

CHAPTER – I

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background

Community forest is an evolving branch of forestry whereby the local community plays the significant role in forest management and land use decision making by themselves in the facilitating support of government as well as change agents. It involves the participation and collaboration of various stakeholders including community, government and non-Government organizations (NGO's). The level of involvement of each of these groups is dependent on specific community Forest project the management system in use and region. It gained prominence in the mid-1970's and examples of community forestry can now be seen in many countries including Nepal, Indonesia, Korea, Brazil, India and north America.(source: Jorge Mottos Wikimedia common)

Forests are key component of biodiversity that represent the foundation of ecosystems and that through the services they provide affect human well-being. Community Forestry approach has initiated in Nepal since 1978. Due to the great success of middle hills, it has effectively implemented in Terai area too. About 5.8 million hectares (40% of the total geographical area of the country), out of which 4.2 million ha (29 %) is forest and 1.6 million ha (10.6 %) is the shrub land (MFSC 2004). MFSC (2008) claimed that the overall deforestation rate of Nepal is 1.7 % which is well above the Asian average (1%). And global average (1.3%).² Globally, deforestation results in the annual loss of 1.3 million ha of forest (FAO 2005) , there were several sectors affected by deforestation.

Community Forestry programme was initiated in Nepal in the late seventies and Nepal has been practising it most effectively since last two decades after the commencement of Master Plan of Forestry Sector in Nepal 1988 and consequently the forest Act 1993 & Forest Regulation 1995. Till the Tuesday, August 13, 2013, According to the Community forestry User Groups Database Record available in Report of Community Forestry Division of the Department of Forest Nepal, the total number of forest usergroups (CFUGs) formed is 18,133 and the area of national forest

handed over as community forest (CF) is 1,700,048 hectares. Total number of households benefited is 2,237,195. The maximum and minimum number of members in a forest user group committee (FUC) is 25 and 4 respectively and that of women members in a committee is 29 and 0 respectively. Community forestry is national forests handed over to the local user groups for protection, management and utilization according to forest Act, 1993. The forests are managed according to the operational Plan (OP) prepared by community Forest Users Groups (CFUGs), approved by the District forest Office (DFO). According to the act, CFUGs has to be established and registered at the District Forest Office (DFO) before handing over of the forests and they are self-sustained institutions (Kanel 1993). The CFUGs can act as self-governing entities to generate, utilize and sell the forest product as mention in the Operational Plan. Procedural details of the community forestry are explained in the Forest Rules 1995 and community forestry guidelines and directives (Kanel 2006). Currently, forest area Covers 39.6% of the total land area of Nepal.

The experience of equity and sustainable development issues learnt from participatory forest management system adapting germ three decades in Nepal has encouraged policy makers to develop women centred policy and provision to increase women participation in forest management. Though many policy efforts have been tried to promote gender equity in all types of participatory forest management, it is still weak at operational level. The findings of this paper has shown the women inclusion in CFUG committee has only limited in 'member' though Guidelines has mentioned to have at least one-third women in executive committee. Three-fourth key position of the committee (chair, secretary and treasurer) is hold by men. The gender discriminative socio-cultural believes and practices have affected the system of forestry institution too. Low knowledge in gender sensitive budgeting and patriarchal behaviour are main challenges to promote gender sensitive development in forestry institutions. This paper has suggested three action line that helps to make forestry institutions gender sensitive, which are Gender focus staffing in all offices with specified job description, Develop all Illaka forest office as gender information centre and Motivation/orientation for compulsion of at least one women in any key position of executive committee.(acharya Keshab 2011)

Community forestry's successfulness has unique identification at international level as well. It demonstrates that the authority used by the government is to delegate power to community, which supports to empower the local people and help to establishing system for proper management of the forest area. Both government and communities are satisfied with this policy so finally Nepal has able develop some 16,000 CFUGs. This has brought about one third of the country's forest area under Community forestry (DOF 2010). However, women's participation in overall management is poor as the total only about 5 percent (800) forest are managed by women, which have the legal rights to manage over a million hectares of forest areas. Given its history of over three decades, studies have increasingly focused on the extent to which CFUGs implement democratic practices, improve livelihood options and restore ecological benefits (Dhital 2009).

Gender issues are becoming central to discussion of community forestry program in Nepal. Although policy has mentioned women's representation in CFUGs, but present legislation has not fixed any quota for the representation. So women and poor sections of the community in FUG committee. The Federation of Community Forestry Users in Nepal (FECOFUN) has made policy of having equal (50/50) female-male membership in the FUGs although this has not been translated fully into practice, recent data shows that the participation of women in FUG related activities is low. The total no. of CFUGs committee members are 1, 59,876 and the representation of women in CFUGs committee member's 40,727 in an average of 25.47% percent (Report of Community Forestry Division of the Department of Forest Nepal 2013, Aug.13)

Most of the rural people in Nepal traditionally depend on farming and livestock rearing for their livelihood. Forest is the major component of farming system and plays a vital role in the rural economy by providing fuel, construction materials, and animal feed. In Nepal, this traditional practice has been legitimized through the implementation of community forest program. Since the last twenty-five years, this program has been implemented with the objective of forest restoration and the participation of locals in the management of forest and allows them to derive forest resources for their benefits with equal focus on optimum conservation of vegetation.

Community forest can provide multiple goods and service comprising physical forest products and environmental services. Timber, fuel-wood, fodder, grass, leaf litter are collected by local people to satisfy their daily needs. Besides, forest also provides many other non-timber forest product of high economic value including medicinal and aromatic products. They also contribute to conserving soil and water resources and sequestering carbon. Thus, timber and non-timber products, recreation, climate regulation, carbon sequestration, option and existence values are the major benefits of forests. The forest services are of locally, nationally or even globally important (CFDP 1995).

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

Several factors explain the differentials between male and female workloads. In addition to agricultural and animal husbandry responsibilities, women have primary responsibility for food processing, fuel and fodder collection, and domestic chores, including cooking and child care. In many households men have migrated to other parts of Nepal or to India or even abroad in search of wage labour and temporary employment to supplement household income. The women then must assume a great proportion of the agricultural tasks as well.

After participation of women in Community Forest (CF) management there have been many changes because women always been sincere for their work. After their participation, protection of forest was found good. So women play a vital role for the management of forest resources in Nepal. (Bohora Som Bahadur 2008)

In these circumstances, the purposed study tries to look at the situation of women participation in community forest management and perception of women regarding the motivating factors and hindering factors that influences their role to involve in CF management. The study area is of Mygadi District of Nepal.

1.2 Statement of the Problem

Forest is a crucial component of the rural people for their livelihoods. It provides basic needs of fuel-wood, fodder, timber and green manure to the farmer and equally important in providing minor forest products which help to generate income to the local people. Forest is the integral part of farming system in the hills of Nepal. Forest resources are essential to the survival of farming people such as water for drinking and irrigation, fuel-wood for cooking and heating, fodder for livestock feeding, wood for shelter and enriching soils for growing crops. Since a long time back, hill farmers have been involved in forest management to sustain farming system.

In the context of forest management, women have been contributing for protection and management of the forest resources from time immemorial. However, their involvement in different aspects of natural resource management has been mostly in the form of nominal participation (Ostrum 1992). Their role is subsided by the existing patriarchal cultural practices, religious beliefs and value system, even though they are the prime managers of the natural resources (Njoroge 1999).

Women have been the prime managers of the natural resources from time immemorial (Njoroge, 1999). They have made great contribution in plantation, weeding, pruning and thinning activities of forest resource management. They are the responsible person for the collection of firewood, fodder, leaf-litter and so on for their livelihood. In addition, especially, in the rural areas, commercially valuable products such as medicinal plants, fruits, nuts, mushroom etc. are mainly collected by women (Banjade 2003).

Women have been taking part in development activities in Nepal, long before international concerns were voiced for including women in development and increasing their participation. In Nepali, Socio- economic context, women's workload is believed to be heavier in rural areas of the country compared to that of their men. However, their contribution to development activities at community level and work at household level is never recognized their status remained unimproved in spite of global efforts in increasing women's participation. There are constraints of women's participation in Nepali society at various level which can be eliminated mainly

through awareness generating and training at massive scale for both men and women because neither of the two gender exist isolation.

If women were sending their men to participate in the meetings and gatherings, they may have good reasons for the same. Why they do not want to or cannot participate in village meeting instead of their men? Without knowing this, arguing about involving or nominating of women into committees without their knowledge or consent, Just because a project or program has mandate to involve women their participation is not going to solve the problem or making things better for women. The practices in relation to this issue which can be observed at the field level in different parts of the country raises some questions such as whose requirement is this. Is it of state, planners, policy maker, donor, agencies or community and village? If women participation is deemed essential in planning implementing and decision making, why are they left out? Where do they belong in the process of development? How long they will have to represent only in the papers or just get nominated by other. Who think their participation is necessary? Questions such as these have intrigued many of us. This study will attempt to address some findings from selected community forest user groups.

There is no readymade solution to increase women's participation in forestry or community and rural development. As it is said, necessity is the mother of invention women's needs and problems. Could only motivate them for participation in any development interventions. Therefore, they themselves and other as well will have to identify their needs or interest to begin with. They should seek and also be given opportunities to speak about their problem listed to and properly motivated by local people and elite. So long as men decide, what the needs, problems, interest and priorities of their women are unfortunately, this is prevailing practice in most of the situations from the level of households to national and international the idea of enhancing women's participation in development will only rhetoric.(source: Upadhyashiju 1996)

Forest user groups in Nepal are characterized by a comparatively high level of women's participation. As a result several forest user groups are predominantly or entirely composed of women. Women in most of the groups are very committed to forest protection and management, although in many cases they have to re-vegetate

with severely degraded forest patches (Bhattarai after Stoian and Yadav 1997). They should regularly participate in community meetings and involve themselves in decision making. Most male dominated rural societies in Nepal have now been increasingly convinced that women are capable of making decisions regarding forest conservation and the sustainable use of their resources. In many cases, FUCs entirely composed of women may be nominal so that decisions made by them may be the reflection of their male heads. In general, the poor, illiterate and disadvantaged women are ignorant of FUG activities. This may be the reason that there is a poor reflection of their opinion in forest management. Such women attend the meetings but they do not exchange their opinion. Some factors might be rendered behind such inactive role of women, which is the major aspect of sustainable CF management. Since women are playing vital role in forest management like collecting fuel wood, fodder, leaf compost and bedding, tree planting and controlling grazing their involvement in participatory resource management is prerequisite. But most user group forests don't have adequate fodder, fuel wood, and bedding materials.

Therefore, women have to go to distance places from where they manage to bring only one bhari (back load) a day. Village women often lack confidence to become involved in CF management activities because of illiteracy. They may have to face numerous difficulties in decision making process. Various studies indicate that many women informants believed they could participate better in forest management. If they were able to read and write, they could maintain minute books or handle correspondence independently. Efforts should be given to integrate the concerns of women in CF. Women literacy and training for women may improve their confidence and management skills.

Women are the real users and responsible for protection, management and utilization of forest products. Fundamentally, this research tried to assesses women's participation in community forestry management from various dimensions based on their existing socio-economic and cultural background. More specifically, this study had focused to seek answers of the following questions:

- a) What are the major factors that are more responsible the women Participation in executive level of community forest users group of Myagdi district?

- b) What are the rules and regulations the user have made for the management activities to their forest?
- c) Are women users involving equally in decision making, monitoring and evaluation and benefit sharing activities of the community forest?
- d) What are the motivating factors of women's involvement in community forest management?

1.3 Objective of the Study

The general objective of the study is to investigate the real participation of women in Community Forest User Group's Executive Committee in Myagdi District.

Specific objectives of the study are follows:

- a) To find out the women participation in the executive committee (Vital and other post).
- b) To investigate women participation in other community forest activities and decision making process.

1.4 Significance of the Study

Nepalese women can play the vital role and contribute to manage natural resources, its development, and conservation, which ultimately leads to the building the nation. In the Nepalese context, rural women are the real users of the forest resources. Therefore, their involvement and contribution in the CF management process needs to be recognized and properly incorporated in to the community forestry policies and strategies. Different development initiatives are focusing on women's participation in natural resources management. It is therefore, this study was concerned whether there is an actual involvement of women or not in community forest management.

This study basically explains the different dimensions of women's participation in CF management. Moreover, it considers the Women participation in executive i.e. chairman, secretary, Treasure, and others small posts in community forest user group in Myagdi district. Similarly, decision making process in forest management, implementation, monitoring, evaluation and benefit sharing process were also analysed.

This study explains the problems associated with women's involvement in CF management activities and accessibility of forest products in relation to their presence in the community forest user group in the Myagdi district. Besides this, the study also suggests some of the areas to be analysed within the existing frame. This study is also expected to help the planners and decision makers to review and re-think on presence of women in executive level in community forest user group in Myagdi district.

1.5 Organization of the study

This study can be divided into five chapters. First chapter is introductory which involves background of community forest, participation of women in executive post in CFUG's group, objective of study and importance of study. Second involves related studied is done with community forest related with participation of women in executive post in CFUG's. Third involves research methodology which helps as guide line to finish the research work. It mainly helps us the methods to perform the study. Forth involves the data analysis which tells what carried information supports the objective of researcher or not and it helps to learn the methods of analysis the different nature of data and it gives the suitable statistical hypothesis to explain the objective. Last chapter involves the results and recommendations of the study.

CHAPTER – II

REVIEW OF LITERATURES

The relevant literatures on community forestry were reviewed so as to specify and better understand the study problems. Literature review has helped the researcher to clarify the concepts and formulates new ideas and better ways of looking at the study topic. Published literatures were reviewed to know what has already been done. There are significant numbers of studies related to the role of women in community forestry of which only a few are outlined here.

2.1 Natural Resources and Forestry in General

Forestry is the science, art, and business of sustainable managing our forests for all of the multiple uses and values required by society for its social, biophysical, and economic well-being (Lakehead 2008). Moreover, it is the science, art and practice of understanding, managing and using wisely the natural resources associated with, and derived from forest lands. These resources include timber, water, fish, wildlife, soil, plants, and recreation. The utilization of all of these resources is part of the cultural heritage and modern resources management embraces these values. Forestry starts with trees knowing how they grow and what part they play in the world as a whole. Forests affect how we live and provide many things we use, so it is important to take care of them, understand what they give us, and use them wisely. (Source: Lamichhane Dhanajaya: 2004)

Forestry is the science, art, and practice of creating, managing, using, and conserving forests in a sustainable manner to meet desired goals, needs, and values (SAF 2008). In simpler terms, the forestry profession focuses on caring for trees, soils, water, wildlife, and other forest benefits, both for now and for future generations. Forestry includes such diverse specialties as forest, wildlife and fisheries, pest, disease, and fire management; research and teaching; forest recreation, wilderness, and watershed management; agro- and urban forestry; policy and economics; communications; technology applications; genetics; and environmental degradation.

