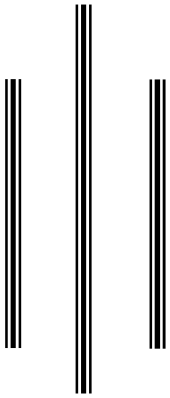
An Assessment of Good Governance in Community Forest User Group's

(A Case Study of Gorkha District Nepal)

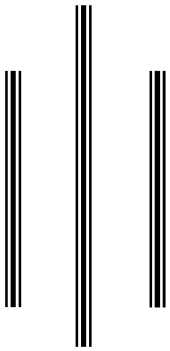


A Dissertation Submitted to

The Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences

Department of Sociology / Anthropology, Prithvi Narayan Campus, Pokhara

in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirement for the Master Degree in Sociology



By

Shekhar Bahadur Adhikari

Roll # 115/061

Regd. No.: 13463-89

Tribhuvan University

Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences

Department of Sociology / Anthropology

Prithvi Narayan Campus

Pokhara, Nepal

July, 2008

LETTER OF RECOMMENDATION

This is to certify that Shekhar Bahadur Adhikari has prepared this dissertation entitled **"An Assessment of Good Governance in Community Forest User Group's: A Case Study of Gorkha District Nepal"** under my supervision. I therefore recommend this dissertation for final approval.

(Mr. Sharad Paudel)
Faculty Member
Department of Sociology/Anthropology
Prithivi Narayan Campus, Bagar,
Pokhara, Nepal

Date: 7th July, 2008

LETTER OF APPROVAL

This dissertation submitted by Shekhar Bahadur Adhikari entitled **"An Assessment of Good Governance in Community Forest User Group's: A Case Study of Gorkha District Nepal"** has been approved as partial fulfillment of the requirements for master's degree of arts in Sociology.

Evaluation Committee

Supervisor _____

(Mr. Sharad Paudel)

External Examiner _____

(Bishwo Shrestha Ph. D.)

Chairman _____

(Bishow Kalyan Parajuli Ph.D.)

Date: 7th July, 2008 **……**

LETTER OF RECOMMENDATION BY LANGUAGE EDITOR

This is recommended that I have read through the draft of dissertation entitled **"An Assessment of Good Governance in Community Forest User Group's: A Case Study of Gorkha District Nepal"** By **Mr. Shekhar Bahadur Adhikari** as Language Editor and made necessary corrections and improvement there in. I have been impressed by his intelligible presentation of the facts through the medium of Plain and correct English.

_____

(Bishowo Raj Adhikari)
Lecturer
Department of English
Prithivi Narayan Campus
Pokhara, Nepal

Date: 7th July, 2008 **……**

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

My sincere gratitude is to the Sociology/Anthropology Department of Prithivi Narayan Campus and Head of the Department Bishow Kalyan Parajuli Ph.D. for allowing me to write the dissertation in this topic.

I would like to express very sincere and profound gratitude to my supervisor Mr. Sharad Paudel. Despite his busy schedules, he always brotherly inspired and provided me enough time to discuss in subject matter and gave numerous inputs to complete this dissertation. I am very much grateful to him.

My sincere acknowledgement also goes to the District Forest Office Gorkha and SAGUN Program, CARE Nepal for providing necessary information and data to complete this study. Similarly, I specially appreciate and acknowledge the general members and executive committees of Tarpakha CFUG, Simle Women CFUG, Saune Thuli CFUG, Birenchook CFUG, Baniya Danda CFUG, Bahrapirke CFUG and Ragar CFUG who graciously imparted their knowledge on the subject at hand. I am very much grateful to Mr. K. P. Osthi, DFO, Gorkha for his valuable comments and suggestions. I highly acknowledge Dr. Chandra Bahadur Thapa, Assistant Campus Chief, institute of Science and Technology, Prithivi Narayan Campus Pokhara and Mr. Dev Raj Gautam for their inspirations and constructive supports in compiling and editing the report. I am heartily thankful to Mr. Shiva Pd. Shrestha, Ranger of Gorkha, Mr. B. P Acharya and Ms. Sanjita Ghimere, Program Field Officer of SAGUN/CARE, Purnima Ghale, Rita Devkota, Tika Pulami, Mina B.K., Bishnu Thapa, Susmita Basnet, Local Resource Persons and Quick Computer Service- Bagar, Pokhara. I am also grateful to entire team of FECOFUN Gorkha and other colleagues for their kind-cooperation and efforts provided towards me to compile data and other necessary information about the community forests during the field visits of study area.

