context Hoskins (1982:7) says "though women in rural areas are directly dependent on forestry related resources, many forestry projects are designed without any recognition of the impact the proposed activity will have on them.

Women of rural Nepal have a very close relationship with forest. Collecting fuel wood meets 85% of the cooking energy consumption. (Den Holm, 1991). Women have traditionally and primarily performed the tedious and tiring job of collecting fodder and other forest products (Ojha, 2001). The women spend more than three-fourth of household time in collecting forest products (Kumar et. al 1989).

According to Gautam, (2059) 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 country. First of all, women of 29 hectars of Balthali VDC of Kavrepalanchok district formed all women FUG and managed 2.9 hectars of land in Bisthodhar Pakha as CF at 046 VS. In 047 VS, an all women FUG of Chhahare Siureti, Bokhim VDC of Bhojpur district, undertake 11.9 ha forest for management. Successively, the rate of formation of all women FUG and women member in mixed group increased significantly. Women have manage smallest (0.22 ha. in Badikhel,

Latitpur) to biggest (527 ha in Budhbare, Dhankuta) CF as their needs and managerial capacity.

Regarding women's participation data (GoN/DoF, 2007) shows that currently 784 (5.468 percentage) FUGs are handling by all women group. Similarly, 33567 women are working as EC member in different FUGs. The formation of all women FUGs is higher (97 FUG) in year 053/054 and higher percentage (9.0 %) in year 058/059. The formation of all women FUG is optimistically increasing in recent years. Nepalese women have shown equal concern in forest resource and environmental management.(Community Forestry Bulletin,2007).

Ymomiko 1999, says, in all the localities of the mountain region of Nepal women are the most needy of forest products and hence the major collectors of forest products. In spite of this, their saying in CF management and development is restricted. The Community Forestry Operational Guidelines issued by the Nepalese Government in 1990 was probably the first forestry document, which specially mentioned the role of women in decision-making process. It stipulated that one-third of the Forest Users Committee members should be women. This is in contrast to Nepal's master plan for the Forestry sector 1988-2010, which indicates strong gender biases and only emphasizes women's involvement in family planning programs. However, the Guideline mentions little about participation by disadvantaged groups. Other officials guidelines on handing-over procedures of community forests have not clearly addressed gender/social equity issues either women's concerns are still seen as an add-on issue.

A study conducted in the mid-western development region of Nepal shows that the representation of women in the User Group committee was Nil in 7 FUGs and only marginal in others except in those committees that were formed exclusively for women (Pandey, 1997).

A similar study conducted in the eastern Koshi hills of Nepal reported that in all FUGs women appear to be fully involved in collecting forest products. However their role in decision-making within the FUGs is very low. Participation of women is found to be significant only in those FUGs, which are exclusively managed by them. In other FUGs, women either did not attend committee meeting and group assemblies or participated passively. When asked about their non-participation, it was established that the women's lack of involvement in overall planning and forest

management was because of the domination of men in meeting and the decision-making process (Rasaily, 1996).

Rural women confront obstacles that limit their ability to participate in community development programs. They frequently lack the self-confidence or a forum in which to speak up publicly for themselves and for their families. They often lack access to childcare, credit, education and land tenure, which limits them more than men of their own families. These obstacles prevent them from being heard and from achieving a more powerful role in accessing and making decisions about tree and forest resource management (FAO, 1989).

Recently gender issues are becoming central to discussion of community forestry programs in Nepal. Although policy has mentioned women's participation in CFUGs the present legislations have not fixed any quota for the representation of women and poor section of the community in FUG committee. The Federation of Community Forestry Users in Nepal has made policy of having equal (50/50) female male membership in the FUGs. However this has not been translated fully into practice and recent data shows that the participation of women in FUG related activities is low. The representation of women in CFUGs is in an average of 20% (Shrestha, 2000).

J.R Adhikari (2001) mentions that Community forestry development projects have the policy of actively involving women in the running projects. The foremost reason for this is that women are the main beneficiaries of the forests. They are the main collector of firewood and fodder, usually responsible for leading livestock to graze in the forests, doing almost all the cooking, which in rural areas is always on wood. Therefore they are the group, which has most to gain from the success of projects. Also they often know more than about local needs and priorities for forest products, species preferences etc.

In this context Timilsina, 2002 writes women participation has increasing due to change in perception that women also have capacity to make decisions related to village development, resource management and their family concerns. CF process have encouraged and provided space to women to get engaged in decision making as well as the role of catalytic agent that helped to grow other groups and co-operative managed primarily by the women in village. Before CF program women participation was very low in development programs related to common concerns in



the village. CF has important role in bringing women out of house hold domain. The CF programs have recognized women as real resource manager and user.

Augusta Molnar, (1987), recommends that the present level of women's participation in Community Forestry management activities can be increased by,

- ) Analyzing women's needs and roles, ideally at the decision stage, and then as the program is implemented, in order to ensure that women can benefit;
- ) Targeting extension information to women; and
- ) Directly involving women as project staff, village workers, and decision-makers.

One study of NUKCFP (1998) concluded that although the number of women in the user group committee and in the general assembly is increasing, there is still a gap in the flow of information regarding community forestry management. This is because, the women, the poor and the discriminated occupational caste people are considered to be more of listeners and workers whereas the rich, the men and people of higher caste are regarded as instructor, supervisor and leaders. This conception is a factor that has hindered women's participation in Community forestry management.

Kharel (1987) has pointed out that various programs and projects have identified numerous problems that have proven to be a hindrance in the involvement of women in forestry management and development activities. The particular nature of Nepalese society, where women have a minimum role in decision making, is the most prominent. Moreover, most rural women of Nepal are illiterate and have a localize view of life, the society is male dominated and they are unwilling to share their power and authority without which approaching rural women is impossible. Due to these constraints it is felt that it will take along time before one can expect any major involvement of women in forestry.

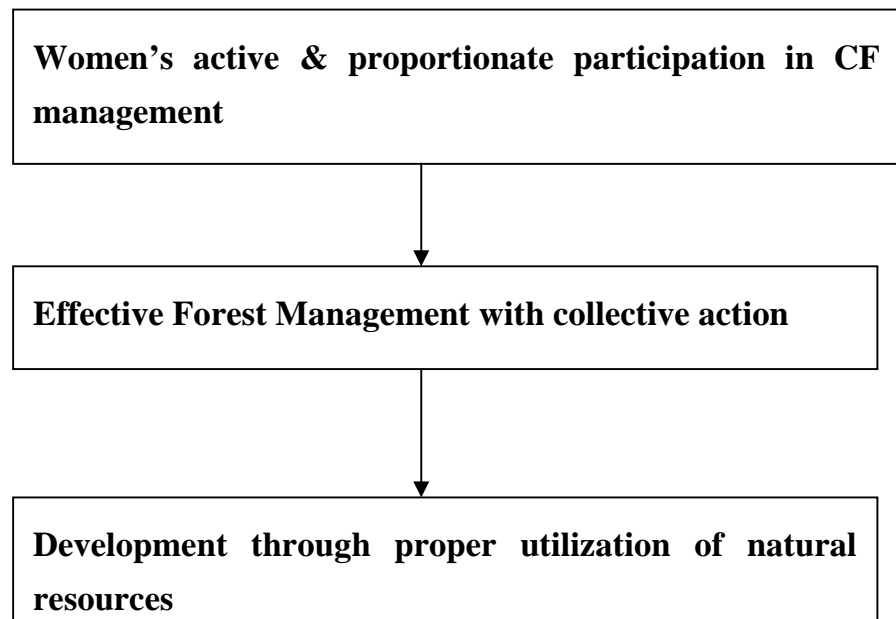
Number of studies has been conducted in different parts of Nepal looking at women's participation in forest management. On the basis of previous studies, we can say that women are the real users and manager of the forest resources. Trend of women's involvement and capability has been increasing in CF 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.

## **2.6 Theoretical and Conceptual Framework**

### **2.6.1 Theoretical Framework**

The community forest program is launched by government and its success and failure depend upon people's participation. People's participation can't be possible without proportional and active participation of women. It is also noted that people's participation needs to be understood within the context of local culture, norms and values as well as people's knowledge and perception about their ecosystem (Chhetri et. al, 1992).