2.2 Social and Community Forestry

The term “social forestry” was first used by the Indian government in 1976 to describe forestry on village not forest reserve land. This reflects the widespread debate at the time over issues such as what the real objectives of social forestry activities were (or should have been) and what the outcomes were both in terms of stated objectives and unexpected results (ODI 2008). Social forestry scheme can be categorized into groups: farm forestry, community forestry, extension forestry and agro-forestry (Edugreen, 2008).

Social forestry also aims at raising plantations by the common man so as to meet the growing demand for timber, fuel wood, fodder, etc., thereby reducing the pressure on the traditional forest area. This concept of village forests to meet the needs of the rural people is not new. It has existed through the centuries all over the country but it was now given a new character.

With the introduction of this scheme the government formally recognized the local communities’ rights to forest resources, and is now encouraging rural participation in the management of natural resources. Through the social forestry scheme, the government has involved community participation, as part of a drive towards a forestation, and rehabilitating the degraded forest and common lands. (Source: chettri Bahadur som 2008)

The "Community forestry” is a village-level forestry activity, decided on collectively and implemented on communal land, where local populations participate in the planning, establishing, managing and harvesting of forest crops, and so receive a major proportion of the socio-economic and ecological benefits from the forest" (Martel & Whyte 1992).

"Successful community forestry requires... genuine popular participation in decision-making... Experience has proven time and again that participation is more than a development cliché; it is an absolute necessity if goals are to be met. But, working with people rather than policing them is a new role for many foresters" (Eckholm et al 1984).

Community forestry has the following characteristics: the local community controls a clearly and legally defined area of forest; the local community is free from governmental and other outside pressure concerning the utilization of that forest; if the forestry involves commercial sale of timber or other products, then the community is free from economic exploitation of markets or other pressure from outside forces; the community has long-term security of tenure over the forest and sees its future as being tied to the forest" (J. Evington 1992).

Community forestry, social forestry and rural development forestry are more or less equivalent and reflect Abraham Lincoln's view of democracy - government of the people, by the people, for the people"(J. Burley 2008).

The terms "social forestry", "community forestry" and "farm forestry" are frequently encountered and used interchangeably. Kirchhofer and mercer (1984), for example, define community forestry (social forestry at village level) and farm forestry (social forestry at household level) as subsystems of forestry at the regional and national levels.

Similarly, both "social forestry" and "community forestry" can be used interchangeably if it refers to a social oriented forestry practice or project at the village level. In this regard, Palit (1996: 12) defined social forestry as:

‘Any activity (such as the purposive growing of trees, certain techniques in crop production soil conservation, improved use of wild forest products) of a social group which has as its ultimate effect a movement of that group while at the same time lessening the pressure which that population is applying to the resources of the natural forest through a more efficient and more intensive use of land’.

2.3 Forestry in Nepal: Policy history and Strategies

The Forests Division was established in 1942for the scientific management of forests under state ownership (HMG/N 1976). During the period from 1942 to the mid-1970s forest management was exclusively protection oriented. Because people live near and are dependent on forests, management must include local people as they fulfill their needs for firewood, fodder and timber. Although the forests have been nationalized

and forest officials made very powerful, as a result, deforestation continued and forest management was practiced in vain. Forest management as practiced exclusively by the department was not successful. Including local people in forest management and providing an incentive for local management became a crucial issue. The National Forest Plan of 1976 was highly committed to initiate people's participation in forest management and made provisions to hand over a part of government forests to local political units or village councils called "Panchayats."

'The Panchayat Forest and Panchayat Protected Forest Rules 1978' officially initiated the implementation of a community forestry program in Nepal. Forest lands without trees were handed over to local panchayats as "Panchayat forest" and with trees as "Panchayat protected forests." Once the forests were handed over as Panchayat Forest (PF) and Panchayat Protected Forests (PPF), political bodies were required to conduct the protection and maintenance of forests and implementation of a scientific forestry management plan prepared by the Forest Division in consultation with the Panchayat. The Panchayat and Panchayat Protected Forest Rules of 1978 also had some inherent problems such as forests were not handed over to actual users who were protecting the forests or who could protect the forests. Because the forests were highly degraded, there were no initial benefits and incentives for long-term management. Similarly, since the Panchayats used to get a portion of the income from the PPF, the villagers lacked incentive for managing the PPF (Panchayat Forest and Panchayat Protected Forest Rules 1978)'.

'The Master Plan for the Forestry Sector' (MPFS 1989) was approved in 1989 providing a 25-year policy and planning framework and remains the main policy and planning document for the continuing development of the forestry sector. The long term objectives of the Master Plan was to meet the people's basic needs for forest products on a sustained basis, conserving ecosystems and genetic resources, protecting land against degradation and other effects of ecological imbalance, and contributing to local and national economic growth.

The Master Plan, regarding community forestry programs, highlighted of handed over all the accessible hill forests of Nepal to user groups (not to the Panchayats) to the extent that they are willing and capable of managing them and the priority of community forests is to supply forest products to those who depend on them with the

adequate involvement of women and the poor in the management of community forests.

The major recommendations of the Master Plan have been incorporated in the Forest Act (1993) and Forest Rules (1995). The act and the rules have given substantial rights to local people in managing their community forests. The codification of these rights in the national legislation is one of the unique features of community forestry in Nepal. Further elaboration of these rules is made in the community forestry directives and guidelines. The focus of this legislation is on institutionalizing CFUG as an independent and self-governing entity, nationwide expansion of community forestry, providing utilization and management rights to the local community, and creating an accountability forum for community development. It has also limited the role of the district forest office to that of supporter, facilitator, monitor and regulator of community forestry.

'Forest sector Policy 2000' withdraws some of the rights of local forest users in the plains area of Terai, with the intention that the forests would be better managed by the active involvement of the government. The new policy has created antagonism between the Terai users and the government, and the government has not been able to manage the forests better. Presently, the government is trying to pilot an approach called "collaborative forest management" in the three Terai districts with the financial support of the Dutch government. The outcome of this pilot program has yet to be seen in the field. As per this cabinet decision, the government imposed 40% revenue sharing on the sale of Timber from the CF of the Terai and Inner Terai. However, the Supreme Court annulled this decision. The government, then, started to collect this revenue through the promulgation of finance act. The finance act was later revised in the last and this fiscal year. As per the revised finance act, the government collects only 15% of the sales proceeds from the sale of surplus timber of only two commercial species of the Terai.

The 'Tenth Plan' was prepared in the context of Millennium Development Goals, and is also considered as the Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper (PRSP). The plan has as its target the reduction of poverty in Nepal from 38% to 30% by the year 2007. It has four pillars for intervention - broad based high economic growth, social sector development, social inclusion/targeted programs, and good governance. In line with

the overall objectives of the PRSP, the Forestry Sector under the Tenth Plan also has goals of reducing deforestation, soil erosion and the degradation of biodiversity as well as solving the problems of poverty and unemployment. Sustainable management and conservation in this case includes managing a supply of forest products while conserving the environment through management and enterprise development of forests, watersheds, plant resources and biodiversity. Poverty alleviation includes providing employment and income opportunities for the poor, women and disadvantaged groups using participatory approaches and expanding forest development activities, as well as providing greater access to decision making in CFUGs. The plan also allows farming of NTFP and medicinal plants within community forest areas. Finally, the user group formation process will be monitored and improved to address the challenge of achieving equitable forest product distribution among community forest users.

2.4 Community Forestry in Nepal

In 1978, the government, recognizing the rapid depletion and deterioration of the country's forest resources and the Forest Department's limited capacity to handle the problem alone, introduced community forestry policy to seek local communities' cooperation in the sustainable management and use of the country's forest resources. The policy puts control of forests in the hands of the users of the resource, with the role of the Forest Department staff shifting from that of manager and controller of forests (policing) to that of adviser for forest users (HMGN 1989).

Community forestry is most accurately and usefully understood as an umbrella term denoting a wide range of activities which link rural people with forests, trees, and the products and benefits to be derived from them. Gilmour and Fisher (1991) define community forestry in terms of control and management of forest resources by the rural people who use them especially for domestic purposes and as an integral part of their farming systems. Since community forestry constitutes both social and biophysical elements, they both are equally important. The "resource" can be managed effectively with a clear understanding of forest management principles and knowledge of natural system and "social" part can be dealt with a clear understanding of a society and their relationships with the resource and institutions related to it.

The way community forestry approach used to be defined and interpreted in Nepal up until late 70s, suggests that community forestry implies 'community-resource' relations, commonly known as 'indigenous system of forest management' (Fisher 1989), which was widespread in Nepal's hills. During 80s and beginning of 90s, nevertheless community forestry was further conceptualized and internalized, new policy framework was crafted (HMGN 1988), legal instruments have been in place (HMGN 1995), various processes, methods and tools have been developed, modified, re-modified and experience gained. During this period, community forestry was understood and recognized as government's priority programmed, for which the role of forest bureaucracy in the hills changed from policing to facilitating leading to the evolution of community-resource relations towards a triangular interface among community, resource and government bureaucracy.

In the late 90s, with the changing political and policy context, community forestry is being understood and conceptualized in terms of stakeholders relationship because there has not only been increasing trend of FUGs, tremendous number and types of stakeholders and service providing agencies and organizations, with diverse interests and influence have emerged and grown. The pattern of interactions among these agencies with FUGs and government organizations in fact influence each other's action, their own governance system, gender equity issues, and ultimately to the way how resource is managed and utilized, how the management plans, strategies and programmers are designed and implemented, how negotiation takes place and conflicts are resolved for effective forest management in order to achieve the desired outcomes at people's livelihoods and resource condition level. This is the context within which community forestry in Nepal is growing and always progressing. It is not like as it was in the past and it will not be in the future as it is now, therefore community forestry should be defined, redefined and understood in a dynamic way.

The present form of Nepal's community forestry is guided by the Forest Act of 1993, Forest Regulations of 1995, and the Operational Guidelines of 1995. These legal instruments have legitimized the concept of Community Forest User Group (CFUG) as an independent, autonomous and self-governing institution responsible to protect, manage and use any patch of national forest with a defined forest boundary and user group members. CFUGs are to be formed democratically and registered at the District

Forest Office (DFO), with CFUG Constitution, which defines the rights of the users to a particular forest.

In 1978 the Community Forestry Development Program (CFDP) introduced the concepts of Panchayat Forestry (PF) and Panchayat Protected Forestry (PPF) with the purpose of handing back for protection and management of the forest to the people. In the 1980s, decentralization regulations were introduced in the forestry sector to establish and foster local people and local organizations, participation in the management and development of PF and PPF. In 1990 at the end of Nepal's Panchayat System of government brought a change in the status of PF and PPF. Today, the term community forestry is used to refer to any forest under user group protection and management (Chhetri and Pandey 1992).

Community forestry has received high priority in the forestry sector program to the government as reflected in both the master plan for the forestry sector HMG, 1988 and the eight five year plan (NPC 1992). The main thrust of the community forestry policy of the government is the phased transfer of management and utilizations of community forest to the actual users based on simple operational plans which are prepared and endorsed jointly by the forest user and the assistant ranger from the district forest office. Assistant rangers are supposed to apply the rules, schedule and other institutional arrangements made for forest production management and utilization (Adhikari 2001).

Before 1957 there were no strict rules and regulation for the protection and use of the forest. The government paid no attention to develop the forest and allowed forest use to continue at higher rate, forest rehabilitation was simply ignored, so rapid deforestation has been seated serious problem e.g. floods, landslides, water security, decreased agriculture and livestock productivity etc. Generally the factors responsible for deforestations increased demand of forest and forest products due to population growth, clearance of the forest to increase the agricultural land and grazing livestock in the forest.

To solve the increasing problem of deforestation, in 1957 the government nationalized all forest to prevent the destruction of national wealth to nationalize private forests for their adequate protection (Regmi 1978). Unfortunately, the government was not

prepared to assume the technical and administrative responsibilities of forest ownership. Villagers reacted negatively to nationalization, believing that their traditional rights of access and use had been curtailed. As a result, local responsibility for forest protection disappeared whereas previously these had been communal responsibility for managing the forest, but after nationalization, no one took responsibility of managing the forest. Moreover, because there were no land records, villagers had a strong incentive to destroy the forest, so that the land could be claimed as private property after it was cleared and cultivated, as a result of inadequate government control and adverse local reaction to nationalization, Nepal's forests effectively became common property (Dankelman 1989).

The forestry Act of 1961 and its subsequent amendment and rules became the basic law governing forest administration in Nepal. Likewise the forestry act and the forestry protection Act 1967 attempted to establish empowering community to protect and manage the forest. Community and till leasehold forestry are at present the most important aspect of forestry development in Nepal.

2.5 Women's Participation in Community Forestry Management

In the Asian countries women (more than men) spend a significant portion of their time in forest related activities such as farming, collection of fuel wood and fodder, grazing animals, fetching water and cooking. Several studies conducted in different parts of country so that this is also case of Nepal and such studies stress the need to involve women in forest management so that the community itself can protect and develop local forest resources successfully (New ERA 1983).

Siddiqi (1989) argues that Women's participation will help the forest first & the women second. Women will have to give forestry before forestry gives to them. He writes that it is essential to involve women in developing and implementing workable management plans, there has to be a targeted effort to draw them in. Because of the nature of Nepalese society and positions of men women in it, other strategies may be unworkable, e.g.; the attempt by the Nepal Australia Forestry Project to integrate women into existing organisations rather than organise a separate structure for them, which proved to be unworkable.

Women have worked successfully in both mixed and all female forestry committees in rural Nepal. Men and women and professional foresters now generally agree that women are capable of committee management. She argues that women's membership of forestry committees be promoted, primarily through extension activities (Inserra 1988).

Box 1 The Chipko Movement for Forest Protection

The Chipko movement was against adding 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 by deforestation. When the forest department announced auction of 2500 trees in the Reni forests was overlooking the Alak Nanda 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 10 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 up cooperatives to guard local forests, and to organized fodder production at rates that will no harm the trees. Within the Chipko movement, women have joined in land rotation schemes for fodder collection, helped replant degraded land and established and run nurseries stocked with species the select (Borg, BVD 1989).

Women's participation in a programme also depends on how they perceive the benefits accruing from it. Castillo puts people's participation depends on how effective a programme is in fulfilling the interest of the people. Generally, speaking the higher the prospect of benefits from a development programme, the greater will be participation in its activities (Cohen and Up Hoff 1977).

Hoskins (1981), argues that the in which programme's benefits are shared out is also a major factor affecting in participation. It proved that, the higher prospect of equitable benefit sharing, the greater the chances of women's participation. Further, he argues that women's expertise in forest related activities in generally unnoticed by the concerned agencies and as a result, programme cannot achieve their commitments.

A study conducted in the western development region of Nepal by Panday (1997) shows that representation of women in the Executive level of Community forest user group was nil in seven FUGs and found to be only marginal in others except all-women group. Similarly Adhikari (2001) concludes in his study that CF is as a successful NRM initiative with the management of CFUGs. Management of forest resources through the involvement of resource users has been realized increasingly as a better strategy for protection, conservation and sustainable use of forest resources in the hills. It is clearly demonstrated that women due to their interaction with the natural resources have developed vast indigenous knowledge, skill and technology regarding the conservation, protection, use and management of those resources. From gender prospective, involvement and participation of women in the planning and decision making forum of CF programme were found to be minimal. CF programme cannot be as expected if a present trend of women's low participation continues.

