

# CHAPTER - ONE

## INTRODUCTION

Nepal is located between 26<sup>o</sup>12' to 30<sup>o</sup>27' North latitude and 80<sup>o</sup>4' and 88<sup>o</sup>12' East longitude. It lies in South Asia. It occupies 0.03 percent of the total land and 0.3 percent total land of Asia. It is a landlocked country and roughly rectangular in shape. It has an area of 1,47,181 sq. km. Approximately it extends 885 km from east to west and 145 to 241 km from north to south. India lies towards east, south and west of Nepal and Tibetan Autonomous region of Peoples Republic of China lies in the North. Naturally, Nepal is divided into three major regions i.e. Terai in the Southern part, