

**WOMEN'S PARTICIPATION IN COMMUNITY FORESTRY PROGRAM:
(A Case Study of Suwarna Community Forest User Group, Saptari District)**

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RECOMMENDATION LETTER

This is to certify that Mr. Deependra Roushan has completed the thesis entitled, **"Women's Participation in Community Forestry Program" (A Case study of Suwarna Community Forest User Group in Saptari District)** under my supervision and guidance. The research work is original to the best of my knowledge. I, therefore, recommend this report for final approval and acceptance to the dissertation committee.

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This thesis entitled " **Women's Participation in Community Forestry Program**" (A Case Study of Suwarna Community Forest User Group in Saptari District) submitted by Mr. Deependra Roushan has been accepted for the partial fulfillment of the requirements of Master's Degree in the faculty of Arts in Rural Development by the evaluation committee.

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ABSTRACT

This study entitled "Women's Participation in Community Forestry" (A Case study of Suwarna Community Forestry Users Groups in Suwarna VDC, Saptari District) was based on primary data collected in November, 2011. The main objective of the study was to assess effectiveness of Women's participation in forest management, decision making, monitoring and evaluation and benefit sharing in the community forest. The other specific objectives included to examine the access of women involvement in community forestry management, to identify the major hindering and enhancing factors for women's participation in community forest management, to identify the solution to make community forestry program more inclusive for women and to assess the local people's perception towards women's role in the community forest management in the study area.

For the purpose of the study, the researcher had applied both exploratory and descriptive research design. The sources of data were both primary and secondary and the nature of data was both qualitative and quantitative. There are a total of 430 households in the community forest user group. Out of them, 65 households were selected on simple random basis for the study purpose as respondents of the community forest user group members (one from each household) and ten key informants were the respondents of the study.

The study has revealed that the involvement of women in CFM is limited. Access of ordinary women in decision making is found lower. Women's participation in FUG general assembly's & regular meetings was not active & decisive. But in the case of benefit sharing access of both sexes was found almost equal. There is no gender based forest resource distribution system. Only Executive Committee members take part in monitoring and evaluation aspect. Women EC members was passive in vital discussion & in taking decision. The educational level was found influential factor in active participation. The different CF related traveling, has benefited the users. The women who are less participate & are less active are found less aware & less motivated. Lower caste users are far behind in participation in CF activities.

Therefore, more traveling should be conducted to make active to all users for higher participation. In overall, this CF was found a model forest but, some major changes should be made to improve women's participation in Community forestry management & development. Likewise therefore, amendment of operational plan of the CF by broader discussion, focusing on creating opportunities from community forest for women (like for income generating activities, providing capacity building traveling etc) and creating an inclusive environment for intermixing between Man and Women are major recommendations made by the research here.

RESEARCHER

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ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS

AGDP	:	Agriculture Gross Domestic Production
AGM	:	Annual General Meeting
BS	:	Bikram Sambat
CBS	:	Central Bureau of Statistics
CFUG	:	Community Forest User Groups
DFO	:	District Forest Office
DDC	:	District Development Committee
FAO	:	Food and Agriculture Organization
FDG	:	Focus Group Discussion
FUG	:	Forest User Group
FUGC	:	Forest User Group Committee
HH	:	Households
ICIMOD	:	Integrated Centre for Mountain Development
IGA	:	Income Generating Activities
INGOs	:	International Non-Governmental Organization
MoFSC	:	Ministry of Forest and Soil Conservation
M and E	:	Monitoring and Evaluation
NGOs	:	Non-Governmental Organizations
NHDR	:	Nepal Human Development Report
NTFPs	:	Non-Timber Forests Products
OP	:	Operational Plan
PF	:	Panchayat Forest
SCFUG	:	Suwarna Community Forestry User Group
PPF	:	Panchayat Protected Forests
PRA	:	Participatory Rural Appraisal
TFPs	:	Timber Forest Products
WB	:	World Bank
WWF-NP	:	World Wildlife Fund Nepal Program