Regarding women's participation, data (NGO/DFO 2013) shows that currently 613(4.85%) FUGs are handling by all women group. Similarly, 33567(21.5%) women are working as EC member in different FUGs. The number of formation of all women CFUGs is higher (97 CFUGs) in FY 053/54 and higher in percentage (9.0%) in FY 058/59. Despite the gradual decreasing in number the percentage of formation of all women FUG is optimistically increasing in recent years. As women's strenuous work carried out in other countries, Nepalese women have shown equal concern on forest resource and environmental management. For example, Women handled CFUGs named Malati of Saptari district showed capability and the won award Ganesh Man Singh Van Samrakchan uraskar, by conserving the CF efficiently (Gautum,2059). Increasing trend of women member in EC and winning reputed award by all women group indicates women's capability that they can manage any forestry programme they offered.

In rural areas, Indigenous women have much knowledge about forest resources such as fuel wood, fodder and medicinal herbs because women are the main collectors of these products. They have an indigenous knowledge about forest resources and its efficient use. Indigenous Women exploit several different forests and numerous areas within the forests. They travel from low hills to high forests as far as six hours walk above their village. During spring and autumn Indigenous women go to the lower

forests, visiting higher forests in the winter, not only to collect firewood, fodder, food and herbs- which are almost solely a women's responsibility, but also to cut nigalo, the bamboo group, for men in the village to work with. Thus, rural indigenous women have the knowledge of identification of species, knew species name, its uses, geographic location, reasonability and availability and conservation of the natural resources (Shrepa 2004).

The importance of women in the collection of forest produce is borne by data from almost every country in Asia, Africa, and Latin America. For instance, in the North-West Frontier Province of Pakistan, women and children collect 78 percent of morels (Iqbal 1991). While women and children are the dominant players in collection and drying, men (53 percent) play a much more active role in the sale of morels. Similarly, women and children collect 90 percent of medicinal herbs and do 100 percent of the drying. Sale of medicinal herbs, disaggregated by gender, shows that 71 percent of the selling is done by women and children, and 29 percent by men (Iqbal 1991).

People's participation is the basic strategy to which the community forestry program is committed. It aims at involving people at every stage of community forest management activities. Participation of user households in every forest management activity can stimulate an ongoing learning process by increasing the awareness of collective responsibility within the community (Agrawal 2001). However, despite the continuous and conscious effort toward the participation of all users, the active participation of poor and marginalized people in forest management activities is quite low. Further, the program is causing some household to have significant problems in meeting their needs (Springate-Baginski et al., 2003). In deciding whether to participate, or not to participate in a community forest management activity, a household would be motivated by a number of factors. Poor households do not benefit from community forests as much as the others and are not very interested in community participation (Malla et al., 2003). Poor households also have a high opportunity cost of participation as the time spent on participation could be used as labour for cash income (Adhikari et al. 2004).

Forests cover about 4 billion hectares, nearly 31 percent of the earth's land surface. The rate of deforestation has slowed down in recent years. Between 2000 and 2010

the estimated net change in forest area was about 5.2 million hectares per year while between 1990 and 2000 it was -8.3 million hectares. This reduction in forest depletion is attributed to large-scale planting of trees and forest protection programmes (FAO, 2010). However, forest degradation is still very high in many countries. Indeed, the management and protection of common property resources and of forests in particular has been and remains a global challenge. Over the past decades the widespread concerns on deforestation and forest degradation, Specifically of the Himalayan forest, have raised questions on the best ways to limit and counteract this trend and to understand its causes (Baland et al., 2010, 2013). Few studies analyse the determinants of fuel wood collection which is assumed to be one of the causes of deforestation and forest degradation (Baland et al., 2013, 2010; Edmonds, 2002; Foster and Rosenzweig, 2003). Poverty has been advanced as one of the hypothesis for environmental degradation. However, some of these studies do not find evidence that poverty is a determinant of deforestation. Poorer households collect less than richer ones, but at the top income level fuel wood collection starts to decrease. In addition, despite consumption growth appearing to accelerate deforestation, an increase in education, non-agricultural occupations and access to other sources of fuel wood may reduce this pressure on forests, highlighting the importance of distinguishing between sources of growth when looking at the effect of poverty on environmental degradation (Baland et al., 2013). Understanding the causes of deforestation becomes particularly relevant for determining the ways forests can be protected. The protection of forests and, in general, of common property resources from an overexploitation and hence from depletion as population grows is crucial for dining any developing policy (Wade, 1987). The question is then to understand how best these resources can be protected and managed (Baland and Platteau, 1996). Common property resources are essential to the livelihoods of a large part of the population mostly in developing countries. Indeed the depletion of these resources, besides posing concerns for the sustainability of the entire world population, becomes particularly worrying for those populations which rely on these resources for their daily lives (i.e., the rural poor in developing countries). Water, grazing land, agricultural land, forests, and isheries are all common property resources. The rights to exploit these resources are held in common with many individuals and these rights can take various forms from an unlimited use to an almost total ban in the access to the resources (Wade 1987). Essentially common property resources represent a subset

of public goods. They are non-excludable but rival in consumption. Unlike public goods, common property resources face problems of congestion, depletion and degradation (Runge 1986), because their joint use implies subtract ability. Past literature concentrated on highlighting the failure of common property arrangements which generate a mismanagement of these resources and ultimately cause even more rapid degradation. The basic theoretical argument is that individual incentives inevitably lead to the mismanagement of common property resources. This is indeed well described in three of the most popular theories of collective action summarised by Wade (1987). Specially, in the Prisoner's Dilemma model, rational individuals do not have the incentive to cooperate. The Tragedy of the Commons theory (Hardin, 1968), which extends the argument to common property resources, predicts that the private benefit of an overexploitation of a common resource exceeds the private costs of protecting the resource from excessive use because this can be shifted to the whole group. A tragedy of the commons emerges because of the existence of common property rights over a scarce resource. In the Logic of Collective Action (Olson 1965), (Mancur Olson) argues that a rational individual, unless forced by corrective mechanisms, will always have the incentive to ignore the social costs of an overexploitation of the resource and act for his own interests. He also adds that only small groups will have the incentive to voluntarily cooperate and successfully protect the collective good while large populations will never have this incentive (Olson, 1965). As a result of these theories, the tendency therefore was to give a relatively small role to local collective action institutions for environmental protection and economic development. However, since the mid-1980s the discussions on which type of institutional arrangement is best for common property resource management changed and a vast literature on common property arrangements emerged (Agrawal, 2001). This more recent literature claimed for the success of collective action as an effective alternative to private resource management or state regulation of a common resource (Baland and Platteau, 1996; Wade 1987). The claim was based on the recognition that the above theories hold under the assumption that individuals cannot communicate, which is implausible in many situations (Wade, 1987). As a result voluntary collective action institutions can emerge and be successful in protecting the common interest if effective rules and related sanctions are established within the group. Since then the belief that local communities through the formation of collective action institutions could successfully manage common property resources

and hence contribute to environmental protection and local development became relevant (Baland and Platteau, 1996; Bardhan, 1993). “Participatory development” and “community driven development” became common themes across countries with natural resources to protect (Hobley and Shakya, 2012). However, Baland et al. (2007), while proclaiming the potential of small rural communities in achieving the goals of environmental protection and economic development, emphasise that group heterogeneity may lead to a failure of these institutions. Often a failure of collective action institutions in protecting common property resources (e.g., forests) results from inequalities within the groups which prevent them from successfully cooperating. The authors stress the relevance of various dimensions of inequality. In particular, income and asset inequality matters as well as ethnic and social heterogeneity which may influence the well functioning of collective action institutions. Group participation may be lower in localities that are more unequal in terms of income and ethnicity (Alesina and La Ferrara, 2000). Most importantly for the current analysis, gender inequality within groups may affect the level of cooperation. Women are largely excluded from any decision making within community groups. In addition, gender norms and divisions of roles within the household have tended to exclude women at many levels within society. This under-representation together with pre-existing gender inequalities within the household and the society as a whole, poses serious concerns for women who have the primary responsibility for the collection of forest products within the household (Agarwal 2007). This suggests that the nature of dependence on forest is different between women and men. Women have a higher interest than men in ensuring the availability of fuel wood and other forest products essential for their daily life. This is also related to the burden associated with deterioration in forest conditions (Acharya and Gentle, 2006). Environmental degradation and natural resource scarcity affect women and children’s time directly, given they have to walk longer distances for the collection of fuel wood (Cooke, 1998). Similarly, women and children’s health may be adversely affected by fuel wood scarcity. Indeed, the use of firewood in an enclosed environment (i.e., a house) is also potentially unhealthy.

Similarly, in West Bengal, India, tribal women gather *Sal* leaves for six months of the year to supplement household income (Poffenberger 1990, Rajan 1995). In India, collection of *tenduleaf* (used for manufacturing *bidi*) generates part time employment for 7.5 million people and they are predominantly tribal women (Arnold 1995). Women in Uttar Pradesh, India derive a substantial proportion of their income from forests and common lands; poor women derive 45 percent of their income from forest and common land compared to 13 percent for men (FAO 1991)

CHAPTER – III

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This research is a descriptive and an exploratory type which employees both qualitative and quantitative data from primary and secondary sources. The research design entails the different type of data and involves assorted method and techniques to collect the required information. It was ensured that findings and analysed explanations can be subjected to empirical scrutiny and used for comparison.

3.1 Study Area and its Selection

This study will be carried out from Myagdi district of CFUGs. Necessary information's will take from primary and secondary sources of data like book, booklet, journal, national and international magazine and interview with respondent, focus group discussing, DFO staff etc. Data will be collected on Simple random sampling. Data selection is based on the basis of the following criteria:

The CFUGs, which meets all the women participation in major post (Chairperson, or secretary) and others committee members.

The women participation in other community forest activities and decision making process.

3.2 Adapted Approach to the Study

Multiple approaches were adopted to accomplish the study. This study was primarily based on the primary data; however, the secondary information was also gathered through published and unpublished reports, journals and literature review. The major approach applied to achieve the set objectives include:

Conducting field survey

Gathering and analysing primary and secondary information; reviewing existing literatures and Verifying collected information through informal discussions with key informants and focused group discussions.

3.3 Research Design

In this study, the researcher applied both exploratory and descriptive research design. The exploratory research design was applied to explore the issues concerned with the participation of women in community forestry management activities. Descriptive research design was used to describe decision making power of women of the studied population.

3.4 Nature and Sources of Data

In this study, both the primary and secondary sources of information were used. The primary information was collected from the field survey. The survey was designed in such a way that the structured questionnaire and checklists were the basis for formal method used in data generation. Informal talks and participatory assessment was also carried out to enrich and check the efficiency of the formal method being employed. The data from the secondary sources were also gathered and analysed. Some of the secondary information was collected from District Forest office and the Hariyali kholchu Deurali Community Forest User Committee.

Qualitative data was gathered from field survey and informal interviews (participatory assessment) as it is felt that freedom of respondents to discuss their beliefs would lead to greater understanding by the subject to be studied; Quantitative data was gathered mainly from secondary sources and intermittently crosschecked through field survey.

3.5 Universe and Sampling

Universe is defined as the total objects or elements of the site area. There were 307 Community forest users group (CFUG) and 35,457 households at the time of registration in this Myagdi District. There are 200 households user in Hariyali kholchu Deurali from which researcher will take 32% (64) households as a sample to study. Sampling is the process of selecting the objects out of the universe. We take the sample from using of different methods like simple random sampling (probability sampling) with applying lottery procedure to select sample. For the selection of household for interview prior noticed was served informing the respondents of the household interview. The researcher herself visited the research areas with her

research assistant and representatives from the concerned Illaka forest office with the permission of the DFO, Myagdi. Then the researcher searched for key persons who have an idea about the concerned community. As respondents were only women, local men were not allowed to be present during the interview. Major castes like Brahmin, Chettri, Ethnic groups like: Magar, Shrestha, and Dalit like: Bishokarma, Nepali, etc. are available in the ward. Main occupation of the people is an agriculture production like cattle grazing and crops gathering. Part time job of school children is also business activities.

In addition to this pre-defined criteria, sample for interview with officials from government and development partners and for the focus group discussion, was selected through the purposive sampling approach. Hence, both probability and non-probability sampling designs were adopted in this study.

3.6 Techniques and Tools for Primary Data Collection

3.6.1 Field Survey

Primary data was collected through structured questionnaire (Annex I) which was used to interview respondents. On the spot checking of the entire completed questionnaire will be done so that any ambiguous information can be immediately asked to the respondents. Errors and ambiguities will be detected during this stage by the re-interview if required.

Household survey was conducted to acquire detail information about population characteristics like caste and ethnicities, age and sex composition, marital status, religious, occupation education, etc. Moreover, landholding size, livestock number and their types, housing patterns, source of firewood, fodder and timber of forest products collection and involvement of collection were also collected through household survey. Besides these it also helped selecting the key information who was actively involved in the forest management activities since the beginning.

3.6.2 Observation

Observation was used to collect qualitative information like women's participation in community forest management activities including decision making, monitoring and

evaluating activities, program implementation and benefit sharing. Observation also helped the researcher to recheck the information which is collected through the other tools. In my observation, I observed the participation of women's in different activities such as general assembly, executive committee and operational plan. But I found that women participation is lower than the male due to their household chores.

3.6.3 Focused Group Discussion

Focus group discussion proved helpful to find out relevant information like decision making, evaluation process of CF management activities. Two group discussions were held during the field work. One group discussion was held in respondent house. Through this discussion information about motivating and hindering factors of women's participation were collected. Another group discussion held in tea shop which helped to collect information about socio-cultural practices in the study area.

3.6.4 Key Informants Interviews

Through the key informant's interview, information regarding the women participation in community forest, the history of forest, women's involvement in forest and hindering and motivating factors of women's participation in CF management were collected. Key informants were the knowledgeable persons of the community. Among them three were elder people of CF and two executive committee members. But the checklist did not limit the discussion to issues raised by the informants. Several probing questions were asked depending upon the level and the capacity of the informants.

3.6.5 Case Studies

A case study views a social unit as a whole (Sharma 2003). The case studies are expected to furnish the research exploring the reality and the realization of community forestry at the local level. In this study, case study has also done. In a case study the investigator makes an in-depth study of a person a social group, and episode, a process, a situation, a community, an institution or any other social units (Kothari 1999).

3.7 Data Base Management

The main task of data analysis is to bring the data in to a systematic order out of the mess of the notes, to pick out the central themes of the study and to carry them across to written work (Baker 1999). The qualitative data were analysed and interpreted descriptively making the argument in logical way. The quantitative data were coded classified on the basis of nature of data and then presented in various tables by using simple statistical tools

3.7.1 Limitation of the Study

This was a research work mainly conducted for an academic purpose based on the information from primary sources and suffered from certain limitations that covers:

This is only a micro level study on community forestry focusing on involvement of women in its management in Nepal.