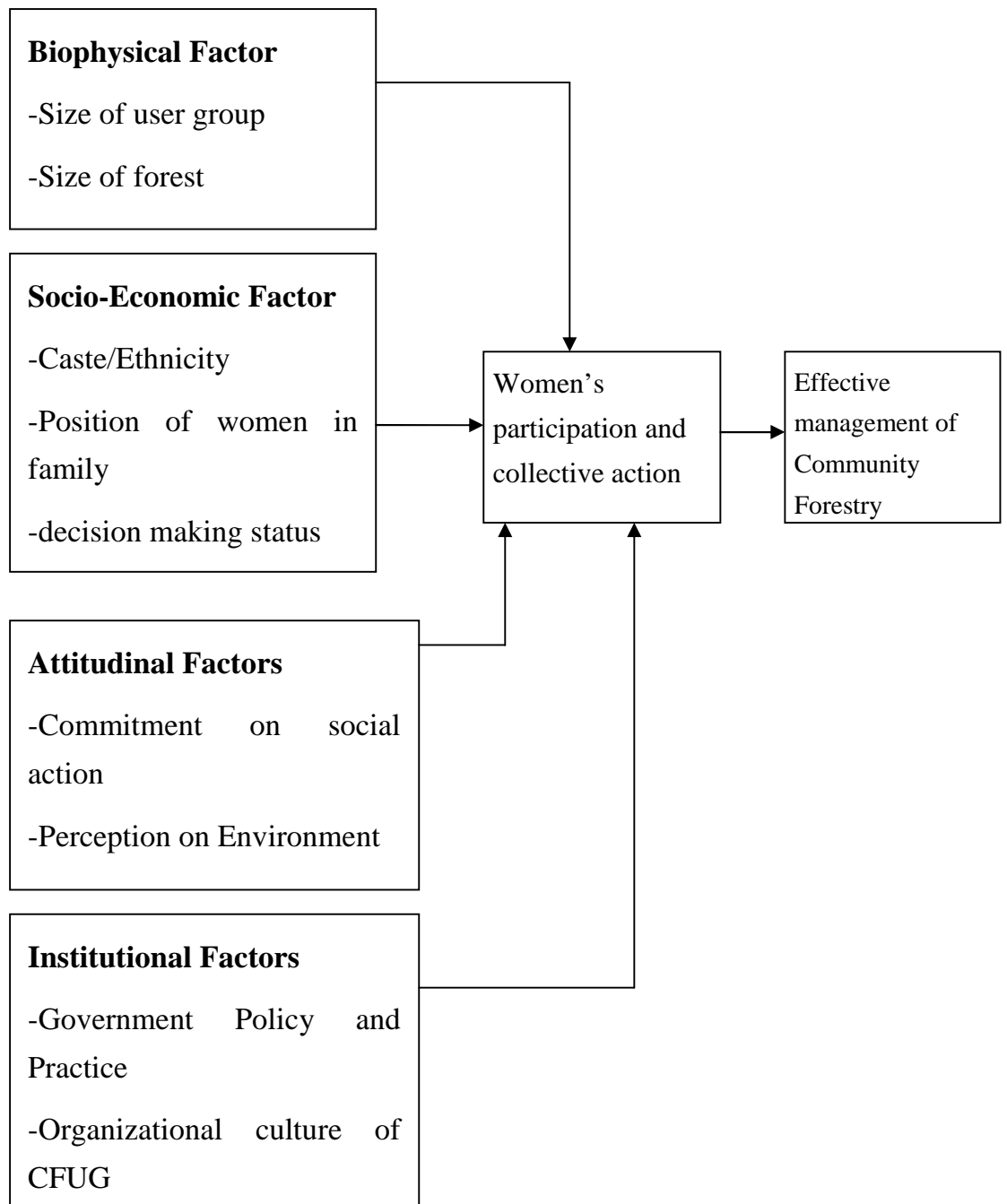
This study is extremely based on CF and its management through the concerned FUG. The FUG is an institution, in which particularly the women are the real users of forest resources and co-manager of CF management. An effective leadership, managerial skill and active and proportionate participation of women in CF management at local level, significantly enhances the status of forest resources at local level. The theoretical perspective is presented in this way:



### **2.6.2 Conceptual Framework**

Women's participation in community forest management itself is a vague, multidisciplinary, and interrelated phenomenon. Among various independent factors; physical, socio-economic, institutional and attitudinal factor exist in the community, which influences to the frequency and intensity of involvement of women in CF

management. Sub-factor of each factor diagram of conceptual framework of the study is presented in figure;



## **CHAPTER THREE**

### **RESEARCH METHODOLOGY**

This chapter describes the technical aspect of research including research design, site selection, process of sampling, nature and source of data, process of data collection and data analysis and presentation method.

#### **3.1 Research Design**

The study has been based on descriptive and exploratory research design because descriptive research design is used to describe the Radhakrishna Community Forest User group's socio-economic phenomenon, dimension and activities of women participation. It is also useful to understand the history of RCFUG forest management system. The explorative research design is helpful to find out the specific objective of the research which related with women's activities in Radhakrishna community forest.

#### **3.2 Site Selection**

The study was conducted in Dang District, in which so much Forest User Group were formed, particularly the Radhakrishna\_Community Forest User Group of Dhanuari VDC was selected for the study. This area was selected for the following reasons. Firstly, exploring specific forest management practice among oldest one which established in 2053/03/25. Secondly the selected RFUG was heterogeneous from caste and ethnic point of view and all womens were involved in FUG and 11 member in Radhakrishna Forest Resource Management executive committee.

#### **3.3 Universe and Sampling**

The Radhakrishna Community Forest User Group consists of 360 users HHs of ward 7 of Dhanuari VDC, which is considered as the universe of the study. However 25 house-hold women's were selected for the detail study. For sample selection, random sampling method was applied. First of all, total HH women's were selected on the basis of caste/ethnic group which involved in RCFUG. There was four cast/ethnic group like Brahmin, Chhetri, Tharu, and Dalit. Further, 25 household women's were selected to access in RCF. Proportionately from each stratum by using lottery method. Thus, 25 female respondents were selected for household

survey to know the situation of women's participation in CF management from women's perspective.

### **3.4 Nature and Source of Data**

Both quantitative and qualitative data are used in this study. Quantitative data generated for this study, were related with socio-economy, dimension of women's participation, motivating and hindering factors responsible for women's participation. These quantitative data were collected from both primary and secondary source. Qualitative data were used to analyze general situation of FUG and to strengthen the generalization of the study.

Primary data were gathered from the period of observation, house-hold survey, field visit, focus group discussion, key informant interview and discussion with CF related persons. Primary data having quantitative and qualitative nature are used to analyze finding of the study. Secondary data having quantitative and qualitative nature are used for literature review and setting of the study area research.

### **3.5 Data collection Technique**

For this study primary and secondary data and information were collected from different tools and technique, which are given follows.

#### **3.5.1 Primary Data Collection**

Following tools and techniques were adopted for the collection of primary data and information.

##### **Household survey**

For the detail information to identify socio-economic situation of user households and women's participation in CF management the household survey was carried out. The household survey was done in all sample households using a set of semi-structured questionnaire. The household survey was concentrated particularly on the data required for the specific objectives of the study i.e. socio-economic situation , dimension of participation, influencing factors responsible for women's involvement in CF management

## **Interview**

A Checklist was developed for the interview of the key informants. Interview was held with the ward member, teachers, leader and other social workers. Principle issues such as history of CF, status of caste/ethnic group and women's participation, benefit sharing system of Executive Committee (EC), institutional culture of FUG regarding CF management etc.

Various purposive discussions were made with district forest officer, concern Ranger and forest guards at their respective office. Particularly, discussion was based on trend of FUG formation, organizational culture and managerial capacity of FUG and status of women's participation in CF management. Information and facts received from forestry technicians were used to verify and triangulate the data received from other sources.

## **Questionnaire**

The questionnaire method is major research instrument of study. Using this method information was collected from sample women respondent of the FUG household. For this structured semi structured questionnaire were developed. Then, the questionnaire filled up by visiting all selected women by researcher herself. Same questionnaire were used for the entire respondent.

## **Focus group discussion**

A focus group discussion in women group was conducted at community level. During FGD, some qualitative data on attitude and perception of women towards their role in CF, role of EC and forestry technicians in CF management, motivating and hindering factoring of women's involvement in CF management were collected.

## **Observation**

The researcher visited the study area and observed women's and men's working area and time, FUG's living standard, male's real behavior on women, women's presentation on group meeting and forest product collection and using activities.

### **3.5.2 Secondary data collection**

Various tools and techniques were adopted for secondary data/information collection. For this published books, journals, proceeding papers, DFO annual report, research reports, previous thesis etc were consulted. On the other hand unpublished material, such as minute books of FUG, record register of range post, data base and websites were used as per need of the study.

### **3.6 Data presentation, analysis**

This study is basically based on quantitative analysis. The information obtained from structured and semi structured questionnaire is used to interpret data. Firstly, the collected quantitative data were processed through validation, editing and coding. Secondly the processed data were presented in tabular form. In order to analyze the data simple statistical tools such as frequency, percentage, average and ratio were used which have enabled to present socio-economic and demographic scenario of all respondents as well as their role in forest management?

### **3.7 Limitation of the Study**

As a student of Sociology this dissertation research is conducted to fulfill the requirement of master in Sociology. This study has inherited some inevitable limitation from the beginning. Occurrence of limitations persists up to data collection, data presentation and completion of this thesis report. Obviously such limitations influence to the coverage, magnitude and quality of research.

- This study conducted in self-finance and with limited resources that automatically, narrow-down the coverage of the study. A study conducted in such a limited period hardly draws the detail and actual information related to cultural and behavioral aspects.
- Rural women were major respondents of this study. Most of them were not educated. That is why; it was quite difficult to carry out the required information.
- The findings of the study may represent to the similar ecology and cultural areas but it may not be generally conclusive in other areas.

## **CHAPTER FOUR**

### **GENERAL INTRODUCTION OF THE STUDY AREA**

This chapter gives the general information of the study area including the characteristics of Dhanuari VDC, Fundamentally, the location, population, climate, socio-economic characteristics land use pattern development initiatives and natural resources of concerned area are discussed in general. Likewise area and coverage of CF, condition of botanical diversity in CF and management practices adopted are discussed as background information of Community Forest User Group.

#### **4.1 Setting of the Study Area**

The study area is situated in Dang district. Total area of the district is 6480 km<sup>2</sup>. Its adjoining districts are Pyuthan, Arghakhanchi, Kapilvastu to the east, Salyan, Rolpa, and Pyuthan to the north, Surkhet and Banke to the west and Indian border to the south.

##### **4.1.1 Location**

There are two municipality and 39 VDCs in Dang District. The Dhanuari VDC is one of them. . The VDC is bordering between Baghmare and Shantinagar in the north, Panchakule in the west, Shrigaun in the east and Goltakuri VDC in south .

##### **4.1.2 Climate**

The climate of this VDC is generally sub tropical in nature. Geographically the VDC is plain . The rainy season starts in Jestha and ends in Ashoj. The temperature ranges from maximum 25<sup>0</sup>c t0 39<sup>0</sup>c in summer and cold in winter. Average annual rainfall is 1170mm.

##### **4.1.3 Population**

According to the VDC record, total population of the VDC is 10,907 of which 5344 are female and 5563 are male. Female constitute 48.99% of total population. There are 1867 households in this VDC. Major inhabitants of the VDC are Brahmin, Chhetri, Tharu and Dalit. Nepali and Tharu are the major spoken languages of this VDC. 2120 population is Radhakrishna Community Forest User Group, ward no. 7, Dhanuar VDC.