I express my heart full thanks and gratitude to my father, mother, my wife Bimala and other family members whose inspirations, dedication and love carried me to this stage.

Date: 7th July, 2008

Shekhar Bahadur Adhikari

ABSTRACT

Nepal's Community Forestry is among the most widely known initiative in common pool resources management. During its 25 years of implementation, over one million hectares of forest land has been handed over to 14500 forest user groups for management till mid-May, 2008. Community forestry is considered one of the most successful development programs in Nepal and enjoys international recognition. The main reason for this success is its people-centered approach. Community Forestry User Groups (CFUGs) are the locally authorized institution to lead community forestry into success.

As with other institutions, good governance is crucial in CFUGs to fight with the governance-related issues like elite domination, low transparency, and accountability, low participation especially of the women, dalits and poor users. These issues eventually affect sound forest management and livelihood prospects of forest users. So, with a view to find out the status of good governance in CFUGs of Gorkha District of Nepal, this study has focused on good governance within CFUGs in four major dimensions: transparency, participation, accountability and predictability.

The empirical data for this study was collected from seven CFUGs of Jaubari VDC, Shreenathkot VDC, Gankhu VDC, Prithivi Narayan Municipality, Dhuwakot VDC, Palungtar VDC and Warpak VDC of Gorkha district. The CFUGs were selected according to stratified random sampling method. Focus group discussion, key informant interview and direct observation were the methods used for Data collection.

Major findings of the study are: CFUGs have been able to maintain good stage of participation and transparency having 68.85% 58.03% score respectively. However, proportionate representation in EC, inclusive participation in decision making is still lacking. Only the 42.41% of the user members are found to be accountable to their duties, function and rules and regulations. Equitable

distribution of resources and poor focused program found to be weak. Predictability of the CFUGs in the study site is found to be at poor stage having 44.63% score. All the CFUGs have good network with their federation but co-ordination, linkages and human resource development system found weak. In overall, the community forestry user groups have been able to maintain 53.23% good governance in the study sites. Moreover it can be generalized that the CFUGS in Gorkha district are marching towards the path of attaining good governance capabilities.

In order to achieve the highest level of good governance, it will require a concerted effort of program interventions, additional research, and internal and external policy changes by CFUGs, District Forest Office and other key stakeholders at all level.

CONTENT

LETTER OF RECOMMENDATION
LETTER OF APPROVAL
LETTER OF RECOMMENDATION BY LANGUAGE EDITOR
ACCKNOWLEDGEMENT
ABSTRACT
CONTENT
LIST OF TABLE
LIST OF FIGURE
ACRONYMS

CHAPTER- 1: INTRODUCTION **1–8**

1.1 Background of the Study 1
1.2 Statement of the Problem 3
1.3 Research Questions 5
1.4 Objective of the Study 6
1.5 Conceptual Framework 7
1.6 Rationale of the Study 8
1.7 Limitations of the Study 8

CHAPTER – II: REVIEW OF LITERATURE **9-19**

2.1 Concept of Social/Community Forestry 9
2.2 Governance and Good Governance 11
2.2.1 Governance 11
2.2.2 Good Governance 12
2.2.3 Characteristics of Good Governance 13
2.3 Sustainable Community Forest Management 15
2.4 Review of Previous Study 16

CHAPTER – III: RESEARCH METHODOLOGY **20-25**

3.1 Study Site Description and Rationale for the selection of the … 20
3.2 Research Design 20
3.3 Nature and Sources of Data 21
3.4 Sampling Procedure 21
3.5 Research Tool/ Guide Line 22
3.6 Variables and their Indicators 22
3.7 Data Collection 24
3.7.1 Focus Group Discussion 24
3.7.2 Key Informant Interview 25
3.7.3 Direct Observation 25
3.8 Method of Data Analysis 25