Due to the time and resource limitation, the field survey was conducted only at a community forestry user group. Thus, the generalization made in this study may or may not represent the country as a whole.

The data collected on different characteristics of ideas, thoughts and voices of people was mainly be based on the memory of the respondents, thus some errors may be expected due to memory lapses.

The success stories that has cited in this study may or may not represent the total scenario of the extent of management of community forestry in the country.

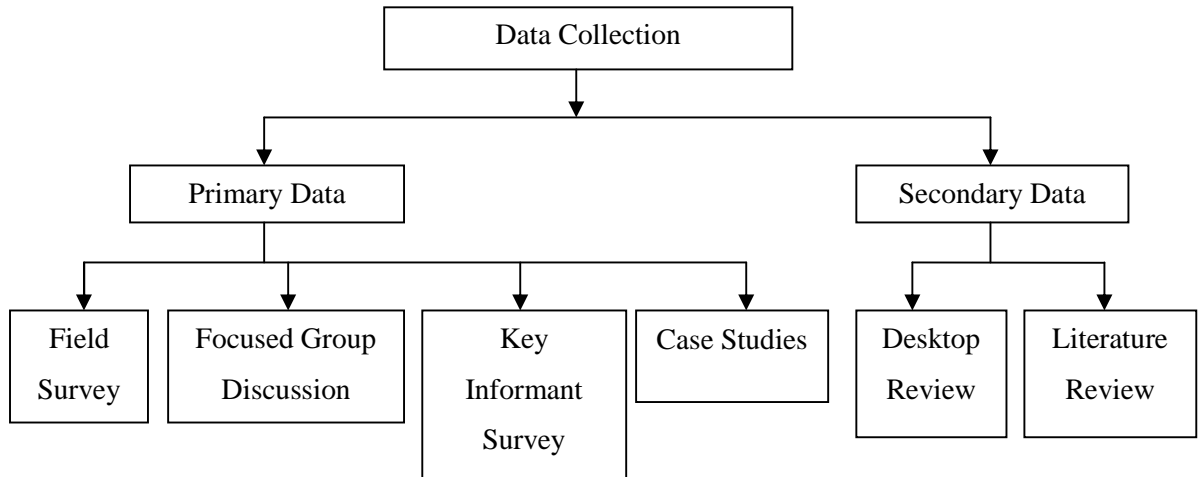
The calculation and analysis made in this study was based on the simple statistical tool used i.e. percentage, average, range, mean and simple bar and pie chart.

3.7.2 Desktop Review

The desktop review was consists of information collection from scattered sources i.e. Department of Forest, District forest Office (DFO) Myagdi, Village Development Committee (VDC), Federation of Community Forest Groups of Nepal (FECOFUN) and the consultations held with a range of individual from related stakeholders in

order to widen the knowledge and share the experiences on community forestry management and involvement of women. This type of desktop review was found helpful in refining the research questions and to direct the study focus.

Figure 1: Data Collection Procedure



3.7.3 Tabulation of Data

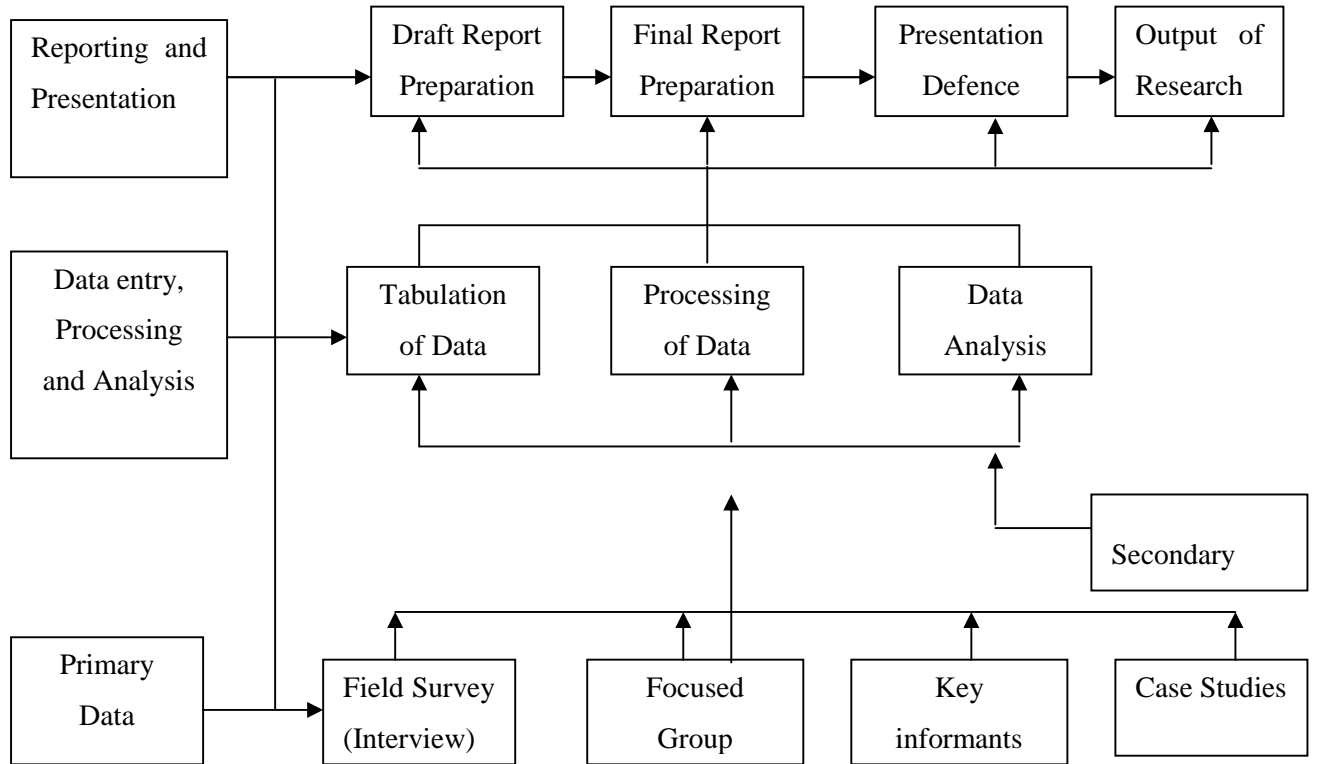
The completed questionnaires were rechecked in the field each day so that the missing information could be obtained on the spot. All the completed questionnaires were tabulated in systematic way for representation of the samples.

3.7.4 Data Entry, Processing and Analysis

For data analysis, desk analysis was conducted first. The data analysis consists of coding and entered into the computer software simply designed by the researcher. Some information was analysed manually. Simple statistical tools such as mean, percentage, frequency, pie-chart, graph, trend analysis and bar diagrams were employed during the data analysis. The analysis was performed through cross tabulation wherever necessary in order to explore the relation between different variables. Qualitative data was checked through focus group discussions, accidental interview and key informant survey. The valuable points, issues, statements were picked up from the qualitative data to supplement and complement other data sources to draw conclusions and recommendations. Also, the national aggregated data was

compared to the field data in order to explore the ground reality of the community forestry management in the study area.

Figure 2: Schematic Frameworks for Data Analysis



CHAPTER – IV

DATA PRESENTATION AND ANALYSIS

4.1 General Introduction of the Study Area

4.1.1 Myagdi District

Myagdi district lies in the western part of Nepal in between 28° 60' to 30° 13' north latitude and 83° 27' to 84° 24' east longitude. It is surrounded by Baglung and Parbat in the south and Rukum in the west, Mustang in the north and Myagdi khola and Kaligandaki River separating Baglung and Parbat in the west and north. Its elevation ranges from 366 m. at sea to 3015 m. at Mustang level. Being a mountainous district, it is hot in the southern lowland and valleys. However, it is cold at uphill. Average temperature ranges from maximum 28.3° C to minimum 9.5° C and average annual rainfall is 2665 mm. The district occupies a total area of 1164 square kilometres, out of which 15% is tropical, 70% sub-tropical and 15% temperate climatic region. The land use classification of the district is 36.6% agriculture, 30.6% forest, 9.7% pasture, 21.4% uncultivated inclusions and 1.7% others (LRMP, 1984-85). Total population of the district is 317320, out of which female and male are 173701 and 143619 respectively and average family size is 5. Population growth rate is 0.81% and density is 272 per square kilometre. Major religions are Hindu (86.07%) and Buddha (12.47%) including others (1.46%). The caste and ethnic groups include more than 13 with majority of chettri (33.51%), brahmin (20.32%), Thakuri (11.75%) and others (10.55%). Literacy rate of male and female is 76% and 55% respectively, which mean 64% in total. The occupation of 33.7% of the total population is agriculture (CBS, 2058). The district has been practicing community forestry development program since last two decades. The potential community forest includes 22,527 ha forest areas and 14795 ha open area. Forest in Myagdi consists of more than 600 small patches scattered all over the district. A substantial number of community forests i.e. more than 307 CFs have already been handed over, out of which 21 were handed over to Women FUGs.

4.1.2 Result and discussion of study Area

This chapter deals to result of data analysed and possible discussion on the related topics. Broadly this chapter contains respondents' general information, membership and representation in CFUG committee participation in decision making, benefit sharing, distribution of forest products and mobilization in CFUG funds, access to information and opportunities.

4.1.3 Respondent's General Information

The classification for respondents age class was followed as defined and stated by pokhrel (2003). Majority of non-dalit, poor and non- poor respondents were from young age with 44%, 46% and 45% respectively. Majority of male respondents (40%) were from old age while female (64%) were from young age. In this study, dalit respondents were found between different groups ranging from 18 to 65 years with mean age 35.5 years while non-dalit respondent's age ranging from 20 to 72 with mean age 40.2 years. Poor respondents were found ranging from 20 to 73 years with mean age 43.1 years while non-poor respondents age ranged from 20 to 80 with mean age 44 years. Male respondents were found between the age ranging from 20 to 75 with mean age 42.5 years with female respondents age ranging from 19 to 68 with mean age 37 years.

Table no.1:

Respondent's General Information

Age groups(in years)	Respondents' status in %					
	Social		Economic		Gender	
	Dalit (n=50)	Non-dalit(n=50)	Poor (n=50)	Non-poor(n=50)	Male (n=50)	Female (n=50)
Young aged (18-35)	30	44	46	45	26	60
Medium aged (36-55)	44	36	30	35	34	30
Old aged (above 55)	26	20	24	20	40	10

Source: Field Survey, 2015

4.1.4 Education of Respondents

Education status of the respondents was classified broadly into illiterate, primary (1-5 classes), secondary (6- SLC) and college degree. Majority of the respondents from social category were illiterate dalits by 47% while 46% were from non-dalits. Only one of the respondents of poor had college degree qualification. More poor respondents were illiterate (55%). More female respondents (56%) were literate and primary (1-5) education status. Chi-square value showed that education of respondents differed significantly between poor and non –poor categories,(Symbol of chi square =9.125 sig. at 95%. From my observation data of Bhagawati VDC, Myagdi District , there different levels of economic status , different level of literacy , education level of female and poor people are lower than male or non-poor. Higher college level of education is only 7.4 percentage.

Table no. 2:

Education of Respondents

Respondents' status		Category in %			
		Illiterate	Primary	Secondary	College degree
Social	Dalit (n=50)	47	30	16	7
	Non-dalit (n=50)	46	16	28	10
Economic	Poor (n=50)	55	29	15	1
	Non-poor (n=50)	40	24	23	12.5
Gender	Male(n=50)	35	32	22	11
	Female (n=50)	56	17	24	3
Overall average		46.5	24.7	21.5	7.4

Source: Field Survey, 2015

4.1.5 Occupation of the Respondents

All the activities of earning by people for their livelihood and daily requirement fulfilment are termed as occupations. The respondents of study area are involved in

variety of occupations like farming, business, service, self-employment etc. Most of the people depends upon the farming for livelihood for daily life. More female and poor people worked on farming activities.

Table no. 3 :

Occupation of the Respondents

Status	Farming	Business	Service	Self-employment
Non-poor	78	5	8	9
Poor	88	3	3	6
Female	87	4	4	5
Male	79	6	7	8

Source: Field Survey, 2015

4.2 Biophysical Condition of Bhagawati VDC

The study area Hariyali kholchu Deurali community forest is located at ward No. 9 of Bhagawati VDC of Myagdi district. This VDC is situated from 28°61' to 30° 14' latitude and 84° 27' to 84° 24' east longitude. Piple north VDC of the same district lies in the north-east, Begkhola VDC in the north-west, Chimkhola VDC in south and Dangname VDC of district in the south east from the study area. The altitude of this VDC ranges approximately from 2100 to 2500 meters above the mean sea level.

4.2.1 Climatic Variability and Rainfall Characteristics

The study area is located in the hilly region within Myagdi district where the climate is sub-tropical. The weather of the VDC is hot in summer and cold in winter. The 2005 climatic record showed that the temperature was between 17.3° - 29.7°C and 12° - 21.5°C in summer and winter respectively. The prevailing wind of monsoon brings rainfall in summer season. The average rainfall was noted 1800 mm in 2005 (VDC Profile 2005).

4.2.2 Forest Coverage

Forest is the main source of obtaining fuel, fodder, medicinal herbs and construction materials for the households. It is estimated that forest supplies almost all the fuel requirements. In the VDC, 2.6 percent of total land area is covered by government forest and 0.1 percent by community forest. The major tree species are chilaune(*Schima wallichii*), katus(*Castanopsis spp.*), Utis(*Alnus nepalensis*), pinus species and so on. The mixed forest type of natural and plantation forest of Hariyali kholchu Deurali is divided into 2 blocks and 6 sub-blocks. In addition to providing forest resources to locals, this forest is serving recreation spots as famous picnic area which adds aesthetic value. Some Non-Timber Forest Products like Pakhanbedh and Akashjeliare also found in the area.

4.2.3 Land Use Pattern of the VDC

Out of the total land of the VDC, 49.5 percent land is covered by agricultural land and 47.0 percent by bushes, 2.7 percent is covered by forest and the rest 0.8 percent area is used for settlement. The table 3 below shows the land distribution pattern of the VDC. Land use pattern of Bhagawati VDC, most of the area is covered of agriculture and bushes. So, most of the people are done agriculture work and domestic animal farming for livelihood. But forestry area is limited. Hariyali Kolchu Deurali CFUG lies on the word no. 9 of this VDC. Managed by users group the area.