#### **4.1.4 Religion**

Hindu is the dominant religion of this area. About 98 percent people follow the Hindu religion and worship Hindu god and goddess as well local god and goddess. Basically, Tharu celebrate different types of local festival.

#### **4.1.5 Economy**

Agriculture is the main occupation of this VDC. About 80 percent people are involved in this sector. Land is plain as well as slightly slopes. There are no permanent sources of irrigation facility, so the people depend on monsoon rains for cultivation. Main agro products are paddy, wheat, maize and mustard. People whose main occupation is not agriculture they are involved in business, service and wage labour.

Women engaged in household chores and unproductive activities. Although they contribute hard labor in the household work, they do not possess any economic power and resource.

#### **4.1.6 Natural Resources**

The main natural resources of Dhanuari VDC are land, forest, soil and water. The triangulation relations among these three basic elements of natural resources are major factor for the agricultural production and livelihood of the village people. Forest is one of the most important natural resources of the study area. Forest resource provides livestock with fodder and grasses and green manure for agricultural production.

Soil is an important factor to grow agricultural products and different places have found different types of soil. The farmer's land has been classified into three main categories. They are the agricultural land known as *Khet* (irrigated land), *Bari* (un irrigated land) and *Kharbari* (uncultivated land). *Kharbari* is marginal land where grasses grown naturally. This grass is used for fodder and thatch.

The other important resource is water in the study area. There is no irrigation facility in this area for the agricultural production. Therefore farmers have to depend fully upon rainfall to grow crop in their *Bari* and *Khet*.

## **4.2 Radhakrishna community Forest User Group**

### **4.2.1 Introduction**

Radhakrishna community forest user group is famous for production of grass and fire wood. The CF is situated at the ward no. 7 of Dhanuari VDC. The total area of the forest under community control is 48 hactor. It has established in 2053/03/25.

There are 11 member in executive committee of JCFUG where as all are women in the presidence of Khima Pandey. The committee members formulate and finalize the drafts of operational guidelines. The committee also reviews the operational plan every year. Total 360 households of Radhakrishna community forest users group of Dhanuari VDC ward no. 7 are benefited from this forest.

### **4.2.2 Type of Forest**

The forest is situated between 440m to 500m height from sea level. The forest is subtropical broad-leaves forest. About 50 percent of the forest area is covered with natural large tree species like *Saal*, *Sissoo*, *Khayar* and others. In addition other plants of different species like *Bukaino*, *Guava*, *Mango*, *Jamun* and *Bans* have been planted in the barren land. Total 1500 plants are existing in this forest.

### **4.2.3 Objectives of Radhakrishna Community Forest**

The Radhakrishna Community forest has been established to fulfill the following objectives

- ) For the sustainable management of forest resource.
- ) To protect biodiversity and to keep environmental balance
- ) To control soil erosion by planting trees in barren land.
- ) To provide forest products and to fulfill the need of user group. i.e. fuel wood, timber, grass and leaf litter.
- ) To conserve source of water.
- ) To control soil and sand theft and
- ) For the institutional development of Forest User Group.

## **4.2.4 General Rules for the Distribution and collection of Forest Products**

### **4.2.4.1 Fuel wood**

The time for the collecting fuel wood was fixed by the decision of the FUG committee. In that time all dead, dying and diseased trees were taken out from the forest. A person from each household participated in the cutting of fuel wood and the members of committee supervised their work during the time of collection. The harvested fuel wood was gathered in a certain areas and made stacks or Bhari of a fixed weight. The fuel wood was then distributed to the user group members at the rate of Rs 20 per Bhari. The committee has also made a special rule regarding the use of fuel wood for the benefit of the forest users. They can take fuel wood from the dead, dying, diseased, deformed and fallen trees in case of events like death, wedding and other religious ceremony. However this must be done with the approval and presence of the committee members.

### **4.2.4.2 Grass**

Grass is collected from the month of Ashad (June/July) to Bhadra (August/September). Every year the date is fixed by committee meeting. The total grass area to be cut was divided into several blocks and the users were allowed to choose the area that they wanted to cut. However they were charged Rs 5 per Bhari of the grass if they took it home with them.

Just to give an estimation of the amount of consumption of the grass by animal the respondent said that one cow needs an average of one Bhari about 20 Kg grasses per day. They fulfill this need for their cattle from their own land and also from community forest. During the winter season they feed their cattle hey, maize, millet, wheat stalks in stall-feeding.

### **4.2.4.3 Leaf litter**

The forest is opened once a year in the month of Baishakh (April/May) for the collection of leaf litter. Only one person of from each household is allowed to collect

the leaf litter, interested households who want to collect the leaf litter will have to pay Rs 5. The leaf litter is used for animal bedding and to make compost fertilizer.

#### 4.2.4.4 Timber

Only 48 hectare of the total forest area is under the control of the community. The trees have yet grown sufficiently to be used commercially. As a result timber collection provision for the house hold use has not been made in the operational plan. However, the committee has made special provision for the use of wood from dead, dying, diseased, deformed and fallen trees in the event of natural calamities like floods, earthquake, fire etc.

#### 4.2.5 Punishment and Penalties

According to the forest operational guideline, FUG can give penalties to those users who violate the rule that are mentioned in the operational guideline as well as those that have been approved by the local District Officer.

**Table 1: Punishment and penalties**

Types of product/Activities	Penalties per occurrence		
	First time	Second Time	Third Time
Grass	Rs. 25	Rs.50	Rs.100
Fodder	Rs.50	Rs.100	Rs.200
Fuel wood	Rs.25	Rs.50	Rs.100
Fuel wood (green)	Rs.100	Rs.200	Rs.300
Leaf litter	Rs.25	Rs.50	Rs.100
Grazing	Rs.10	Rs.15	Rs.20
Encroachment of Forest	Rs.500	Rs.1000	Rs.2000

Source; Field survey, 2012

The above table clearly shows that penalties are imposed for going against the rules and regulations of the forest product collection. There are three types of the rate. The penalties for the first time is low but in the second time it is double and in the third time it is double higher than the second time and fourth times higher than the first time. On the third time the violator is also given a verbal warning that his membership will be withdrawn if he commits a violation one more time.

Similarly, violation for soil collection is also charged according to the rate determined by the committee.

In the case of causing fire in the forest the violator will be punished with a minimum penalty of Rs 1000 and for the encroachment of forest is charged Rs. 500, Rs.1000 and Rs. 2000, first, second, and Third time respectively.

#### **4.2.6 Use of Fund**

Radhakrishna community Forest User Group has established a fund from different source of income. From charges of fuel wood collection, Grass collection, leaf litter collection, penalties, user membership registration fees and grant from the District Forest Office etc. The fund mainly focuses on the management activities of the forest. In addition to this, the fund has also helped in social activities, but, priority has been given to forest conservation.

## CHAPTER FIVE

### DATA PRESENTATION AND ANALYALIS OF WOMEN PARTICIPATION

In this chapter the researcher is going to present and analyze the collected data in order to fulfill the objectives applying various tools and techniques mentioned in the third chapter. This chapter is the focal part of the study.

#### 5.1 General Socio-Economic characteristics of Respondents

This topic deals with the demographic features and socio economic condition of the respondents. Basically it concerns with the specific objective of the study. The demographic structure, economy, occupation, education, land holding, livestock, caste/ethnic composition are presented in this topic is based on field survey 2012.

##### 5.1.1 Demographic structure

Mainly two dimension of the population i.e. sex and ages of the users household and respondents were considered in the study. Age and sex of the users was classified in to four groups, which is given in table 2. Age of the respondents was classified into five groups having 10 year of interval, which is given table 3.

**Table 2: Distribution of population of sample HH by age and sex**

Age Group	Female		Male		Total		Household	
	No.	Percent	No.	Percent	No.	Percent	No.	Percent
< 5	7	9.7	6	8.82	13	9.2		
6 – 14	20	27.78	19	27.94	39	27.8		
15 -59	41	56.94	39	57.35	80	57.1		
> 69	4	5.5	4	5.88	8	5.71		
Total	72	100	68	100	140	100	25	5.6

Source; Field Survey, 2012

Table 2 shows that average family size of Radhakrishna Community Forest User Group is 5.6 people, which is slightly above the average family size of Nepal (5.4 person/Family). On the other hand, number of active aged (15-59 years) people found 57.1percent which is also higher than the national average of 54.1(CBS, 2001). The population of female in the study area is slightly above than the male. Like wise number of active aged women are lower than the male. Economically active population is higher than the depended population.

In this report, below 14 years of age are considered as the economically inactive population because they could not actively contribute in the productive work of household. But in our society economically inactive group of population children above 6 years of age help in fetching water, fetching grass, help in field and other household activities. Similarly People above 60 years also help in agricultural activities and household work. Therefore speaking demographically these population (6-14 years) and (60<) are dependent but in reality in a village area they are not so.

It is noted that, higher population pressure adversely influences both in frequency and quantity of FPs exploitation. On the other hand this population is actively participating also in forest conservation activities.

**Table 3: Population distribution of respondents by age**

Age Group	Number	Percentage
20 – 30	5	20
30 – 40	10	40
40 -50	6	24
50 – 60	3	12
>60	1	4
Total	25	100

Source; Field Survey 2012

The table no. 3 shows that, among the respondents majority of them 40 percent falls (30-40) age group followed by 24 percent of age group (40-50). This active aged

group leads to contribute forest product collection and has played vital role to manage the community forest. Only 4 percent respondents are 60 years above. All the respondents are female who stay in the community regularly and involved forest related work. That is why; it represents the real user and reflects the women's feeling in their own word.

### 5.1.2 Caste ethnic composition

The study area contains people from different caste and ethnic groups. Brahmin is the dominant caste of this area so; they have more chance to cover in the sample of the study.