CHAPTER- IV: INTRODUCTION OF THE STUDY AREA 26-32
4.1 Introduction of Gorkha District, Location and Boundary 26
4.1.1 Land use and Topography 26
4.1.2 Population 27
4.1.3 Vegetation 27
4.2 Introduction of the Selected CFUGs 27
4.2.1 Sex 29
4.2.2 Age 29
4.2.3 Ethnicity 30
4.2.4 Education 31
4.2.5 Well-being Status of Respondents 32

CHAPTER – V: RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS 33-63
5.1 Results of Good Governance Assessment in CFUGs 33
5.1.1 Status of Transparency 33
5.1.1.1Transparency in constitution, Forest Operational … 36
5.1.1.2Transparency in Decision Making and … 37
5.1.1.3Transparency in Financial (transaction) Aspect 38
5.1.1.4Transparency in Resource Distribution and … 38
5.1.2 Status of Participation 40

5.1.2.1 Representation in Executive Committee … 43
5.1.2.2Participation in Decision Making Process … 44
5.1.2.3 Participation in Forest Management and … 45
5.1.2.4 Participation in Benefit Sharing … 46
5.1.3 Status of Accountability 47
5.1.3.1 Accountability in Executive Committee Members 50
5.1.3.2 Accountability in General User Members 50
5.1.3.3 Accountability in Addressing needs and Interest … 51
5.1.3.4 Accountability in Equitable benefit Sharing 52
5.1.4 Status of Predictability 53
5.1.4.1 Clear goals and Objectives 56
5.1.4.2 Networking 56
5.1.4.3 Co-ordination and Linkages 57
5.1.4.4 Human Resources Development 57
5.1.5 Overall Situation of Good Governance by CFUG 58
5.1.6 Over all Situation of Good Governance by Main … 61
5.2 Ranking of CFUGs according to Overall Status of Good … 62
5.3 SWOT Analysis of CFUGs 63

CHAPTER –VI: CONCLUSION AND REOMMENDATION 64-75
6.1 Conclusion 64
6.2 Recommendations 70
6.2.1 Recommendations for Action have further been … 71
6.2.2 Recommendation for Further Study 74
BIBILOGRAPHY
ANNEX

LIST OF TABLES

Table No.	Title	Page
3.6	Variables and indicators of the study	23
4.1.1	Land use pattern OF Gorkha	26
4.1.2	Population Trend in Gorkha	27
4.2	General Characteristics of Selected CFUGs	28
5.1.1	Sub-elements of transparency and score by study site	35
5.1.2	Sub-elements of participation and score by study site	42
5.1.3	Sub-elements of accountability and score by study site	49
5.1.4	Sub-elements of predictability and score by study site	55
5.1.5	Main elements good governance and score by study site	60
5.2.1	Ranking of study site and score in good governance	63

LIST FIGURE

Figure No.	Title	Pate
1.5.1	Conceptual frame work	7
4.2.1	Participants by sex	29
4.2.2	Participants by age group	30
4.2.3	Participants by ethnicity	31
4.2.4	Participants by education	32
4.2.5	Well being status of participants	32
5.1.1	Status of transparency	34
5.1.2	Status of participation	41
5.1.3	Status of accountability	48
5.1.4	Status of predictability	54
5.1.5	Overall status of good governance	59
5.1.6	Overall average status of good governance.	61

ACRONYMS

CF	Community Forestry
CFDP	Community Forestry Development Program
CFP	Community Forestry Program
CFUG	Community Forest User Groups
CSO	Civil Society Organization
DDC	District Development Committee
DFO	District Forest Office/Officer
DOF	Department of Forest
EC	Executive Committee
FECOFUN	Federation of Community Forest Users in Nepal
FGD	Focused Group Discussion
FOP	Forest Operational Plan
GOs	Governmental Organizations
GLA	Government Line Agency
HMG/N	His majesty's Government of Nepal
IGAs	Income Generating Activities
INGO	International Non Governmental Organization
MPFS	Master Plan for the Forestry Sector
NGO	Non Governmental Organization
NTFPs	Non Timber Forest Products
PA	Public Auditing
PH	Public Hearing
PVSE	Poor Vernal able and Socially Excluded
PWBR	Participatory Well-Being Ranking
SAGUN	Strengthened Actions for Governance in Utilization of Natural Resources
UG	User Group
VDC	Village Development Committee
WDPMJJs	Women, Dalit, Poor and Marginalize Janajaties