Table no. 4 :

Area by Land Use Pattern at Bhagawati VDC

S.N.	Land use	Area in ha.	Percent
1.	Agriculture Area	337.00	49.5
2.	Bush land	318.00	47.0
3.	Forest area	18.00	2.6
4.	Settlement area	5.71	0.8
5.	Community forest	0.79	0.1
	Total	679.5	100.0

Source: VDC Profile, 2015

4.2.4 The Hariyali kholchu Deaurali Community Forest

The research unit and Hariyali kholchu Deurali community Forest" was handed over to users group in 2052 B.S. It lied in the ward No. 9 of Bhagawati VDC of Myagdi district and 64 households are involved. Brahmin, Chhetri and Dalit are the major caste groups and cover nearly 0.79 hectors of forest land.

The key informants of the village reported that they themselves had managed the forest before its Nationalisation in 1957. During that time the density of population was very thin and resources were abandoned. So there was no higher demand of forest products. Nowadays, the population growth has the direct effects on forest resources and is not enough to fulfil their household need. The people of this area are much aware on practices community forestry management and the policy of government since the forest was already handed over to the users.

4.2.5 The Caste/Ethnic Composition of Users

The FUGs is combined by four different caste/ethnic compositions. These are Chhetri, Brahmin, Dalits and others. 20 percent falls in (20-30) age group, 17.5 percent falls in (41-50) age group and only 7.5 percent in above (51-60) age group (table 7). In this CFUG main cast are there Chhetri, Brahamin and Dalit living together with harmony. all farming work done together. Forest product use all cast.

Table no. 5:

Caste/Ethnic Composition

Caste/Ethnicity	Population	Percent
Chhetri	228	57.3
Brahmin	102	25.2
Dalit	75	18.5
Total	405	100.0

Source: CFUG Records, 2015

4.2.6 Age-wise Population Composition of the Users

The total users of Hariyali kholchu Deurali CF was found 405, where 198 are males and 207 are females. Hariyali kholchu Deurali CF is situated in ward No.9 of Bhagawati VDC. The table below shows that 56.39 percent population is economically active. However in the field observation it was found that the age below 15 years old children provide crucial assistance to their parents for domestic task (carrying water, cleaning house, clothing, cooking, gathering fodder, carrying firewood and others).

Table no. 6:

Age-wise Population Composition of the User

Age-group	Male	Percentage	Female	Percentage	Total	Percentage
0-4	27	13.63	28	13.52	55	13.58
5-9	21	10.60	20	9.66	41	10.12
10-14	29	14.64	32	15.45	61	15.06
15-19	20	10.10	19	9.17	39	9.62
20-24	16	8.08	20	9.66	36	8.88
25-29	11	5.55	16	7.72	27	6.66
30-34	15	7.57	15	7.24	30	7.40
35-39	13	6.56	15	7.24	28	6.91
40-44	10	5.05	10	4.83	20	4.93
45-49	12	6.06	12	5.79	24	5.92
50-54	9	4.54	8	3.86	17	4.19
55-59	8	4.04	6	2.89	14	3.45
60	7	3.53	6	2.89	13	3.20
Total	198	100	207	100	405	100

Source: CFUG Records, 2015

4.2.7 Religion of Users

Users of Hariyali kholchu Deurali consists with the two types of religion i.e. Hindu and Buddhist. Majority of users were associated with Hinduism (97.80%) followed by Buddhism (2.20%). The total population of Hariyali kholchu Deurali CF users is 307 among of them 97.80 percent are Hindu and 2.20 percent are Buddhist. The religion distribution is shown in the table 7.

Table no. 7:

Religion of Users

Religion	Population	Percent
Hindu	303	97.80
Buddhist	4	2.80
Total	405	100.0

Source: CFUG Records, 2015

In the field work sampled households are 40, among them 34 respondents are chettri and Brahmin and 6 respondents are Dalit, Chettri and Brahmin are Hindu followers and Thakuri and Newar are Buddhist followers. However, during the field visit and interaction with local users, the researcher found harmonious relation between two religions. No religion specific discrimination in terms of forest resource collection and management has been noted.

4.2.8 Landholding Status of Users

Land is the main source of livelihood of the villagers which is divided into Khet (irrigated low-land) and bari (un-irrigated up-land) on the basis of irrigation facility. Most of the forest user group have less landholding and less have more landholding shows that there is high inequality in distribution of property and income. It is shown in the following table. They work in the Bari and Khet every days upon their livelihood.

Table no. 8:

Landholding Size of Users

Landholding size in Ropani	Type of land			
	Khet		Bari	
	Household	Percent	Household	Percent
1-3	32	50.0	25	39.0
3-5	15	23.4	22	34.3
5-7	10	15.7	12	18.7
7-10	7	10.9	5	7.9
Total	64	100.0	64	100.0

Source: DDC Records, 2015

4.2.9 Membership and Representation of Women in CFUG Committee

Table no. 9:

Response on “Membership and Renewal Fee for You in Your CF”

Gender	Response in %		
	Too high	Too low	Just right
Male (n=50)	42.90	11.10	46.90
Female (n=50)	44	14.10	41.90
Overall average	43.15	12.57	43.97

Source: Field Survey, 2015

Note: 2value =2.69 significant level at 0.05

Overall response shows that majority respondents 43.97% stated that the membership and renewal fee for them to be just right for them followed by too high 43.15% and too low 12.57% Gender percentage of female 44% stated that membership and renewal fee was too high for them than male(42.90%) . Fewer % of female respondents (41.90%) said that price was just right for them than male respondents

i.e.(46.90%). Significance of chi- square value shows that there was significant difference in the responses in Social and economic status of respondents at 5% level of significance.

Though most of women promulgated that the fee was high, no one was excluded from being a member in CFUGs due to the membership fee. The CFUGs are thinking of waiving the membership fee for the poor to help them be included in CF process. Exclusion due to geographical location is not prevalent in the CFUGs. The traditional use rights are banned in CFUGs that have excluded few of the families there in membership. : ($2cal < : 2 \text{ tab i.e. } 2.69 < 5.91$) So, Response on “membership and renewal fee for you in your CF.

4.2.10 Representation of Women in Executive Committee and Key Post

Representation of Hariyali kholchu Deurali community forest user group with observed data from CFUGs constitution. It can be summed up that the representation of women users in executive committee was lower in all years than that of the years 062/64. Representation of female users was observed to be lower as compared to than male ones.

Table no. 10:

Representation of Women in Executive Committee and Key Post

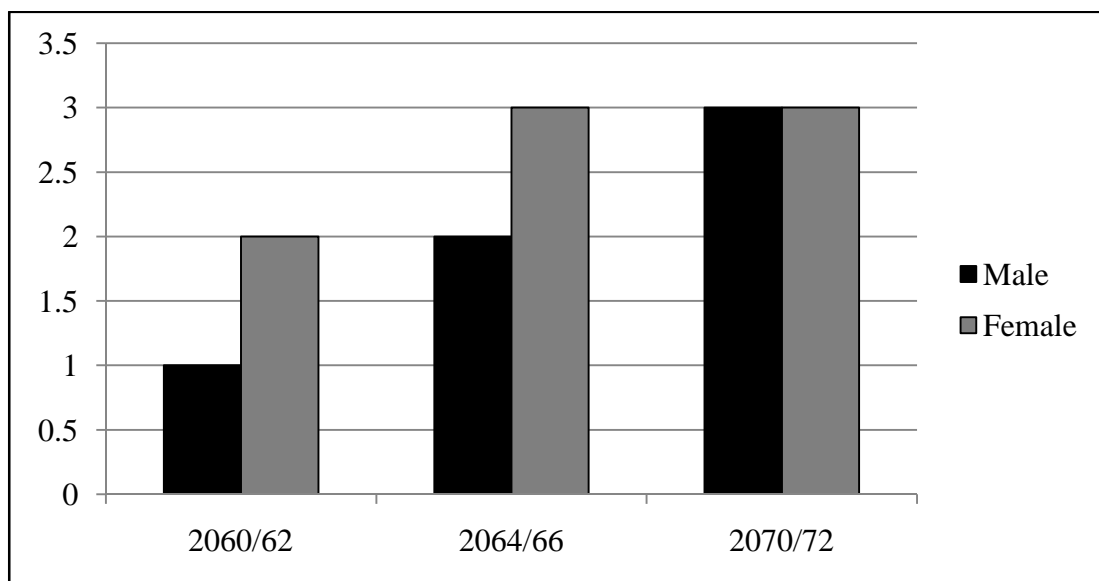
No. of Executive committee in CFUGs		
Years	Male	Female
2060	3	2
2062	2	3
2064	2	3
2066	4	1
2068	4	1
2070	3	2
2072	3	2

Source: DFO, Myagdi Field survey: 2015

We can observe the above data. We can say that women cannot still represent than male in key post of committee member in CF. It happened due to the various social and economic constraints like weak decision power, male dominated society and illiteracy so on. But, some of the years the no. of women members who represented in EC in CF was lower than male.

Figure 3:

Bar- Diagram



Source: Field Survey, 2015

From the diagram female participant of executive member and key post of the committee increasing day by day because female are educated, government policies, changes of society culture.

4.3 Inclusion of Women in Decision-Making

Table no. 11:

Decision Making Process in CF

Gender	Passed agenda by community members	Involved all FUG members	Users
Male (n=50)	41	48	11
Female (n=50)	57	30	13
Overall average	49	39	12

Source: Field Survey, 2015

Note: χ^2 value at d.f. 2 = 3.514 at 5% level of significant)

Majority of the respondents (49%) stated that the process of decision making generally followed in their CFUG was “passed agenda by committee members” followed by involved all CFUG members (39%) and others (12%). The greater percentage of female (57,%) said that agenda in their CFUG was passed by committee while greater percentage of male (48%) stated that the process of decision making generally followed in their CFUG was passed agenda by involving all CFUG members. Chi-square values showed that responses didn’t vary significantly in any categories. Calculated value of $\chi^2 <$ tabulated value i.e. $3.514 < 5.991$. So, Inclusion of Women in decision-making.

4.3.1 Response to Decision Made by Executive Committee

Table no.12:

Response to Decision Made by Executive Committee

Gender	All good	Ok	Not so bad	Very poor
Male (n=50)	14	38	34	14
Female (n=50)	12	44	28	16
Overall average	13	41	31	15

Source: Field Survey, 2015

Note: χ^2 value=2.147, d.f.3, significant level at 0.05

Majority of the respondents (41%) stated that decision made by user group committee was OK (followed by not so good 31%), very poor (15%) and all good (13%). Greater percentage of female respondents (44%) said that the decision was ok while second greater percentage of male (38%) said OK.. They explained that however there was no any negative result for them, FUC had not made decision in favor of them. Chi-square values showed significant difference in the response social and economic status of respondents. $\chi^2_{cal} < \chi^2_{tab}$ i.e. $2.147 < 5.991$. So response to decision made by executive committee.

4.3.2 Responses to Process of Decision-Making in the CF

34% of the female respondents said that the decision was participatory. Equal percentage of male said that the decision was democratic and neutral. Chi-square value showed significant difference in social, economic as well as gender status of the respondents in this statement. From the table, no. of female in process of decision making in CF in two categories like neutral and democratic are relatively less than male due to the various hindrances face by females like more time give to their house, leadership of house go to male and so on. As similarly, there is more no. of female than male in participatory category shows that female can't take decision independently. Nature of female is relatively rigid than male. As a result, more no. of female chooses the autocratic process for decision making.

Table no. 13:

Responses to Process of Decision-Making in the CF

Gender	Democratic	Participatory	Neutral	Autocratic
Male (n=50)	34.7	18.4	34.7	10.2
Female (n=50)	32	34	20	14
Overall average	33.35	26.2	27.35	12.1

Source: Field Survey, 2015

Note: χ^2 value = 2.14 df = 3 Significant at 0.05

4.3.3 Women's Participation on Constitution and Operational Plan Development

It was found that the people of the study area depended upon the forest resources for their livelihood. They had made rules and regulations to manage forest which is known as constitution and operational plan. In beginning, CF constitution and operational plan was formulated in the presence of local people with the help of district forest office. According to respondent at that time all the users involved in this process were male. They made an operational plan for forest management, plantation, thinning and pruning, collection of fodders, leaf-litter and firewood. Within the field visit it was found that all the users had followed the rules and regulations strictly. In anybody went against the rules and regulation, he/she will be punished.

4.3.4 Role of Women in Management of CF Fund

The fund of CF came from the entry fee, picnic spot fee, punishment fee, donation and others, which was kept in the bank account with the joint signature of secretary and treasurer. Women presently heads the position of treasurer of CF. They normally found to using the fund to manage the forest and other local development activities. It was reported that found deposited presently was NRs. 60,500. The 75 percent of found they was gone to local development activities such as village road construction, temple repairing, and school building repairing whereas the rest 25 percent was used for forest management initiatives.

4.3.5 Women Participation in General Assembly

Participation in the general meeting or assembly is one of the major factors which lead to the decision making. The major decisions about CF management are done in this meeting. The members of the users group said that there was less participation of women in such meetings due to their busy schedule in their household activities.

Table no. 14:

Male and Female Attendance of General Assembly

F/Y	Total HH	Total Population	Participation of female	Percentage	Participation of male	Percentage	Total
62/63	60	200	40	40.81	58	59.18	98
66/67	60	250	55	47.41	61	52.57	116
61/62	60	300	72	47.36	80	52.63	182
63/64	64	405	94	48.20	10	51.79	195

Source: Field Survey, 2015

The general assembly takes place once in a year. The highest women's participation was obtained in F/Y 2063/64 (48.20 %) and it is in the increasing trend at present.

4.3.6 Participation in Executive Committee of CFUG

The executive committee members were selected through the consensus of the members at the general assembly. The UC members are nominated by the users groups themselves. The involvement of women and men in the executive committee of CF from the first formation to the present tenure is presented in the table below.

Table no. 15:

Participation in Executive Committee (1995-2007)

Year	Male	Percentage	Female	Percentage	Total
1995	9	100.00	-	-	9
1999	9	81.81	2	18.18	11
2003	11	73.33	4	26.66	15
2007	9	69.23	4	30.77	13

Source: Field Survey, 2015

Above table shows that women participation in CF executive committee was relatively lower as guided by the CF policy. The policy clearly mentioned that 33

percent women must be present in CF executive committee but only 26.66 percent is obtained here. The members of the users group said in group discussion "we were less educated than the male and we don't have time to go official work due to the household chores." This is the main cause of lower participation of women in Hariyali kholchu Deurali CF.

4.3.7 Participation in Plantation Activities

It was reported that plantation activities were done twice at this community forest after its handing over to the CFUG; first in 1998 and second in 2002. It was done in the barren land of the forest. The major species planted were chilaune (Schimawallichhi), katus (Castanopsis), Utis (Alnusnepalensis, Pinus spp.).

In the study area, community forest plantation was usually done in June and July. They informed that it was normally done by both sexes. However, male were engaged to prepare the bed for planting the seedling and bringing it from the nursery to plantation area whereas women were found to be highly involved in plantation activities. According to field survey, it was found that 60 percent of women were found participated. The women's participation in plantation activities was determined by age and level of education and caste/ethnicity which is described in the following heads.