**Table 4: Caste ethnic composition of the Respondents**

Caste/ethnicity	No of Respondents	Percentage
Brahmin	8	32
Chhetri	4	16
Tharu	7	28
Dalit	6	24
Total	25	100

Source; Field Survey, 2012

Table 4 presents the caste ethnic composition of the respondents. Out of total respondents 32% belong to *Brahmin* then followed by *Tharu* 28% and *Dalit* represents 24 percent. It percentage show that there cast composition number of RCFUG.

### 5.1.3 Family Background

Family background of the respondents is presented in the table 5. According to the table most of the sample families are nuclear than joint family. The women from nuclear family have more freedom to development activities like forest management.

**Table 5: Family background of the respondents**

Types of Family	No of Respondents	Percentage
Nuclear	15	60
Extended	10	40
Total	25	100

Source; Field Survey, 2012



Table 5 shows that 60 Percentage of the respondents are from nuclear family, that type of family represented Brahmin, Chhetri, and 40 percentages from extended family who represented Tharu and Dalit.

#### 5.1.4 Educational Status

Education plays a key role in the development of the society and country. It is an important factor of human life. To know the socio-economic condition of any society education is assumed as key factor. For the study purpose users were broadly classified into two categories such as literate and illiterate. In this dissertation, the term literate is simply defined as the person who can read and write simple Nepali. Literate people and respondents of the study area were further classified according to their level of education. The education attainment of the people of sample HH (above 6 years) is presented in table 6.

**Table 6: Educational status of population of Sample HHs**

Education		Female		Male		Total	
		No.	Percent	No.	Percent	No.	Percent
<b>A</b>	<b>Illiterate</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>12.3</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>8.06</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>10.24</b>
<b>B</b>	Literate	16	24.61	12	19.35	28	22.04
	Primary	14	21.54	8	12.90	22	17.32
	Secondary	10	15.38	10	17.54	20	15.74
	SLC	10	15.38	15	24.19	25	19.68
	IA/10+2	5	7.67	7	11.29	12	9.47
	Bachelor	2	3.07	4	6.45	6	4.72
	Master	0	0	1	1.61	1	0.7
<b>Total B</b>		<b>57</b>	<b>87.69</b>	<b>57</b>	<b>91.93</b>	<b>114</b>	<b>89.76</b>
<b>Total A+B</b>		<b>65</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>62</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>127</b>	<b>100</b>

Source; Field Survey, 2012

According to the table 6 total literacy rate (>6 years) of population of the RCFUG is 89.76, where as 91.93percentage male and 87.69percentage female literate out of total population. This literacy rate 89.76percentage is higher than the national literacy rate 63percentage (Economic survey 63/64). Higher literacy rate among user

found positively determined the level of awareness in various disciplines of community forest management such as forest protection, utilization and development. Due to cause of lower literacy rate of female in compare of male was not encouraging female to play the effective role in decision making process. Although, there are so, many other factors like social norms and values affecting in the involvement of women in CF management.

### 5.1.5 Religion of the Respondents

People of the study area were found the follower of Hindu and Buddhist religion, which is given below Table no 7.

**Table 7: Religion of the sample HHs**

Religion	No. of households	Percentage
Hindu	24	96
Buddhist	1	4
Total	25	100

Source; Field Survey 2012

Majority of the people (like Brahmin, Chhetri, Tharu, and Dalit) 96 percentage of the study area were found the follower of the Hindu religion. Only one Dalit household of sample households found Buddhist who change his religion after because of own interest . However followers of both religions were living in harmony.

### 5.1.6 Size of Land holding

The Radhakrishna community Forest User Group has occupied mainly two types of land that is Khet and Bari. A Khet represents temporarily irrigated land and Bari is un-irrigated. This is shown in Table 8.

**Table 8: Land holding size of the respondents.**

Land Size In Kattha	Types of land			
	Khet		Bari	
	No.	Percent	No.	Percent
<10	5	20	9	36
10-20	8	32	11	44
20-30	6	24	5	20
30-40	4	16	0	0
>40	2	8	0	0
Total	25	100	25	100

Source; Field Survey 2012.

According to the table 8, majority of people 32 percent holding Khet 10-20 Kattha and bari 44 percent. Only 8 percent of households have more than 40 Kattha land. There is not any land less people. Especially *Dalit* have small size of land. They work in others' land as a wage labour. Land has a kind of symbolic meaning of wellbeing. For eg., who has more and high quality of land is accepted as rich.

### 5.1.7 Food Sufficiency

User households were classified in to five groups i.e. < 3 month, 3-6 month, 6-9 month, 9-12 month and cereal selling according to the situation of their cereal production from their own land and status of food sufficiency. Families having similar quantities of cereal production are placed in particular class and analyzed accordingly. The situation of food sufficiency of the households is presented in Table 9.

**Table 9: Distribution of sample HHs by food sufficiency**

Food Sufficiency	No. of HHs	Percentage
< 3 months	2	8
3 – 6 months	5	20
6 – 9 months	9	36
9 – 12 month	6	24
> one year	3	12
Total	25	100

Source; Field Survey 2012.

Table 9 shows that the majority of users 36 percent come under 6-9 month food sufficiency category. Level of food sufficiency is directly related to bigger land holding size and higher quality of cropping intensity of land holding by particular family. It is also related with family size. It was observed that food sufficiency from own land is considered as a symbolic meaning of well being in the society.

### 5.1.8 Occupational Composition

Basically, primary and secondary occupations of the user families were considered in the study. Agriculture is found as the main occupation in the study area. Besides this, users of study area found engaged in service/wage, business, and animal husbandry. Among those occupations agriculture and animal husbandry are mostly depended upon forest resource. Detail of the Primary and secondary occupations adopted by house holds and respondent individual in study area is given in Table 10 and 11.

**Table 10: Main and Secondary Occupational distribution of sample HHs.**

Occupation	No. of HHs	Percent
<b>Main Occupation</b>		
Agriculture	15	60
Animal Husbandry	3	12
Service/wage	5	20
Business	2	8
Total	25	100
<b>Secondary Occupation</b>		
Agriculture	5	20
Animal Husbandry	10	40
Service/wage	5	20
Business	3	12
Remittance/Pension	2	8
Total	25	100

Source; Field Survey, 2012

The Table 10 presents the occupation of the sample HHs. According to the Table largest numbers of house holds 60percent are depending on agriculture as the main source of income and secondly on animal husbandry. Both occupations are closely related to forest resource. That is why; forest resource management is essential for this community.

**Table 11: Main and Secondary Occupational composition of Respondents**

Occupation	No. of Respondents	Percent
<b>Main Occupation</b>		
Agriculture	14	56
Animal husbandry	5	20
Service/wage	4	16
Business	1	4
Total	25	100
<b>Secondary Occupation</b>		
Agriculture	4	16
Animal husbandry	12	48
Service/wage	2	8
Business	1	4
None of them	6	24
Total	25	100

Source; Field Survey 2012

According to table 11 the majority of the respondents were involving in agriculture as the main occupation. Secondary occupation was animal husbandry. Likewise those occupations were mainly handled by the female member of the society. It is

notable that without active participation of female in all aspects of community forest management is not possible.

### 5.1.9 Livestock Raising

Live stock farming in the study area has been found supporting the farming system. It also served as a source of income and livelihood for the village people. Cow, buffalo, goat were major domestic animals in the study area. The number of livestock raised in the study at the time of survey is given in table 12, below

**Table 12: Livestock keeping trend in the study area**

Types of livestock	No. of livestock	Average per house
Buffalo	23	0.92
Cow	25	1
Goat	27	1.08
Chicken	20	0.8
Total	25	3.8

Source; Field Survey 2012

Table 12 shows that average livestock keeping trend in the study area is 3.8/household, which is below than the national average of 4.1 animals per household. All the cattle are stall fed with grass, hay, Kudo etc. Grass, fodder and hay are obtained from their own private land, buying from others and community forest. Animal husbandry is found as an integral part of farming. Users are keeping livestock as a source of organic manure, milk and meat.

### 5.1.10 Fuel use Pattern

For cooking food at home mainly fuel wood, gas and kerosene are used. Fuel use pattern of sample HHs is shown in Table 13.

**Table 13: Fuel use pattern of Sample HHs**

Types of fuel	No. Of HHs	Percentage
Fuel wood	13	52
Kerosene	3	12
Gas	7	28
Other	2	8
Total	25	100

Source; Field Survey 2012.

According to the Table, 13 majority of the respondents (52 percent) use Fuel wood for cooking food at home. . About 28 percent respondents replied that they use LP Gas to cook food. Those who use fuel wood are primary users of community forest. They also have trees in their own land. Some of the respondents use both gas and fuel wood. Although they use gas in their kitchen but for cooking *cudo* they depend upon forest. They also use dried maize stalk for this purpose.

### 5.1.11 House Type

House type is also considered in the study. Mainly *Pakki*, *Semipakki* and *Kachi* houses were found during the study. The situation of housing types is shown in table 14.

**Table 14: Types of house of the respondents**

House Types	No. of HHs	Percentage
Pakki	8	32
Semipakki	13	52
Kachi	4	16
Total	25	100

Source; Field Survey 2012

Table 14, presents that majority of houses 52 percent consist *semipakki* in the study area followed by *Pakki* 32 percent. Due to shortage of local material eg *Khar*, availability of construction material people use Tin and cement tile for roofing purpose. Due to lack of sound income sources the users were going to construct *semipakki* houses. Thus house pattern of the study area is mostly depended on forest resources.

If we considered the national average there are 29.2 percent *Semipakki* houses and 36.6 percent *Pakki* houses in the country. As compare to national average this community found better position in *Semipakki* houses and slightly worst in *Pakki* houses 32 percent.

### 5.1.12 Facilities in the Household

The researcher found toilet, drinking water and electricity as a physical facility in the sample households. However the utilization of these facilities found difference in household to household.

