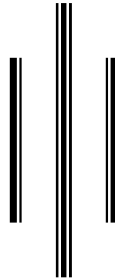
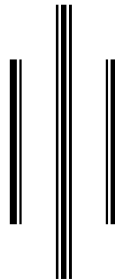


**Women Participation and Decision Making Process in
Community Forest Users Group**
{A case study Phulbari Community Forest Users Group of Sandhikharka VDC - 3
Arghakhanchi District, Nepal}



A Thesis
**Submitted in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for
the Award of the Degree of Master of Arts in Rural
Development**



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LETTER OF RECOMMENDATION

This is to certify that Maya Khatri has prepared the Thesis Report on Women Participation and Decision Making Process in Community Forest Users Group: A case study Phulbari Community Forest User's Group of Sandhikharka VDC - 3 Arghakhanchi District, under my guidance and supervision. He has successfully completed the Thesis Report in the form as required by the Faculty.

I forward this Thesis Report for examination and also recommend for acceptance.

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LETTER OF APPROVAL

This is certified that the Thesis Report on Women Participation and Decision Making Process in Community Forest Users Group: A case study Phulbari Community Forest User's Group of Sandhikharka VDC - 3 Arghakhanchi District, written and submitted by Maya Khatri has been examined. It has been declared successful for fulfillment of the academic requirements toward the completion of Master of Arts in Rural Development.

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ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I would like to express my sincere gratitude to my respect advisor Umesh Acharya, Lecturer Central Department of Rural Development, Tribhuvan University for his particular effort, continues supervision and inspiration to complete my report. 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. My sincere thanks go to the center Department of Rural Development and all the members and the staffs for giving me this opportunity.

The support of the local people during the conduct of the field survey is highly appreciated. The field survey would have been a very difficult task without the effective help extended by the local people. So, I would like to express my thanks to all the respondents, who had helped me giving primary information.

I would like to express my sincere thankfulness to VDC, DDC and DFO office of the study area for providing me essential inputs. Specially thanks for Mr Dilip Kumar K.C DDC Staff and Mr Madan Dhungana DFO staff. I am also grateful to my respected Sir Mr. Rajendra Prasad Kadariya and Mr. Nanda raj Gyawali for their assistance at different stages of the report preparation. I express my warm thanks to my friends, Miss, Laxmi Khatri, Mr. Ses Lamichhane for their valuable cooperation and suggestion.

I cannot remain without acknowledging my Mum and younger brother Mr. Binod K.C. and Sobit Jung Rayamajhi because they had contributed a lot for me and always supporting to me every step of my life. I would like to express my sincere gratitude to my parents, family member and others my relatives for their moral support.

Maya Khatri

August, 2010

Abstract

Forest is one of the major sources of rural livelihood in Nepal. It is the sources of food, firewood, timber, fodder, leaves and litters etc. The rapidly increasing population growth and its subsequent effects on natural resources particularly forest resources has been noticing since long. For the better management and enhancing the forest resources the concept of community forest was emerged during 1970s in Nepal. The community forest is the forest handed over the local community on which they have the full authority to use, protect and manage community forest in their own way so that they can fulfill their basic needs for firewood, timber and other forest products in a sustainable manner. 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 community forestry program is aimed at community development and particularly at meeting the household needs of firewood, fodder and timber.

Forest is managed and used mainly by women in rural Nepal and their role is increasing in their society. Thus, the ultimate managers and users of the forest are women. Basically, this study has been concentrated on the women Participation and decision making process in CFUG 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.

There is very low representation of women in CF executive committee in PCFUG in Sandhikhark VDC-3, where almost all of women are considered as the general member. There is no clear provision about percentage representation of female in their constitution. Usually CFUG's male member makes almost decisions and used to take advantages of low access of women in any portfolio by influencing on participation, information and decision-making. Different women focus groups also said that there are very low participations of female in assembly and meetings but male member decide on behalf of them. About half of them concurred that their opinions are not always incorporated into CFUG's decisions. Over all female members (executive or general) have relatively low access in participation and information of CFUG or general assembly, meetings, discussion and formal or informal sharing and that lead limited access to them especially on the decision making. Women member are very less aware on the important decisions made by CF executive committee and even by general assembly.

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Acronyms

CFUC	Community Forest Users' Committee
CFUG	Community Forest Users' Groups
CF	Community Forest
CFOP	Community Forest Operation Plan
DDC	District Development Committee
DFO	District Forest Office
FAO	Food and Agriculture Organization
FPP	Forestry Partnership Plan
FINIDA	Finish Development Agency
FGD	Focus Group Discussion
HDI	Human Development Index
HHs	House Holds
Ha	Hectare
ICIMOD	International Center for Integrated Mountain Development
NFE	Non Formal Education
NTFP	Non Timber Forest Products
OP	Operational Plan
PA	Protected Area
PCUG	Phulbari Community User Group
RP	Range Post
TU	Tribhuvan University
USAID	United State Aid
VDC	Village Development Committee
WCFUG	Women Community Forest Users' Groups