Box 2: Hariyali kholchu Deurali :a witness for Forest Management at Bhagawati VDC

:Hariyali kholchu Deurali has been living in Bhagawati VDC for more than five decades. As researcher asked to him about forest management, he told that in earlier time the forest was very dense, population was less. Before six-seven years as population increases, the demand of forest resources is high, resulting people used forest resources even illegal ways. The condition of forest became worse. But nowadays, the people of these areas are aware on practices the community forest, forest policy of the government as it was handed over the local people in 2052 B S.

4.3.8 By Age

Table no. 16:

Respondent Participating in Plantation by Age

Age group	Yes		No		Total	
	No of HH	Percentage	No. of HH	Percentage	No. of HH	Percentage
20-30	6	15	2	5	8	20
30-40	17	42.5	5	12.5	22	55
40-50	1	2.5	6	15	7	17.5
50-60	0	0	3	7.5	3	7.5
Total	24	60	16	40	40	100

Source: Field Survey, 2015

Above table shows that 23 percent women were participated having age between 30-40 years. It was highest participation in plantation among different age groups. And there was least participation of women (7.5%) having 50-60 years of age.

4.3.9 Participation in Forest Harvesting

There is restriction to collect green twigs from the community forest even though the community forest is open for the user group for collecting dry twigs. Normally, they collected firewood in winter (December – January). Similarly, they also used straw of maize and wheat as firewood as substitute of forest based fuel for cooking.

In the study area, women's involvement was found relatively higher than male for harvesting of forest products. The respondents informed that firewood collection was the key task of women in a household. Cooking is generally taken as the women's sphere in household. The table below shows the involvement of women in forest harvesting at Hariyali kholchu Deurali CF.

Table no. 17:

Women Participating in Forest Harvesting

Sex	Firewood		Leaf Litter		Wood	
	No.	Percentage	No.	Percentage	No.	Percentage
Female	26	65.0	36	90.0	22	55.0
Male	4	10.0	-	-	7	17.5
Both	10	25.0	4	10.0	11	27.5
Total	40	100.0	40	100.0	40	100.0

Source: Field Survey, 2015

It was found that 65 percent women interviewed were involved in harvesting where as only 10 percent male were involved. Leaf-litter collection was found the main working sphere of female in the study area. It was found 90 percent of women were actively involved in leaf-litter collection and the rest were male. They reported that, children also helped them to collect leaf-litter. However, girl children were found higher than boy.

Similarly, in wood collection women were found highly involve than men in the study area. However, men collected fodder for their livestock only in the absence of women in the family. Children were also involved in collecting fodder.

4.3.10 Participation in Thinning and Pruning

In the study area, the thinning and pruning activities are normally done in November and December. It was held every year for the well growth and betterment of the seedling. All the user members of community forest participate. After thinning and pruning, the removing parts of the tree were collected in certain place. After that, each of the participants gets those parts in equal bases. The user members who did not participate in thinning and pruning activities had no access to those resources. Children under 12 years old were not allowed to participate. Males were engaged in supervision of thinning and pruning activities whereas females were found involved in removing the useless parts of the trees. It was noted that female participation was

relatively found higher in this activity because they could get firewood during this time which was the main duty of women within a household.

4.4 Motivational Factors for Women's Participation

In this study, following 5 alternative factors was given for selection about the motivational factor that motivates them to involve in community forest activities. Following table gives the view of respondents about the motivational factor.

Table no. 18:

Respondent Reporting by Different Motivational Factors

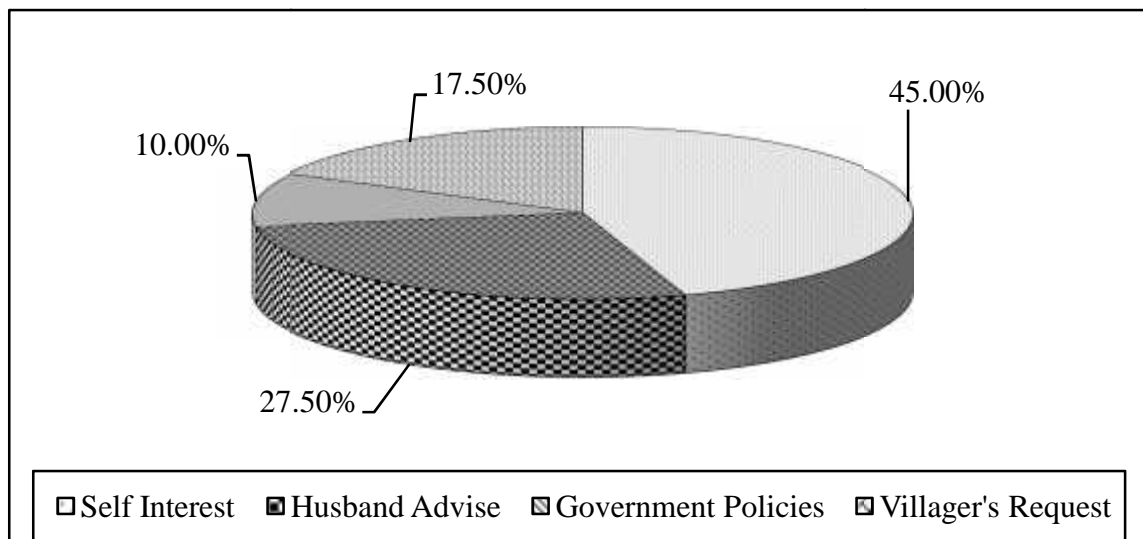
S.N.	Motivational factors	No. of respondent	Percentage
1.	Access to Resources	16	40.0
2.	Self Interest	8	20.0
3.	Villager's Request	7	17.5
4.	Husband Advise	5	12.5
5.	Government Policies	4	10.0
	Total	40	100.00

Source: Field Survey, 2015

16 respondents informed that, before formation of CF the condition of forest was poor which was turning bad to worse day by day. During that time, women had to walk nearly 2-3 hours for fire-wood, fodder and leaf-litter collection. After formation of the CF, the local people took interest to manage the forest. Then the forest condition was gradually improving and become better. Consequently, the quantity of the fodder and leaf litter were also increased in the CF. Women did not need to walk to other forest to collect the forest products. And then they also gradually started to participate in forest management activity by involving in executive committee of the CFUG.

Figure 4:

Distribution of Respondents by Motivational Factor



The above table and figure shows that the self- interest, husband advice and villagers' request, access of resources were more effective motivational factors to women to involve in community forest activities. NGO/INGOs were found fewer involved for awareness program to motivate women to involve in development activities. Looking community forest model, 45% women were motivated to involve in community forest activities. The government policy to make minimum one third female members must be in community forest user's committee to make pressure to aware women for forest management initiatives. And government policy to focus on advertises and communication about community forest model motivates for women to involve in community forestry management.

4.4.1 Hindering Factors for Women's Participation

Women are the main users of forest resources in the study area. Therefore, forest is the integral part of women's life. Similarly, women have vast knowledge about the multiple benefit and usefulness of forest resources. They argue that forest makes the desert green, helps to protect landslide and helps to increase the sources of water. So it seems that women have vast knowledge of forest and their roles more beneficial for forest management. However, some constraints play vital role in hindering the

women's participation in community forest. The main obstacles of women's participation are briefly mentioned in the following topics.

4.4.2 Traditional Male Dominated Culture

Hindu cultural was found dominated in the study area. In Hindu culture women are fixed to do household work and they have restriction to go and to stay away from the home without family permission. So this is one of the major problems for women's participation in CF management. The aforesaid causes were not separately responsible for the low participation of women in community forest management activities. The combinations of all of the causes were main problems for women's participation. The major hindering factors for women's' participation in CF management could be summarised by the table below.

Table no. 19:

Women Reporting by Hindering Factors for Women's Participation

S.N.	Hindering factors	No. of HH	Percentage
1.	Illiteracy	10	25.0
2.	Timing of meeting	8	20.0
3.	Low level of economic condition	5	12.5
4.	Traditional male dominated culture	3	7.5
5.	Lack of technical knowledge	2	5.0
6.	Cumulative of all above causes	12	30.0
	Total	40	100.0

Source: Field Survey, 2015

Among the interviewed respondents, 30 percent of them viewed that all of the above mentioned causes were the combine obstacles for women's participation in CF management. Similarly, 25 percent respondents viewed illiteracy is main obstacles for active participation for any development activities. Due to the lack of capacity to read and write, they feel humiliation and they must face many problems in active participation. Knowledge and illiteracy is little different factor because literate women also may lack of knowledge in any subject and illiterate women also may have knowledge about proper subject by their experience. And 20 percent women have

reported they lacked time for the participation. Moreover, low level of economic condition (12.5%) and traditional culture (7.5%) were found women unwilling to participate in every development sector including forest management initiatives.

Table no. 20:

Participation in Executive Committee (1995-2007)

Year	Male	Percentage	Female	Percentage	Total
2003	7	100.00	-	-	7
2007	9	81.81	2	18.18	11
2011	11	73.33	4	26.66	15
2015	9	69.23	4	30.77	13

Source: Field Survey, 2015

Above table shows that women participation in CF executive committee was relatively lower as guided by the CF policy. The policy clearly mentioned that 33 percent women must be present in CF executive committee but only 26.66 percent is obtained here. The members of the users group said in group discussion "we were less educated than the male and we don't have time to go official work due to the household chores." This is the main cause of lower participation of women in Hariyali kholsa Deurali CF.

4.4.3 Participation of CFUG Members in the Meeting when Constitution was Finalized

Table no. 21:

Participation of CFUG Members in the Meeting when Constitution was Finalized

Gender	Present	Absence
Male (n=50)	58.3	41.7
Female (n=50)	55.26	44.74
Overall average	56.285	43.205

Source: Field Survey, 2015

Note: 2value= 0.142,df=1, Significant at 0.05

Overall response shows that only 56.285% of the respondents participated in the meeting when constitution was finalized. Little more female and male respondents were present while other less than was absence. The table shows that more number of male present in constitutional meeting than female due to the social and traditional values like more voice of female in any meeting was denied by male. Insignificance of independent chi-square test indicates that responses were independent of the category of the respondents. From the table, tabulated Chi-square is greater than calculated i.e, 0.142 is less than 3.841. So, null hypothesis is accepted. It means participation of CFUG members in the meeting when constitution was finalized.

4.4.4 Participation in the Meeting when OP was Finalized

Table no. 22:

Participation in the Meeting when OP was Finalized

Gender	Yes	No
Male (n=50)	76.39	23.61
Female (n=50)	55.26	44.74
Overall average	65.825	34.175

Source: Field Survey, 2015

Note: 2 value= 7.306,df=1, Significant at 0.05

Overall response indicates that only 44.93% of the respondents were present in OP finalizing meeting. Greater percentage of male (76.39%) was present than that female (55.26%) in OP finalizing meeting. From the table, no. of male in Op finalized is relatively greater than female because they are more interested the decision made own their favorer. Chi-square value shows that presence of male and female respondents on OP finalizing meeting is dependent upon the respondent's category. Workload at household level and socio-cultural obstacle might be the reasons for less presence in the meeting when OP was finalized. Chi-square values indicate there is no significant difference in responses among categories.

4.4.5 Participation in the Meeting when UGC was Formed

Overall response shows that only (62.825%) of the respondents were participated in the meeting when user group committee was formed. The presence of female respondents was the lowest (44.74%) while of male was the highest (55.26%).Households work load and limited in certain area by male. So, they are low participation in UGC was formed.

Chi-square test in gender shows that responses were dependent of the category of the respondents.

Table no. 23:

Participation in the Meeting when UGC was Formed

Gender	Yes	No
Male (n=50)	76.39	23.61
Female (n=50)	55.26	44.74
Overall average	65.825	34.175

Source: Field Survey, 2015

Note: 2value= 7.306, df =1, Significant at 0.05

4.4.6 Participation in the Meeting when the Distribution of FPs Decided

Overall response shows that only 49.4% were present in meeting when rate of FP distribution were decided. Male respondents (60%) were present in high percentages followed by female respondents (38.8%) due to the weak bargaining power of women than male in distribution of forest product among user group. Significance of chi-square test shows that presence of male and female respondents in meeting when rate of FP distribution were decided, were significantly dependent upon the respondent category. Business was the main reason for less presence of female in meeting and assembly. The tabulated chi-square is greater than calculated chi-square value i.e. 5.134 is less than 1.507. So, Participation in the meeting when the distribution of FPs decided.

Table no. 24:

Participation in the Meeting when the Distribution of FPs Decided

Gender	Present	Absent
Male(n=50)	60	40
Female (n=50)	38.8	61.2
Overall average	49.4	50.54

Source: Field Survey, 2015

Note: 2 value= 5.134, df =2, Significant at 0.05

4.4.7 Perception on "Your Participation is Active in CFUG Meeting and Assembly"

Table no. 25:

Perception on "Your Participation is Active in CFUG Meeting and Assembly"

Gender	Agree ←—————→ Disagree		
	1	2	3
Male(n=50)	25	14	61
Female (n=50)	18	13	69
Overall average	21.5	13.5	65

Source: Field Survey, 2015

Note: 2value= 5.13, df =2, Significant at 0.05

Majority of the respondents (65%) disagreed that their participation was active in CFUG meeting and assembly followed by agreed (21.5%) and neutral (13.5%).

Most of the respondents are disagreed in participation in CFUG due to the most of cunning CFUG members make the decision in their favored. That's why CFUG respondents denied attaining in the meeting. Comparatively more female respondents

are disagreed to participate in meeting than male. Because they are weak in almost all sectors than male. Significance of chi-square test shows that responses related to expressing views on proposed agenda in meeting and assembly is significantly dependent upon the respondent's gender category. Weighted mean of the response shows that more 61 male respondents disagreed more on the statement than female respondents. Here, $\chi^2_{cal} < \chi^2_{tab}$ i.e. $5.13 < 11.07$ So, Perception on your participation is active in CFUG meeting and assembly.

4.4.8 Perception on "You Raise Different Issues of CF Management in Meeting and Assembly"

The comparison of mean responses of social status of respondents shows that Non-Dalit (2.07) respondents agreed to raise different issues of CF management in meeting and assembly than Dalit (2.52). Weighted mean values in economic status indicate that poor respondents (2.52) disagreed while non-poor respondents (1.93) agreed on the statement. Respondents from gender status both disagreed on the statement. Significance of chi-square test shows that responses were significantly different among social and economic status of the respondents.