## **5.2 Local people's perception towards women's role in Community Forest**

This section deals with women their knowledge attitude on community forest and local people's perception about women participation in community forest management.

### **5.2.1 Women's knowledge and attitude on Community Forest**

When women were asked about their knowledge of community forestry, it was found that, they could be categorized into three different groups.

The first group comprised of those women who are the members of CFUG committee. They are educated and knowledgeable they participated actively in the CF activities. It was also found that they informed other women of the villages about the activities of the committee.

The second category is made up of those women who, never take part in any community forestry meeting and also not participate in the assembly. Although they are unaware of various aspects related to community forest like committee formation process, group formation process, date when the community forest was handed over, number of committee members, forest area even the name of community forest. But they know that the committee has been involved in protecting the community forest since last few years.

These women said that it was not necessary to attend in meeting of community forest because they get information from their husbands and committee members about the various forest related activities like the date when they had to go to collect forest product and when the various forest management activities like planting, weeding, pruning, clearing and singling were beginning. They think that their responsibility is only to go and collect forest products. They didn't have own view about forest management. They totally supported their husbands saying.

Although these women gain information about the changes in rules and other management activities of CF from committee members and others, but they are ignorant about other smaller details of CF activities, like what topics discussed in meeting, what disputes arouse and how they were resolved, what is the situation of the fund and what are the future activities.



The women from third category consisted of those who were ordinary members of the CFUG. They always attended in meeting as well as in the assembly. As a result they had knowledge of community forestry activities. When asked them about the selection of women in FUG committee they expressed satisfaction over selection process. Educated, interested convincing, dedicated able to give time women were selected. Another question asked them is it necessary to form CFUG committee women only? They replied that it should contain both men and women to perform properly because only men or women would not be able to make decision solely from perspective. If men made mistake then women would be correct them and vice-versa.

They also opined that it would be very difficult to make a committee solely of women. The main reason they cited was a lot of women were uneducated it would be difficult for them to perform various official tasks. Secondly the women are highly involved in household activities so they said it is extremely difficult to take out time for any unexpected forestry works that may come up.

Similarly, if a committee consists solely of men then all decisions would be made from their perspective and interest. The interest of men regarding the use of forest product differs from that of women. Women and men often have different views on the importance of various forest resources. A woman's view first concern may be to find enough trees and forest products to satisfy the immediate family needs. Men's primary interest in forest may be for those forest products that are mainly sources of cash. Women have a greater knowledge of forests than men. Therefore, if you make a committee consisting only of men, then women's necessities and problems related to the forest will be unknown and ignored by the committee.

### **5.2.2 Analysis of perception**

Both men and women were asked "is it necessary to participate women in community Forest management"? The views they expressed are stated below

#### **Women's View**

- ❖ As the women are closely related to forests so, they generally have a better knowledge about the forest than male living in the same area
- ❖ The responsibility of running household is primary duty of women. To take care of animals is also their responsibility. For this purpose women have to

collect and fulfill the requirements of grass, grass litter for animals and fuel wood for fuel. Therefore, these women have a direct relation to forest. So, women have a better knowledge than men about the type of plant that provide grass, fire wood and leaf litter.

- ❖ During plantation the tasks of selection of species is almost importance. By using the vast indigoes knowledge of women, we can make the task of selection of species easy and simple.
- ❖ The involvement of women in CF activities will make them directly aware of the various activities that are going on in their community forest and this will provide them with an opportunity to learn something in equal manner as the males. After involving such activities women felt encouraged and motivated to participate in forest related other activities. Due to these reasons women's participation is essential in CF management activities.

### **Men's View**

- ❖ As a, primary user women feel the need of forest products the most so, they should be actively involved in CF management.
- ❖ Women have more knowledge about the types of plant that provide leaf, wood and other forest products, their involvement in CF management activities will make the work of protecting and managing the community forest more effective.
- ❖ Solely involvement of men in CF management activities prevents women participation. As a result the women will be restricted from the opportunity to learn. The forest products are more required for women than men, If we ignore or less inform them about the rules and regulations of governing CF will be on impediment in the effective management of the community forest.
- ❖ Sole participation of males in CF activities can lead to other problems it will lead to the formation of rules only from the male perspective and this is unable to address the grievance and problems of women. As a result forest management process could not achieve its goal effectively.
- ❖ To fulfill the financial requirements of household men have to involve in income generating activities like, business, service and other works outside

the house. So, they couldn't provide sufficient time for CF management activities. To overcome this problem women's participation is essential.

### 5.3 Women's Participation in Community Forest

This is the main section of the study. Basically it concerns with the specific objective and their corresponding results. The results are totally based on the data collected from primary and secondary sources. Four dimensions of participation such as women's involvement in decision making and planning process, implementation process, monitoring and evaluation process, monitoring evaluation process and benefit sharing process are discussed as their participation in community forest management. These dimensions include various sub-dimensions.

#### 5.3.1 Women's Participation in Decision making Process

Women's involvement in Decision making-process in CF development and management is considered in terms of their involvement in community constitution preparation meeting, name registration in CFUG, involvement in operation plan preparation, using voting right for executive committee member selection and involvement in conflict management. Details of women's participation in decision making process are given below Table 15.

**Table 15: Women's involvement in Decision Making Process.**

Description	Participation	Percentage
Involvement in constitution preparation meeting	4	16
Name registration from own family as User	4	16
Involvement in OP preparation	6	24
Managing conflict	5	20
Selection in EC	3	12
None of above	3	12
Total	25	100

Source; Field Survey 2012

Table shows that only 16 percent women were involved in constitution preparation meeting, which is low in compared with women's involvement in operational plan preparation. According to the respondents this was due to mainly ignorance of the users in CF registration, patriarchy influence of men and inadequate information regarding CF's constitution.

Like constitution preparation, the researcher found that involvement of women in name registration from family as CF users was 16 percent. They all are household head. According to the respondents' leaders and executive committee members it was neither the keen interest of women to involve in CF management nor the liberal nature of males but was due to absence of males by any reasons or no presence of mature male in the family. Lack of awareness and exposure like training, visit etc was found one of the causes of this situation.

The researcher found 24 percent women from community involved in operation plan preparation. This is also in comparison to men. According to respondents' The EC does not mobilize the users effectively in operation plan preparation as well as other such gathering. Due to lack of adequate knowledge, skill or concern matter it had found more dependency of executive committee on forestry technicians regarding operational plan preparation.

Regarding the conflict management, respondents of the study area expressed their views during household survey and executive committee meeting. There were some conflicts between user group and non-users of same wards particularly on use and right of forest resources and during the name registration of new users. The community forest user group spent enough time to manage these conflicts without the involvement of women but they couldn't succeed. After the campaigning and creating pressure by women to accommodate remaining household in the CFUG, the conflicts were managed. According to local people, 20percent women were involved in conflict management.

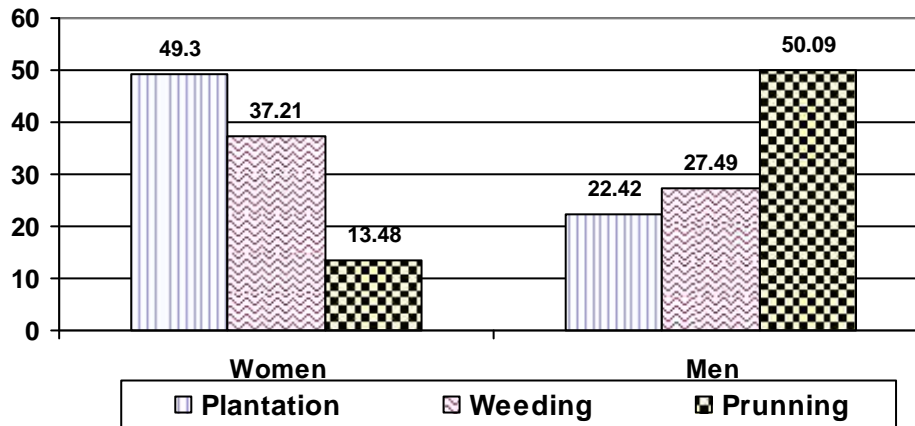
During the study it was found that the EC members were selected through the unanimous decisions. Total 3 members were represented in executive committee of the CFUG. Reliable and capable candidates forced to become women in EC member. The community forest user group consists of 27.27 percent women member in EC, which is lower from gender bias perspective. Unfortunately, men in CFUG have the vital portfolio such as chairperson, secretary and treasurer etc. Only 3 (12 percent) women participate in EC selection process.

Among the total respondents 4 (16 percent) women replied that they never participated in any description of decision making process of community forest. According to them it was due to their voice and attendance was ignored by EC and also by their own family.

### 5.3.2 Women's participation in Implementation process

Basically, women's participation in carrying out various activities such as, clearing bushes, singling, pruning, plantation and collecting/transporting FPs etc. was taken consideration during the collection of field information. Women participation in implementation is given in Figure. 1.

**Figure 1 Gender participation in implementation process**



Source; Field survey 2012

Above figure presents the respondent's response about their family's participation in various management activities. It shows that women involvement in implementation part of CF management is higher than the other parts like decision making, monitoring and evaluation and benefit sharing. The figure gives the results that in plantation and weeding activities usually women members participate great in number, whereas in pruning activities men participation is higher than women.

The figure shows that women's participation is very low (13.48 percent) in pruning activity. In plantation and weeding activities women's participation is higher than men. In plantation and weeding activities women participation is 49.3 and 37.21 percent respectively, whereas men participation is 22.42 and 27.49 percent. According to the respondents and forest technicians particularly women used to transport sapling from nursery and transplant it. Men are found responsible for digging the pit and fencing and protecting the plantation areas. The respondents added that women seriously take care of growing plants.

Respondents of the study area expressed that particularly the male considered silvicultural activities as Jhara system (compulsory but relatively inefficient labour

for common social activities) hence, men send women to participate in such issues. At the same time requirement of FPs to women found as another coercive factor behind it. Unequal participation in such activities indicates the discrimination between two sexes.

