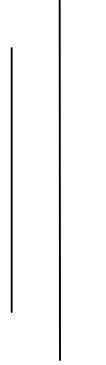


**Women Participation in Community Forest Management:  
A Case study of Ratuwa Mai Community Forest User's Group,  
Topgachhi V.D.C., Jhapa District**



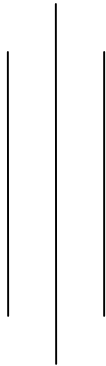
**A Thesis**

**Submitted To:**

**Central Department of Rural Development**

**Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences**

**In Partial Fulfillment of the Requirement for the Degree of Master of Arts  
in Rural Development**



**Submitted By:**

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**June, 2010**

## **LETTER OF RECOMMENDATION**

This is to certify that Sailu Acharya has completed her thesis entitled Women's Participation in Community Forest Management: A Case study of Ratuwa Mai Community Forest User's Group of Topgachhi VDC-8 in Jhapa District under my guidance and supervision. I, therefore, recommend this thesis for evaluation by the examination committee.

-----  
Mr. Khem Raj Bhattarai  
Research Supervisor

## **APPROVAL LETTER**

This thesis entitled “Women’s Participation in Community Forest Management: A Case study of Ratuwa Mai Community Forest User’s Group, Topgachhi VDC-8, Jhapa District”, submitted by **Sailu Acharya** has been accepted as the partial fulfillment of the requirements for the Master Degree of Arts in Rural Development by the evaluation committee.

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## **ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS**

This study was conducted in partial fulfillment of the requirement for the master degree in rural development. I wish to express my sincere indebtedness and gratitude to my honored teachers and thesis supervisor Mr. Khem Raj Bhattarai, & the external examiner Mr. Umesh Acharya, Central Department of Rural Development for his supervision which led me to the completion and accomplishment of this research work.

I would like to thank to Prof. Dr. Pradeep Kumar Khadka, Head of the Central Department of Rural Development, Tribhuvan University, Kiritipur who inspired me directly and indirectly in pursuing this study. I would like to express my sincere thanks to Central Library's staff's who devoted to provide me required documents in the course of writing this report.

This work would not have been possible without the appreciable response and cooperation by the forest users of the Ratuwa Mai Community Forest User Group of Topgachhi VDC-8 of Jhapa District. I would like to thank to Secretary of the Topgachhi VDC for giving me guidance and helping by giving the idea for collecting the data. I would also like to give thanks to District Development Committee Office of Jhapa District.

I would like to give special thanks to my parents Mr. Dhruba Prasad Acharya and Mrs. Kopila Acharya for their inspiration to complete my thesis. I would also like to give my thanks to my friend Mr. Chiranjibi Nepal who always help me to complete this thesis. At Last, I also thankful to my husband Mr. Hom Prasad Parajuli and my lovely daughter Sneha Parajuli for helping, encouraging, supporting, guiding and inspiring while preparing this thesis.

Sailu Acharya

## ***Abstract***

*Nepal is one of the least developed countries in the world. It is characterized by its mountainous terrain which makes basic infrastructure and communication development difficult. The people of Nepal are heavily reliant on subsistence agriculture, most of which is historically focused on the Terai area of Nepal. Forests are an integral part of the agriculture and lives of people in these area. They provide timber for housing, fuel wood, fodder for stock and leaf litter for composting among many other things. Nepal used to be very rich in terms of forest resources and biodiversity. It is the main source of firewood, timber, litters and animal fodder. A vast majority of the population in rural Nepal is directly involved in managing forest as part of their everyday life.*

*At the beginning when the size of population was small as compared to the vast area of forest, exploitation of forest resources by the people had less adverse effect on environment and the socio-economy. The rapid growth in population resulted multifarious impact. The rapid socio-economic changes in Nepal have placed a new demand on forest resources. People are cutting trees for expanding their agricultural land. So Nepal's forests are gradually disappearing causing a major ecological crisis.*

*In the present context, it is the most focused and prioritized program of the forestry sector to promote the forest situation in the country. Community forestry is an approach to forest management intended primarily to benefit the local users of forests. The main objectives of the community forestry program is to involve and participate community members in the conservation and management of natural resources in a sustainable manner in-order to fulfill the daily requirements of fodder, forages, bedding materials for animals, firewood and*

*timber. The community forestry program is aimed at community development and particularly at meeting the household needs.*

*Women's participation is the most important aspects and activities of community forest management in Nepal. Since they are the key stakeholders with the forest resources, definitely they have vital role as well as idea to use it in sustainable manner. When a rural woman became the member of FUG Committee then her new developmental role will be started. Groups meet to discuss community forestry rights and responsibilities. Women's participation also depends upon how many villagers understood the rights and authority of the FUG Committee members. The frequencies of meeting, assembly and people's participation also affect the women's participation.*

*In Nepalese context, the level of supports given to the women by male counterpart determines the participation of women in any outdoor activities in the community. Traditional norms, powers in decision making roles and benefit sharing also affected their participation. Thus, the greater the support from family, greater would be the chances of active participation of women in CF management. Also, educational status of people plays a key role for better involvement of women. There are other social factors as well in our community that helps or hinders the active participation of women in the CF activities. Basically, this study has been concentrated on the role of women in CF management as well as what are the major factors that are either supportive or not supportive to women from participating in the public sphere breaking the traditional boundary and their role.*

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