4.4.9 Perception on "Executive Makes Decision Alone"

Table no. 26:

Perception on "Executive Makes Decision Alone"

Gender	Agree ←—————→ Disagree		
	1	2	3
Male(n=50)	52	16	32
Female (n=50)	68	14	18
Overall average	60	15	25

Source: Field Survey, 2015

Note: χ^2 value= 3.093, df =2, Significant at 0.05

Overall average response shows that majority of the respondents (60%) agreed on the statement followed by disagreed (25%) and neutral (15%) but overall weighted mean shows that majority of the respondents (1.66) were neutral on the statement. Also in my field observation Dalit, female and weak of male in society respondents were found unaware of the role, responsibility and the decisions made by the executive committee as well they are deprived from information about CF. Null hypothesis is accept it means that there still Perception on executive makes decision alone. Here ($2_{cal} < 2_{tab}$ i.e. $3.093 < 7.815$)

4.5 Perception on "Products Sale and Distribution System is Participatory

Majority of the respondents (34%) were neutral on the statement. Majority of female respondents (44%) were neutral on the statement "Products sale and distribution system is participatory" while male respondents (34%) were neutral on the statement. Second highest Majority of male respondents (36%) agreed on the statement while female respondents (30%) were agreed on the statement. Female respondent's perception on products sale and distribution system in neutral is relatively higher than male due to the fear of their family and society which would make major cause to stay neutral in products sale and distribution system. Here ($2_{cal} < 2_{tab}$ i.e. $1.057 < 3.841$) So, Perception on "Products sale and distribution system is participatory

Table no. 27

Perception on "Products Sale and Distribution System is Participatory"

Gender	Agree ←—————→ Disagree		
	1	2	3
Male(n=50)	36	34	30
Female (n=50)	30	44	26
Overall average	33	34	28

Source: Field Survey, 2015

Note: $2 = 1.057$, $df = 2$, Significant at 0.05

Table no. 28:**Distribution of Forest Products among CF users**

Gender	Agree ←—————→ Disagree			
	Fair	Biased	H.B.	Don't know
Male(n=50)	51.7	14.3	16	18
Female (n=50)	52.8	12.9	14.3	20
Overall average	52.25	18.6	15.15	19

Source: Field Survey, 2015

Note: $\chi^2 = 2.855$, $df = 4$, Significant at 0.05

Overall response shows that majority of respondents (52.25%) agreed that the distribution of forest products among community forest users is fair followed by biased (15.15%), highly biased (19%) and don't know (14.62%). The respondents from female category agreed more on the statement than other categories. Chi-square value showed no significant difference in any of the respondents' status on the statement. Here($\chi^2_{cal} < \chi^2_{tab}$ i.e. $2.855 < 5.991$), so distribution of Forest Products among CF users

4.5.1 Benefit Sharing in CF**Table no. 29:****Benefit Sharing in CF**

Gender	Equal basis	According to op	According to decision make by EC	Decided by influential/ elite person	Don't know
Male (n=50)	69.4	12.2	18.4	11.9	14.3
Female(n=50)	78	10	11.3	12	11.9
Overall average	73.7	11.1	14.85	11.95	13.1

Source: Field Survey, 2015

Note: χ^2 value=5.256, $df = 4$, Significant at 0.05

Majority of the respondents (73.7%) stated that the benefit was shared on the equal basis followed by according to decision made by executive committee (11.1%), don't know (14.85%), according to OP (13.1%) and decide by influential/elite persons (11.75%). Majorities of the respondents from all category stated that the benefit was shared on the equal basis. Chi-square test shows that responses showed no significant difference in all of the categories. Here, ($\chi^2_{cal} < \chi^2_{tabi.e.5.256 < 11.07}$) So, Benefit sharing in CF is improving.

4.5.2 Perception on "Benefits and Opportunities Sharing Mechanism is Equitable and Justifiable"

Table no. 30:

Perception on "Benefits and Opportunities Sharing Mechanism is Equitable and Justifiable"

Gender	Agree ←————→ Disagree			
	1	2	3	Mean
Male(n=50)	14	32	54	2.4
Female (n=50)	10	42	48	2.38
Overall average	12	37	51	2.21

Source: Field Survey, 2015

Note: χ^2 value=2.067, df =2, Significant at 0.05

Overall weighted mean (2.38) shows that majority of the respondents were neutral on the statement. Weighted mean in female (2.38) indicates that they disagreed on the statement "benefits and opportunities sharing mechanism is equitable and justifiable" while male respondents (2.4) were neutral on the statement From the table, large no. of female respondents are neutral in benefit sharing due to they cannot open their views independently as well as large no of male are disagreed in benefit sharing of forest products because they are openly put their views in meetings. Significance of chi-square values in social and economic status shows that responses on the statement differed significantly by social and economic status of the respondents. Here, ($\chi^2_{cal} < \chi^2_{tabi.e.2.067 < 5.991}$) So, Benefit sharing in CF is improving.

4.5.3 Responses to Organization of Any Training, Tours and Other Special Programs for their Users by EC

Table no. 31:

Responses to Organization of Any Training, Tours and Other Special Programs for their Users by EC

Gender	Yes	No	Don't know
Male(n=50)	60	26	14
Female (n=50)	50	37.9	12
Overall average	55	31.67	13

Source: Field Survey, 2015

Note: 2 value=5.468, df=1, Significant at 0.05

Overall response shows that majority of respondents (55%) agreed that EC had organized training, tours and other special programs for their users. These included Iron improvement, goat-keeping, Bee-keeping, Women empowerment, NTFPs training, scholarship to poor students etc. From the table, large no of male are benefited from taking leadership by EC than female because female are limited in house as well as negative thinking taken by society on female. Chi-square value shows significant difference in response by social status of the respondents. Here, ($2cal < 2tabi.e.5.468 < 11.07$) so ,responses to organization of any training, tours and other special programs for their users by EC

4.5.4 Information about Decision Made by EC

Table no. 32:

Information about decision made by EC

Gender	Yes	No
Male (n =50)	84	16
Female (n=50)	52	18
Overall average	68	42

Source: Field Survey, 2015

Note: 2value=0.071, df =1, Significant at 0.05

Overall response indicates that majority of the respondents (68%) agreed that they knew about the decision made by executive committee. Greater portion of Male respondents (84%) agreed upon the statement followed with equal percentage by female respondents. From the table large no. of male are agreed on information about decision made by EC than female because literacy rate of male is greater than female. Chi-square test indicates that responses were independent of the category of the respondents. Here, ($\chi^2_{cal} < \chi^2_{tabi.e.0.071} < 3.84$) so, information about decision made by EC.

Table no. 33:

Information Sharing Mechanism in CFUG

Gender	Neighbor	From notice of EC	Others members of groups	Family members
Male(n=50)	46.5	16.3	18.6	18.6
Female (n=50)	70.1	10.3	9.3	10.3
Overall average	58.3	13.3	13.5	14.45

Source: Field Survey, 2015

Note: χ^2 value=8.27, df =3, Significant at 0.05

Majority of the respondents (58.3%) agreed that they would know about the decision through neighbors followed by via family members (14.45%), other members of group (13.52%) and from notice of EC or as member (9.75%). Greater portion of female (70.1%) followed by male (46.5%) respondents agreed that they would know about the decision through neighbors. From the table, there is rare visit of female in ECM. So, they get information about ECM from neighbors and delay. Chi-square value indicates that response on this statement differed significantly between male and female respondents. Here, ($\chi^2_{cal} < \chi^2_{tabi.e.8.27} < 15.507$) so, information sharing mechanism in CFUG.

4.5.5 Perception on "The Method of Information Sharing in your CF is good"

Table no. 34:

Perception on "The Method of Information Sharing in your CF is good"

Gender	Agree ←————→ Disagree			Mean
	1	2	3	
Male (n=50)	46.5	16.3	18.6	18.6
Female (n=50)	70.1	10.3	9.3	10.3
Overall average	58.3	13.3	13.5	14.45

Source: Field Survey, 2015

Note: 2value=4.86, df=2, significant level at 0.05

Almost 58 % of overall respondents disagreed on the statement “The method of information sharing in your CF is good” followed disagree (14.45%) and neutral (13.5%) Majority of the female respondents (70.1%) are agreed than male respondents (16.3%) of female were neutral on the statement respondents than male due to the women are less free than male in each type of professions. Significance of chi-square value shows that responses on the statement differed significantly by social and economic status of the respondents. Here, ($\chi^2_{cal} < \chi^2_{tabi.e.4.86 < 9.48}$) so, Perception on "The method of information sharing in your CF is good.

4.5.6 Participation in Training, Tours/ Seminars/ Workshop since Implementation of CF

Overall response shows that majority of the respondents (48.35%) hadn't participated in any training, tours/seminars/workshop since implementation of CF. Only 8% once, 8.2% twice and 37.5% more than twice had attended CF related training, workshops and study tours. Among them 70% of male respondents participated greater than twice followed. Most of females participated in the least no. of times. Moreover, chi-square test showed significant difference between male and female respondents.

Table no.35:

Participation in Training, Tours/ Seminars/ Workshop since Implementation of CF

Gender	Once	Twice	More than twice	Never
Male (n=50)	14	4	70	12
Female (n=50)	2	8.2	4.1	85.7
Overall average	8	6.1	37.5	48.35

Source: Field Survey, 2015

Note: 2 value= 7.79, df=3, level of significant at 0.05

4.5.7 Response on the Total Saving Amount in CFUG Fund

Table no. 36:

Response on the Total Saving Amount in CFUG Fund Statement

Gender	Yes	No
Male (n=50)	25	75
Female (n=50)	10	90
Overall average	17.5	82.5

Source: Field Survey, 2015

Note: 2 value= 3.84, df=1 level of significant at 0.05

Greater percentage (82.5%) of the overall respondents stated that they didn't know about the total saving in CFUG fund. The greater percentage of female (90% each) stated that they didn't know about the total saving in CFUG fund than any other categories. Chi-square value indicates there was significant difference in the saying between male and female respondents. Here, ($\chi^2_{cal} < \chi^2_{tabi.e.3.84} < 7.815$) so, r response on the total saving amount in CFUG fund.

4.5.8 Factors Affecting Inclusion, Women in CF

To promulgate, there has been some progress in addressing livelihood needs of the importantly women, through their participation in forest user groups under community forestry. However, there still exists a wide gap between the expectation and the achievements in reality. Exclusion persists (LFP, 2015). The concept of social inclusion emphasizes involvement in the structures and institutions of society – most fundamentally, the participatory and communicative structures, including new forms of social partnership through which a shared sense of public good is created and debated (IILS/UNDP, 1997). Social exclusion is shaped in the form of historically constructed hierarchical caste, class and gender relations as well as affected in the current form by the resource and institutional attributes (Bista, 1991). Obviously, this is also reflected in the community forest user groups (CFUGs) of Nepal.

There are two major aspects of exclusion important to recognize; One relates to social exclusion where class, caste and gender relations affects the ability, women groups to claim for membership, participation and access to benefits obtained from community forests user groups. Exclusion from membership is the most important issue. Exclusion from membership not only results to their exclusion from participation and access to forest products but also to the access to other non-forest benefits derived from the user groups. The barriers for their effective participation in decision making and access to benefits might be context specific that needs to be explored and understood before designing the interventions for the removal of barriers (LFP, 2015).

The second aspect of exclusion relates to geographical location where communities in remote areas are excluded both because of their inaccessibility and because of the worsening security situation in the country. Often these two situations are linked i.e. those areas which are geographically less accessible are also the ones most affected by conflict and vice versa. The majority of the population in remote areas is poor and among them the majority is dalits and janajati. Thus, by excluding remote communities, we might be excluding a large proportion of the poor, dalits and janajati benefiting from interventions (HURDEC, 2004). Thus it is equally important to devise strategies and mechanisms to reach more effectively to the people living in remote areas. Some of the immediate response for geographical inclusion should include encouraging partners including DOF and animators to focus more on reaching

less accessible areas and also working with Community Based Organizations (CBOs) and Local Resource Person (LRPs) in providing the services (LFP, 2015).

Factors affecting inclusion of women in CF can be specifically glossed in the following headings:

4.5.9 Membership

Exclusion from membership is the most important issue, especially when assistance and interventions of service providers are channeled through these users groups. Exclusion from membership not only results to their exclusion from participation and access to forest products but also to the access to other non-forest benefits generated by CFUGs or provided by service providers through the groups. Most of the female who are genuine users are being excluded from using collective resources due to existing provisions of charge of high membership and renewal fees. Though the boundary of community forest is based on traditional forest use and forest management practices, most of CFUGs have made their boundary on the basis of existing political boundaries, which naturally exclude the real and traditional forest users of community forests. Economic condition, caste identity and gender relations constraint the poor, women and disadvantaged castes make claims for membership.

4.6 Representation in Decision-Making Forums

In most of the CFUGs, existing institutional arrangements for selecting executive members have not given sufficient attention in representation of different categories of users by class, gender, ethnicity and other attributes. As a result, many CFUGs do not women in their CFUG Committees. Political scenario also affects the selection of the members to be elected for committee, thus it results in slight exclusion because of less favoritism for the female and disadvantaged. Among, the members, formal and non-formal institutional women and janajati in particular from being represented in their group's Executive Committee and from participating effectively in decision making processes. In terms of representation, poor female households have limited access to education, thus resulting in limited leadership qualities and low confidence levels which ultimately make them meet the required criteria to become represented in committee. Lack of awareness, self-motivation, and negligence by elites and the rich

and workload for their livelihood earning are some of factors affecting their representation in decision-making forums. Constraints that affect the interests and ability of women to represent themselves and participate effectively in decision-making include an absence of issues that are of direct concern to them, inappropriate venues and timing of meetings, lack of time because of the fulfillment of reproductive and productive roles, restricted mobility, a general preference for men to participate wherein one member from a household is invited, and societal norms which curtail their effective representation and participation in public forums like that of assemblies and committee.

4.6.1 Voices in the Decision-Making Forums

In most of the CFUGs, decision-making forums are formally led by the local power elites. These power elites vary from place to place such as local political leaders, the particular caste, rich and educated people. Even if some CFUGs involve the marginalized sections particularly women of the community in the decision-making body, in most of the cases either they could not speak up or their real voices are not heard properly. Agarwal (2001) has termed this situation as participatory exclusion, i.e. exclusion from seemingly participatory institution. Though the member of marginalized section represent the decision-making body, there are various evidences that the real interest of that section of the community have not represented in the formal decision-making process due to ignorance or low level of influence of the representative. Attitude, in addition, towards the, women is one of the discouraging factors to their participation and voice hearing in the decision-making forums.

4.6.2 Benefit Sharing, Distribution of Forests and Fund Mobilization

The lack of voice and influence in decision-making results in their inability to claim an equitable share of benefits derived from the management of forest resources. Forest policies and program are often seen as having been failed to reach and benefit these groups because of the lack of emphasis of the specific constraints that these groups face and because of the lack of interventions specially designed to address these constraints. The lengthy, complex and formal working procedures of the CFUGs further exclude the marginalized sections. For example, for forest products collection, users need to pay the price for the forest products determined by the executive

committee within the stipulated time. The time may be too short to collect money for the women in most of cases. There are severe gaps in policy and practices regarding positive discrimination in distribution of forest products. In most of the CFUGs, forest products are distributed equally rather than considering real needs of the users. For female users, they have no other option but to depend on the community forest while rich users might possess trees/ forest in their private land. So, users might have different dependency on community forests. Unless there are special provisions for the female, it is very difficult for them to get involved even in the forest products distribution system. Most of the CFUGs have the provision to sell forest products, which are generally expensive for the poor users whereas the rich users claim the rate is too minimum. As a result, female users are excluded from enjoying the benefits. Most of the support organizations and CFUGs are focusing on the management of timber species, which are generally out of reach of the poor and marginalized.