In the observation of research both women and men are found involved in FPs collection and transportation. However, the degree of women's involvement was again higher in actual field. Women found heavy loaded in this regard. Users again reported that men used to consider it is women's work. Sometimes men feel losing their prestige by transporting the fuel wood from the community forest. Hence, men used to deny collecting and transporting forest products from the community forest except timber.

### **5.3.3 Women's involvement in Monitoring and Evaluation process**

Some common issues regarding monitoring and evaluation (M&E) aspects such as involvement in regular assessment of community forest (quantitative and qualitative), involvement in forest protection activities (as *Ban heralu*) and involvement in general assembly and reviewing operational plan were selected for the study.

Involvement rate of women found relatively low in various issues of M & E aspects in study area. However involvement of women as *Ban Heralu* found higher than as compared to other sub issues. Respondents of the study area explained that only women executive committee member took part in monitoring aspects. Similarly, they also added that women do not go to forest alone to act as *Ban Heralus*. They used to go in pairs or in group.

Informants expressed that provision of monitoring and evaluation is poorly mentioned or lack in operational plan. If it is, this is the task of EC members and forest technicians. Thus ordinary users found unaware about M & E aspects of community forest management.

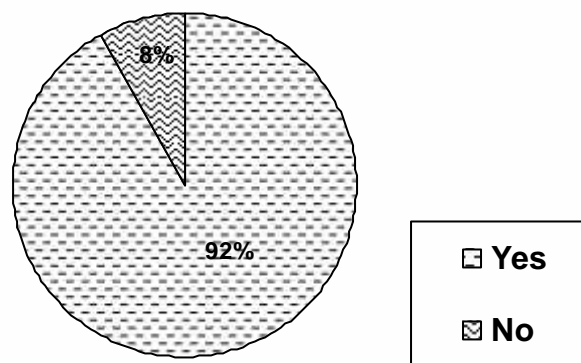
The researcher found low attendance of women EC member as compare to men in monthly meeting of CFUG. According to them, this was mainly due to inappropriate time of meeting. In their notion, monthly meeting used to conduct in morning, which is the peak hour of women. They reported that holiday, when women become

relatively less pressure of work due to the cooperation from males, which makes easy to attend the meeting to women EC members.

During attending the monthly meeting of CFUG the researcher found higher participation of women but was passive in the vital discussion and in decision making. Likewise the researcher observed more dependency of women EC member on male members due to lower confidence on subject matter and dominating role of male member. Hence, women's role in forest management is highly influenced by women's knowledge on subject matter, confidence, age activeness and educational status.

The researcher had asked some question to the respondents regarding the activities of community forest through the users of structural question to understand the participation manner and frequency of women. In this regard women's participation in assemblies is given in the following figure 2.

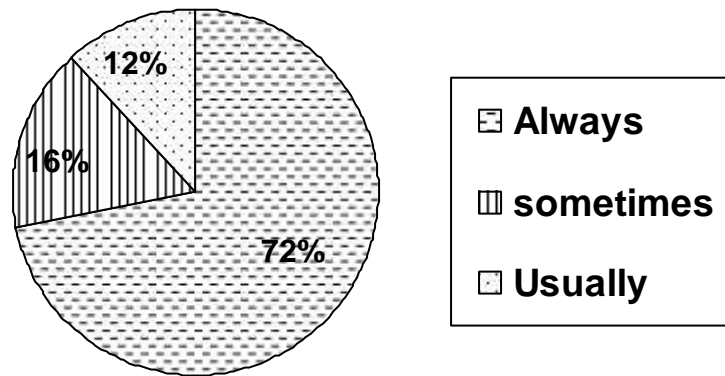
**Figure 2: Women's participation in CFUG Assembly**



Source; Field Survey 2012

The above Figure shows that about 92 percent respondents say that they participate in the FUG assemblies. In contrast, 8 percent of sampled household do not participate in FUG assemblies. The women respondent, mainly Tharu and Dalit women who does not participate in the assembly, says that she does not participate because she does not have any knowledge of community forest so she hesitate to participate. She fears being criticized for her ignorance while expressing her views in front of other people. She feels her presence in the assembly and meeting is useless because she does not have any idea about the topic which is discussed in meeting.

**Figure 3: Frequency of participation in meeting**



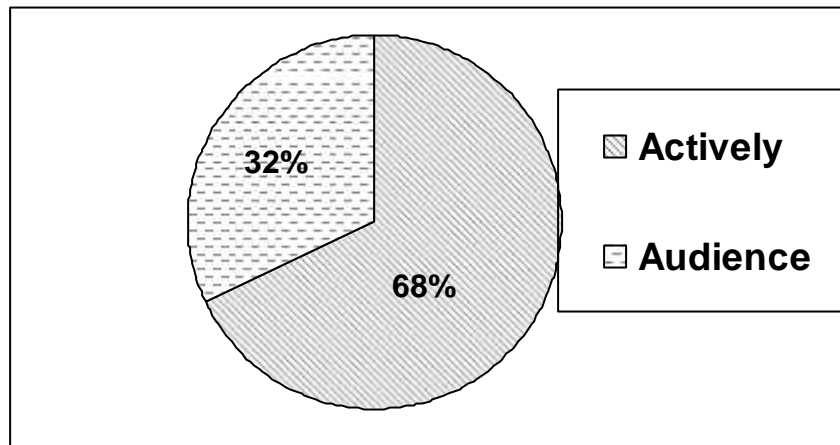
Source; Field Survey 2012

The Figure 3 shows the frequency of respondent's participation in meeting and assembly. According to the figure 72 percent women said that they always participate in meeting. 16 percent replied that they go to assemblies sometimes and 12 percent said they usually go to the assemblies. From this we can see that most of the respondents fall under the always category and this category is 5 and nearly 8 times greater than usually and sometime category.

The data gives a satisfactory result because the trend of women's participation has been changing gradually. From this, we can conclude that women of this CFUG are aware of the community forest activities. The women who said that they go to the assemblies only sometimes said although they want to participate regularly but due to household burden they unable to give for such activities.



**Figure 4: Manner of participation**



Source; Field Survey 2012

Only participating is nothing, the important thing is way and manner of participation. To know this a question asked them how you participate in the meeting/Assemblies. Answering this question 68 percent replied that they actively participate in the meeting and discussing about forest management. However, still 32 percent women participate as an audience and they are only hearing. From this observation it is found that although there is an increasing number of women in the committee and general assemblies, due to lack of self confidence of the women user, they generally do not express their views in the meeting. There is still gap in the flow of information where the committee and men mainly make the decision. Women, poor and people of lower and discriminated caste people are usually listeners whereas; committee members, rich people esp. men usually take on the role of instructors, supervisor and leaders.

After the study of last five year's minute books of respective FUG, the researcher assessed the women's participation in general assembly and review of operational plan. While the assessment the researcher found general assembly as an institutional festival of the FUG, which is arranged once a year for review of the last years activities and impart fresh mandate to EC for the coming year. Through the discussion the researcher found that users considered general assembly as authentic participatory evaluation of the FUG. According to the respondents and key informants the rate of women participation in assembly is increasing every year.

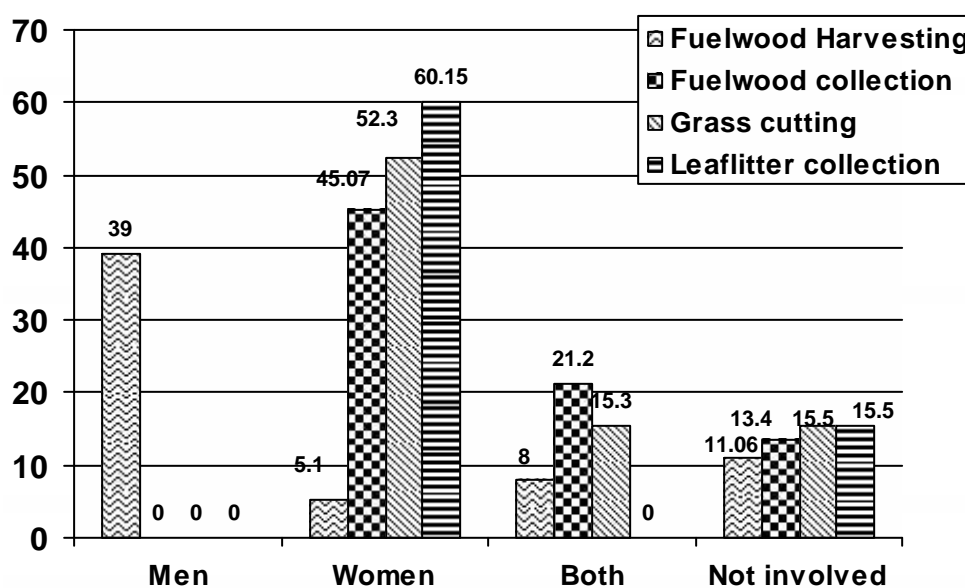
### 5.3.4 Women’s participation in benefit sharing process

Some common issues of benefit such as forest products sharing, opportunities to participate in training visits and utilize the benefits to be available from social activities launched from the income of community forest are analyzed in the study.

#### 5.3.4.1 Forest Product Sharing

After the formation of CFUG, women of the study area were benefited from the forest products. According to the respondents, almost all the forest related works are performed by the women. Due to socio-cultural factors there are so many work differences between men and women in our society. During the observation it was found that there are also work differences between men and women’s involvement in forest product collection activities. The women’s involvement in forest product sharing is given in the following Figure 5

**Figure 5: Forest product collection pattern**



Source; Field Survey 2012

During the field visit, it was found that men usually participate in fuel-wood harvesting activities. Among the sampled household 39 percent men harvest fuel wood, according to respondents, women generally do not harvest fuel wood. Only 5 percent women are involved in this activity. Men’s keen interest with the wood harvesting activities was observed during field survey.