Thus, the basic objectives, which guide forest management, vary between the rich and the poor, and in most of cases the rich dominate the process. Gradually, the poor and marginal become excluded from the process.

4.6.3 Access to Information and Opportunities

The power and position holders grab various opportunities of the CFUG such as participating in the training organized by various support organizations, access to the information of existing policies and benefits, and networking which further empower them with additional power to exclude women and marginalized from the community forestry processes (Agarwal, 1994; Banjade, 2003a; 2003b). In many cases, information flow and communication within the CFUG is formal, i.e. written notice is put on the board of CFUG office and other few places rather than using informal and locally practiced way of communication. Poor, illiterate, marginalized and women generally cannot understand these messages and are gradually being excluded from the mainstream. The inability of CFUG committee to disseminate the information, ignorance to users, lack of self awareness of the users, inability to attend assemblies due to their business in livelihood earning are other factors that exclude the poor, women and Dalits from access to information and opportunities.

CHAPTER – FIVE

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION

5.1 Summary

This study is related to participation of women in executive level in community forest. This study analyses obstacles affecting of women' participation in executive level and changes in decision making about forest products distribution among community forest user group while women take vital position in CF. It is the comparative study. It compares decision making process about forest product distribution among CF users, management, regulation and plantation in between male and female. This study is completed in five chapters. First chapter is related to introductory part which comprises background of the study, historical development of CF and women' position in executive level in CF, Problem of study which comprises women position in CF in past and present time and problems face by women from male in female dominated society, Study is limited due to time, money and cost constraint because it is only for partial fulfilment of master's degree not of institutional work, it has limited to analyse in specific objectives not for general objectives. Second chapter is related with literature review relates with women participation in executive level in CF. It shows the various application of women participation in executive level in CF of different countries including with Nepal. It shows the development stage of women participation in CF. Chapter three is related to research methods used to complete the study like research design which includes how an investigator conducts its research what statistical tools are used by him. For example this research methodology relates with simple random sampling, samples are taken from form fill up methods, interview method, and focus group discussion and so on. In fact most of the data are primary and some secondary data are used if they necessary. Chapter four is related to data analysis and interpretation. It is done to the suitable representation of study. It comprises graphs, figures, tables and statistical test to verify the study either be reliable or not. Similarly, Last chapter is related to summary and conclusion which comprises outcome of study and what is purpose of study and what is shown in study.

In the study area, forest plantation activities were normally accomplished in between June and July of the year. 55 percent of women were found participating in plantation.

Similarly, the forest harvesting work is usually done in winter (December to January) women's involvement is found relatively higher than male for harvesting of forest products i.e. about 65 percent in firewood collection, 90 percent in leaf litter collection and 55 percent in fodder collection activities. Male users were reported to collect forest products only in absence of female in their family. Moreover, thinning and pruning activities done in November and December. Women involvement is found higher than the male.

This study is categorized into various parts to systematize analysis. Mainly it is divided into five chapters. The first chapter relates into introductory parts. In constitution and operational plan development it was found that there was a very low participation of female. Out of 30 people involved, there are only 2 female participated. All the rules and regulation about the CF are formed in constitution and operational plan development being familiar about this female are not involved about this.

About management of CF fund, it was found that most of responsible persons are secretary and treasurer. Which is collected by entry fee, picnic spot fee, and donation so on? The treasurer is female. Different workshop and assembly used to be held periodically in order to make decision about CF but it was found that there is less participation of female due to the busy in their household activities. According to the national forest policy there must be one third female participation in executive committee of CF however it seems that in 1995 there was no participation of female out of total 7 members. In 1999 it seems that there was very low participation of women. There were only 2 female members out of total 11 members. Similarly in 2003 there were 5 female members out of total 15 members. Likewise in 2007 there were also very low participation of female in executive committee of CF; there were only 4 female members in 13 member executive board (CFUG). Though it seems that during the period of 1995-2007 woman participation in CF executive committee was increased but it is not appropriate with the national forest policy.

On the basis of this study it is found that woman participation in CF is increased because of their self-interest, their husband's advice, villager's request. The main motivation for women participation in CF is government's policy as well. However it seems that there is very low woman participation in CF according to the national forest policy. The most responsible hindering factors are their low economic

condition, illiteracy, lack of knowledge. Likewise traditional male dominated culture is also most hindering factors which discourage woman to participate in CF. Presently, about 25% of the executive members of CFUGs are women. These groups have been successful in mobilizing household members in local development, and also act as accountability and public hearing platforms. About 2.5 million person day equivalent of voluntary labor is annually mobilized to undertake forest and community development, and to generate social capital in the rural areas.

The study on "Decision Making Role of Women in Community Forestry" is intended to assess the existing decision making processes of community forest user groups (FUGs) and women's role in it taking cases of four FUGs including two women FUGs into consideration from Myagdi district of Nepal.

Women being primary users of a forest, their role in decision making processes of CF activities should be addressed. Therefore, it is crucial important to carry out this study. To assess the decision making role of women in community forestry, the socio-economic, cultural and FUG-related variables have been chosen and analyzed. These variables encompasses various dimensions of social structure (gender, caste, age group, ethnicity, class), socio cultural norms, education, income / savings, extension, motivation, training, income generation activities, FUG structure, forest management activities and meetings. The research is descriptive in nature. The sources of data have included societal as well as FUG characters, which are collected both qualitative and quantitative from primary and secondary sources. Extensive field survey was conducted using both questionnaire and checklist to collect primary data. Consultation of relevant

Literatures and research advisor has been sought throughout the study. Ten percent sampling intensity is taken in the selected FUGs for personal interview/ household survey. Collected data have been processed and analyzed both qualitative and quantitative using appropriate statistical tools accordingly and presented in tabular as well as diagrammatic forms. It is a micro study which attempts to explore the decision making role of women in the FUGs of certain area. So, it cannot comprehend the macro view of the subject matter because women's role is vague in CF and this study reflects some of the variables of FUG and socio economy.

The study has been incorporated in a small preliminary part, five chapters, bibliography and five appendices. The findings of the study has indicated that FUG variables are more responsible for increasing women's participation in CF activities rather than socio cultural characteristics but economic aspect is still occupying a decisive position. Hesitation due to caste and gender in participation is being faded away and there is an increasing trend of female's involvement in public sphere. Subsistence economy of users is to hinder the participation weakening the decision making role. In contrast, good communication, motivation extension, training/workshops, income-generating activities, frequent meetings opportunity and support by males may considerably increase women's participation enhancing decision making role. Therefore, it has been recommended that such activities should be run in order to increase role of women in decision making on community forestry.

5.2 Conclusion

Based on the study, following conclusions have been drawn:

Though most of the female promulgate that the fee was high, no one is excluded from being a member in CFUGs due to membership fee. The CFUGs are thinking of waiving the membership fee for the poor to help them be included in CF process. Exclusion due to geographical location isn't prevalent in the CFUGs. The traditional use rights are banned in CFUGs that have excluded few of the families therein membership. There is very little representation of poor, women users in EC and in key positions in EC (chairperson, secretary, treasurer). Though women are said to be directly related to forest, their presence in management body of community forestry whether it is key position or general position (executive committee member) is lower compared to those of male.

Passing agenda by committee members is the process of decision making in both of CFUG. However, most of the female respondents weren't satisfied with the decision making process as their voices aren't included the process. Even women are neutral on the decision made by committee members. The women users' participation in the meeting when the distribution of Forest Products is decided is lower compared to that of female users because women users don't feel free in expressing their own views in meeting and assembly and most of the users aren't responded positively. Participation

of women when constitution was finalized was found to be satisfactory but participation was lower when OP was finalized and User Group Committee was formed comparatively. Most of women respondents disagree with current products sale and distribution system as the system is not participatory.

Because economic discrimination exists in the CFs and prices set for the forest products are too high for female users. Female members are dissatisfied with forest products distribution system. That benefits and opportunities sharing mechanism is equitable and justifiable, is disagreed because most of the male users capture the benefits and opportunities. The women users aren't satisfied with the fund mobilization system of the CFUG because their needs aren't adequately emphasized. That cost and expenditure of CFUG is transparent for all classed users, is disagreed by most of the users.

Women users of the CFUGs haven't been informed of all programs of CFUGs. Most of the users in CFUGs agree that CFUGs organize training, tours and other programs for their users but most of the users from women haven't participated.

Most of the users know about the decision made by the committee from their neighbors. Users perceive that method of information sharing in CFUGs is neutral. That the decisions of the committee are in favor of the most of the users' esp. for women is disagreed by most of the users. Most of the users don't know about the total saving amount in CFUG fund. Provisions like special incentives for DAGS don't exist in the CFUGs. Most of the female users haven't participated in training, ours/ seminars/ workshop since implementation of CF. Number of days to know the decision made by committee varies significantly by all of the categories. Generally, women receive the decision information lately compared to those of male.

The form of historically constructed hierarchical caste, class and gender relations as well as current resource and institutional attributes contribute social exclusion. Obviously, this is also reflected in the community forest user groups (CFUGs) of Nepal. Factors affecting inclusion of, women may be discussed as below;

Existing provisions of charge of high membership and renewal fees, inaccessibility to the resources due to geographical location, economic condition, caste identity and

gender relations constraint the poor, women and disadvantaged castes make claims for membership.

Inability of Existing institutional arrangements for selecting executive members from different categories of users by class, gender, ethnicity and other attributes, political scenario, formal and non-formal institutional and social mechanisms, limited access to education by women, thus resulting in limited leadership qualities and low confidence levels, Lack of awareness, self-motivation, and negligence by elites and the rich and workload for their livelihood earning inappropriate venues and timing of meetings, lack of time because of the fulfillment of reproductive and productive roles, restricted mobility, a general preference for men to participate wherein one member from a household is invited, and societal norms are some of factors affecting their representation in decision-making forums.

Common prejudices i.e. consideration of women as being incapable of dealing with official matters and women as having short time horizons and their inability of managing forests effectively, capture of decision-making forums by the local power elites, illiteracy of users, ignorance or low level of influence of the representative are some the factors affecting in inclusion of women in CF.

Lack of voice and influence in decision-making, inability of forest policies and program to address needs, lengthy, complex and formal working procedures of the CFUGs, high price for forest products, management of CF for timber species without addressing the livelihood needs of users etc. are factors that hinder inclusion of women in CF.

Grabbing of opportunities by power and position holders, weak information dissemination methods, ignorance to users, lack of self awareness of the users, inability to attend assemblies due to their business in livelihood earning are other factors that exclude the women from access to information and opportunities.

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APPENDIX-I

Participation of Women in Executive Committee of Community Forest User Group
(A Case Study of Mygadi District of Community Forest User Group)

Questionnaire for Household survey

A. General information about Respondent

Respondent No.....

C.F.....

Name.....

.....

VDC.....Ward No.....

1. Caste class of the respondent?

a) Dalits () b) Non- Dalits ()

2. Indicate your educational level?

a) Illiterate () b) Primary (1 – 5) c) lower secondary level (6- 8) d)

secondary level (9- 10)

e) College degree ()

3. Gender class of respondent? a) Male () b) Female ()

4. Age of the respondent (in year).....

5. Occupation of the respondent?

a) Farming () b) Business () c) service () d) self –employed such as carpenter,
house wife, Homemaker etc ()

6. Family size

7. Economic class of respondent?

a) Poor () b) non –poor ()

B. Membership and representation in CFUGC

1. How is the membership and renewal fee for women in their CF ?

a) Too high () b) Too low () c. Just right for women d) Do not know ()

2. Is there any exclusion in membership in your CFUG due to high membership fee?

a) Yes () b) No ()

3. What is about exclusion in membership due to geographical location in your CF?

4. Are the traditional use rights preserved?
 - a) Traditional use rights are banned.
 - b) Traditional use rights can be used by getting permission from CFUC.
 - c) Traditional use rights are allowed in practice but not documented.
 - d) Traditional use rights are fully preserved by documenting in OP.
5. What are the factors that affect women inclusion in membership and representation in CFUGC and how?

C. Decision making

1. What is the process of decision making generally followed in your CFUG?
 - a.) Passed agenda by
 - b) Involved all CFUG members ()
 - c) Passed agenda by only influential persons only influential persons.
2. What do you think about the decision that has been made by user group committee?
 - a) All good b) Ok () c) Not so good d) very Poor ()
3. What do you think the decision is?
 - a) Democratic () b) Participatory () c) neutral () d) autocratic ()
4. Does the committee member listen to your voice while taking decision?
 - a) Yes () b) only sometimes () c) No
5. What are the factors affecting decision making?
 - a) Education status b) size and condition of forest c) Social economic status d) caste system
- 6) What hinder you to take participation in meeting and assembly?
 - a) Cultural and social norms b) business c) awareness d) health e) Nobody listen our voice.
7. How often have you attended the general assembly of your UG?
 - a) Always b) sometimes c) Never
- 8) What are the factors that affect women inclusion in membership and representation in CFUG and how?

9) Do you participate in the following events?

S.N.	Events	Participations Y for yes N for No
1	Constitution preparing and finalizing	
2	Preparation and finalizing	
3	Forming executive committee	
4	Deciding/ rate of forest productive fund mobilization	

D Benefit Sharing, Distribution Of Forest Products And Fund Mobilization Mechanism

1) The distribution of forest products among CF users is

a) Fair () b) Biased () c) Highly biased ()

2) How is the benefit shared?

a) Equal basis b) Equity basis as per family members () c) According to OP ()

d) According to decision made by executive () e) Decided by elite person ()

3) Are you satisfied with the forest products distribution system?

a) Yes () b) no ()

If no, what should be done?

a) Equitable distribution b) low charge c) Access d) others

4) Do you think there is any discrimination in benefit sharing system?

a) Yes () b) no ()

5) Do you know about the total sharing amount in CFUG fund?

(a) Yes [] (b) No []

6) Are you satisfied with CFUG Fund Mobilization?

a) yes [] b) No []

7) Does the user group committee set price for forest product?

a) Yes () b) no () c) do not know ()

E Access to information and opportunities

1) Do you know about decision made by executive committee?

(a) Yes () b) No ()

If no, what is the reason?

a) Fear of sharing benefits b) weak information system

c) Discrimination e) Others

2. Did CFUG organize any training, tours and others special programs for their users?

- a) Yes () b) No ()

If yes, do you participate on these?

- a) Yes () b) no ()

If no why?

- a) Not informed b) No interest c) Discrimination d) others ()

3) How many times that you have been participated in training, tour, seminar workshop since implementation of CF?

- a) Once () b) twice () c) more than twice () d) never ()

4) How do you receive information related to CF?

- a) Public notice b) home to home visit
c) Tole meeting d) letter to individual e) others

5) Usually how many days after do you know about decision?

6) What are the factors that affect poor women inclusion in access to information and opportunities and how?