Women generally collect fuel wood, fodder and leaf litter. The figure shows the women's higher involvement in these activities

In the observation of researcher both women and men found fuel wood collection 21.45 percent and grass cutting and collection (15.3 percent). However, the degree of women's involvement was again higher in the actual field. Users reported that men consider such works are women's work and even they think that such products are more required to the women than men. However both men and women are involved in collection of forest products sharing activities.

The researcher found the 11.06 percent of sampled household user are not involved in fuel wood harvesting and 13.4 percent in fuel wood collection because they never participate in this regard.

With respect to leaf litter collection 60.15 percent of respondents said that only women from their household were involved in this activity.

Respondents also said that the fodder collection, grazing and milking are generally performed by both women and men. Whereas, activities like feed preparation, feeding, cleaning sheds are the women's domain. Women play a crucial role in detecting illness animals because of their close and frequent contact with them. Marketing of livestock is mainly done by men but in consultation with women.

Users added that in all forest collection activities the role of schoolgirl is very important because the girls participate in most of the forest product collection activities. During field visit, no boys are found doing such activities.

The question also asked during focus group discussion and key informants interviewing they said that the wood cutting activities are done by men and the rest of the product collection activities were done by women. Thus gender role different was clearly noticed in forest product sharing from these interviewers but throughout the study the researcher found no gender bias in forest production system in the study area.

#### **5.3.4.2 Human Resource Development**

Mainly the training, workshops and study tour/visit were considered under HRD activity. The younger and adult users are found very enthusiastic in HRD activities. According to respondents these training and visit programs enhance knowledge,

skill, attitude and confidence on respective subject, which strengthens the leadership and managerial capacity of the participant. However, elderly people found not so interested to participate in training and visits.

Based on the data available from Tulsipur Range Post the activities related to training/visit were conducted in limited number they could not provide such opportunity to women. During the interaction with informant, the researcher found that the CFUG is weak in conducting number of activities, number of participants and women participation. Researcher found various reasons behind low participation that executive committee totally depends on range post and do not arrange trainings and visits from own initiation. Similarly, reasons behind low participation of women found that lack of earlier information, lack of confidence of women and chiefly the patriarchal socio-cultural that prevailed in society also resulted in the low participation of women.

A general trend found that the community based training and general interaction activities conducted by range post. These activities found mainly out stained followed by community based, having 1-5 day duration. Only 2 women received CF awareness training at community level, which was organized by Range Post.

#### **5.3.4.3 Benefits from community development and social activities**

During the study it is found CFUG has limited number of community development/social activities in the study area from income of the community forest. According to respondents CFUG has constructed school building, temple, salary for teacher and water tank for drinking water. For these activities, the individuals as well as CFUG have donated. Majority of the respondents reported that all the users are getting benefits from these activities. The researcher found lack of special program targeted to women and disadvantaged group like skill development and income generating activities, which supports them to become self-reliant.

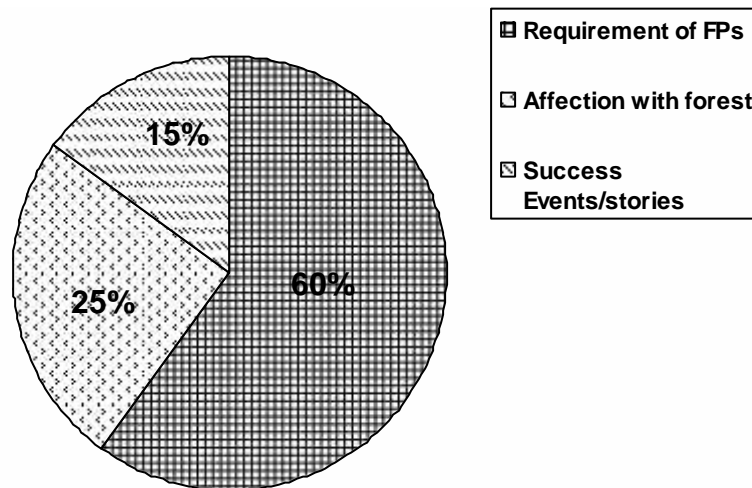
### **5.4 Factors Influencing Women's Participation in CF Management**

#### **5.4.1 Motivating Factor**

Motivating factors of women for involvement in CF was assessed in the study. According to users there are various factors, which determine frequency and

effectiveness of women's participation in CF management. Some major factors are given in figure 6.

**Figure 6: Motivating factors that involve women in forest management**



Source; Field Survey 2012

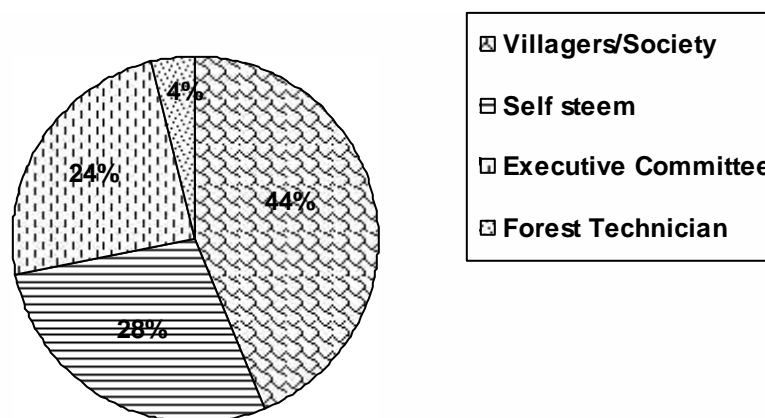
From the study it is found that majority(60 percent) of the respondents of the study area were involved in forest management for the fulfillment of day to day requirements of the forest products like timber, fuel wood, fodder and non timber products. It is not a new phenomenon but is a characteristic of subsistence economy that depends upon the forest resources. Similarly, affection and attachment with their adjacent forest is found as second factor of motivation of women. The affection with community forest was deep-seated due to continuous attachment with forest from the childhood of women which influenced them to involve in community forest management. Minorities of the respondents were inspired with some success stories/Events carried out in neighboring villages and other parts of the country, in which women's role was substantial. This factor is found as supportive and encouraging one.

From the interaction with forestry technician, EC members, respondents and field observation the researcher found that motivation is a psychological and sentimental situation of user, which lead them to involve in CF management. Similarly, the researcher observed that motivated women involved more effectively in Community Forest Management.

### 5.4.2 Source of Motivation

After the factor of motivation, the researcher assessed the source motivation, which inspires women to involve in community forest management. During the study the researcher found several source of motivation, which is given in figure 7.

**Figure 7: Sources of motivation in CF management**



Source; Field Survey 2012

From the study, it is found that majority 44 percent of the respondents guided to involvement in community forest with their village/Society. The researcher found influence of demonstration effects created by the villagers. On the other hand, peer group is an effective tool of motivation, which positively influenced women in CF management. The secondary source is self inspiration, which was created due to long and continuous practice of the seniors as well as the users. According to Fig, 7; 28 percent women are self motivated to participate in Community Forest Management.

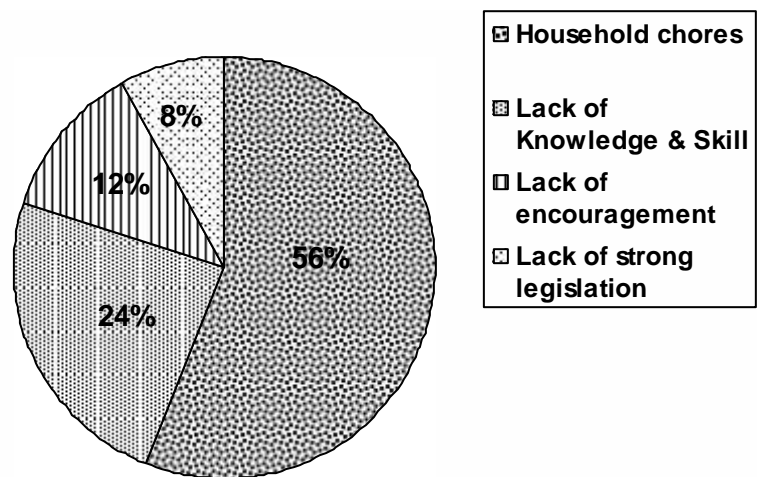
Similarly, respondents of the study area considered the executive committee as third source of motivation. The EC found conducted meeting in certain interval of time, which converted as source of motivation. Lastly, respondents considered the forest technician as a source of motivation. The forest technician interacted with women during monthly meeting, training and other activities, which inspired women to involve in forest resource management.

### 5.4.3 Hindering Factors

There are various factors that have hindered women's participation in CF management. Although many of them are location and individual specific, some

common are time, economy, education mobility and social customs. To know this, information was collected from the respondents by using set of questionnaire developed. Various responses collected from users are organized and analyzed accordingly.

**Figure 8: Hindering factors to involvement in CF Management**



Source; Field Survey 2012

Respondents of the study have considered regular household chore as a main problem of women. They had to undertake all field works. Thus, women were loaded with more works. Similarly, respondents of the study area considered the lack of encouragement and underestimation of women participation as second problem. Such type of social and moral problems found severe considering lesser encouragement and backbiting.

According to the respondents, women were considered with inadequate knowledge and skill as next problem of women that they received not much training and never been participated in study tours. According to them, women of the community are lacked with formal education. Thus they found lack of knowledge and skill on CF management. Lastly, few women raised complex and rigid legal provisions of the state, which is not favorable and promoting nature. As per respondents neither it checks nor massively encouraged to women’s participation in community forest management.

## CHAPTER SIX

### SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION

This chapter summarizes the major findings of the study, draws conclusion about the role of women in community forest management and provides some recommendations to make women more effective in forest management.

#### 6.1 Summary

There is no doubt that forest is an important natural resource. It has economic as well as environmental value. In our context women are the real user of forest from the ancient time. Thus they are more victimized than male from deforestation process. Being primary user, women can play significant role in forest management.

The major objective of this study is to assess the women's participation in CF management. The importance of the study has considered as in two ways both in theoretical as well as applied. This study contributes to the scope of socio-cultural perspective for human ecology. The research is offering new understanding of forest management practices. The findings may be helpful to policy makers, planners' academicians, donor agencies and field workers who are interested, responsible and involved in forest management activities.

To study the women's role in forest management activities the research was conducted in Radhakrishna community forest of Dhanuari VDC ward no. 7 of Dang district during the month of August 2012. Multi caste and multi ethnic groups are living in this area. One of the criteria to become the user of this community forest is HH must be permanent habitant of this village and another criteria is HH should be committed on community forest guideline.

The study is based on primary and secondary data. Primary data was collected from field survey in the study area. Samples of 25 households were selected out of 360 households. Stratified random sample method was used. The study was carried out in the sequential steps of research methodology such as defining research problem, reviewing literature, designing research, collecting data, analyzing, interpreting data and reporting. Basically descriptive and exploratory research design have been used and simple statistical tools like table, percentage, ratio have been used.



The role of women for the management of community forest management is found positive. With their close attachment to the forest they have better knowledge than male about the plants that provide grass, firewood and leaf litter. So women can easily select species of plant for plantation.

Radhakrishna community forest was established by all users in government owned barren land . *Saal, Sissoo, Khayar* are the major plants existing in this forest. Total area of the forest is 48 ha among the 11 executive committee members where as all are women in the president of Khima Pandey.

Women were actively involving in all aspects of participation (decision making, implementation, monitoring and evaluation and benefit sharing) in CFM. But their higher involvement was found in implementation. 49.3 percent women participated in plantation. Similarly, women's participation in weeding and pruning is 37.21% and 13.48% respectively. And in decision making and monitoring process women's participation is lower than men. During the study it was found that the monitoring and evaluation process of CF was not satisfactory.

It has also been revealed that the time spent by men and women in daily works was closely related to demographic socio-economic factor such as family size, ratio of adult men and women members in the family members, farm size and family income. Cultural variations have strongly influenced the time allocation pattern and control of resources. There appears a structured inequality between men and women over the production resources and benefits.

Women can play a vital role in protection and management of forest resources. Realizing this fact they are involved in forest management activities since 1980. In order to involve women in forest resource management, women's as well as mixed forest user group committees are formed. But their heavy involvement in house hold chores, they are unable to give time in development activities like forest management. Only forming women's committee or involving women in committees is not enough because only forming women's committee or involving in committees is just like plantation without protection. To make women's participation effective, their views and ideas should be listened and program should be lunched on gender perspective. Therefore community members should be sensitized about women's role and member importance of involving them in women related program. The male and female both must be come out themselves from their conservative traditions or

orthodox thinking. The working agencies in related field can play significant role to make forward the women as well as community in any activities as forest management.

## **6.2 Conclusions**

The study aims to know role of women in forest resource management. The result has been favorable, as the men and women both realize that women's role is effective for the community forest management. The main points of the research conclusion are given below.

The present forest management system has been very popular with the village people. The majority of the people's view is that the condition of the forest is getting better because of a feeling of ownership regarding the forest development in everybody's mind. Both male and female of the Radhakrishna CFUG recognize the importance of women's role in forest management, but both of them are bounded by socio-cultural tradition.

There was a vast difference in time based on work distribution pattern of men and women. Men had more leisure time than women. During the field observation most of the women were busy whole day in doing productive as well as unproductive work. Most of them were involved in agriculture, animal husbandry, farming and labor work. Due to this reason, women had no leisure time while men were only busy in work that earns cash. Finding of this study shows that women can play a significant role in community forest development, protection and management. Hence, success of the CFUG largely depends upon degree of women participation in its management.

Although women's literacy rate is low in comparison to men however, during the field visit, while talking with them, observing their activities, women's indigenous knowledge regarding forestry related activities was found to be true. School girls are also highly involved in forest product collection activities. Women's participation in CF management was greatly determined by various factors like bio physical situation of CF, government's forestry policy, extension efforts of forestry organization, perception and attitude towards CF and allied issues and status of women in family and society.

Women's participation as executive committee members and their presence in regular meeting was found satisfactory but their participation in decision making was found passive. Participation of ordinary women was found very low in decision making process, due to deep-rooted patriarchal domination in society. 32 percent women participate as an audience in the assemblies. Due to lack of self-confidence of the women users, they generally do not express their views in the meeting.

Participation of women in implementation process was found high. Male's influences in decision making in the family, requirements of forest products to women and tendency of giving less response to social work prevailed in the community are the reasons for it. In aggregate, participation of both sexes in monitoring and evaluation process was found poor in CFUG. Particularly, women's participation was found rather poor in M&E aspects; due to lack of strong provision of regular monitoring and evaluation in the operational plan of FUG.

In case of benefit sharing and development activities implemented by FUG access of both sexes were found almost equal in the study area. But there was lacking of women focused development activities. Women were motivated to participate in community forest management due to requirements of forest products, attachment with forest and women involved success stories carried out in different parts of the country. Similarly, women considered the self-inspiration, their neighbors/villagers, concern EC and forestry technicians as potential sources of motivation to involve in CF management.

Women's higher involvement in household chores, inadequate knowledge/skills, lack of compulsory provision regarding women involvement in legislation, patriarchal influence in the family and society were found as hindering factor of their participation in CF management. Even today, two types of issues are outstanding regarding women's participation. First issue is quantitative aspects of women's involvement in different activities of CF management and second issue is qualitative aspects of women's involvement which is very difficult to analyze and interpret. Participation of more people in the community forest management itself is a big problem. In this context, involvement of women in equal proportion with male in all dimension of CF management is the burning issue of the forest resource management.

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## APPENDIX I (A)

### QUESTIONNAIRE:

#### 1. Personal information:

Name:

Age:

Occupation:

Religion:

Caste\ Ethnicity:

Marital status:

Education:

#### 2. Household Characteristics:

2.1 Name of the household head:

Relation with household head:

2.2 Family Size:

Age Group	Male	Female
<5		
6-14		
15-59		
>60		

2.3 Educational status of Family (>6 Year)

i) Literate

ii) Illiterate

2.3.1. If literate, Level of education.

<b>Education</b>	<b>Male</b>	<b>Female</b>
Literate		
Primary		
Secondary		
SLC		
IA/10+2		
Bachelor		
Master		

2.4 Main source of income:

- i) Agriculture      ii) Business      iii) service      iv) Other

2.5 Amount of land holding:

<b>Types of Land</b>	<b>Area in Ropani</b>
Khet	
Bari	

2.6 Livestock ownership of the household:

<b>Animals</b>	<b>Number</b>
Buffalo	
Cow\ox	
Goats	
Chicken	
Total	

### 3. Community forest related information

3.1 When was this established?

2.3 Who established this CFUG?

i) Government

ii) VDC

iii) All members

iv) Don't Know

3.3 Do you know the past forest management system before the introduction of present system?

i) Yes

ii) No

3.4 If yes please, could you tell me about those systems?

3.5 What contribution did you make to establish this CFUG?

i) Cash donation

ii) labour contribution

iii) Formulation of policy and plan

iv) Participation in the meeting

v) In registration process

vi) Nothing

3.6 Why did you join this CFUG?

3.7 Do you know rules of FUG about utilization, conservation, protection and management?

3.8 What is your opinion about women's role in the forest management committee

3.9 What do you think about the present forest condition?

i) Increase

ii) As it is

iii) Don't know



3.10 Have you gone to participate FUG meeting?

- i) Yes
- ii) No

3.11 If yes how did you participate in the meeting?

- i) Just like audience
- ii) An active participant

3.12 How many times?

- i) Usually
- ii) some times

3.13 If not why did not participate?

3.14 Tell me about male and female participant in harvesting and fetching forest products?

<b>Activity</b>	<b>Male</b>	<b>Female</b>	<b>Both</b>	<b>Hired workers</b>
Firewood				
Harvesting				
Fetching				
Grass cutting				
Leaf litter collection				

3.15 What do you use for daily cooking?

- i) Fuel wood
- ii) Kerosene
- iii) Gas
- iv) Others

3.16 If fuel wood is not used give reason for not using

3.17 Which factors motivate women to participate in forest management activities?

- i) Village/society
- ii) Self esteem
- iii) Executive Committee
- iv) Forest Technician

3.18 What types of forest management activities do you perform in your CF?

- i) Cleaning
- ii) Pruning
- iii) Plantation
- iv) Guarding
- v) Weeding

3.19 Have you got family support to involve in CF management activities?

3.20 Do you know the community development\ social activities conducted by CFUG? If yes specify

- i) School building
- ii) Drinking water
- iii) Road\ bridge construction
- iv) Irrigation
- v) Others

3.21 Are the women equally benefited from the community development activities?

3.22 Have any awareness program been conducted focusing women in forest management activities in your FUG by DoF\ NGOs etc?

i) Yes

ii) No

3.23 Are you facing any problems to involve in CF management? If yes specify the problem.

- i) Individual Problem
- ii) Problem related to family member
- iii) Social problem
- iv) Legal problem
- v) Other

3.24 Lastly what is your opinion to make women's role effective in forest management activities in particular and community development activities in general?

- i)
- ii)
- iii)
- iv)

## **APPENDIX I (B)**

### **CHECKLIST FOR KEY INFORMANT INTERVIEW**

Name:

Designation:

Address:

1. Realization of FUG and efforts regarding FUG registration.
2. Executive committee's election process (automatic, democratic, representation).
3. Level of women's participation during operational plan, preparation training, general assembly and activities in CF).
4. Allocation/sharing of forest production to the users.
5. Use of income from community forest.
6. Provision and trend of executive committee regarding capacity building of user and women's empowerment.
7. Attitude and perception towards role of women in CF management.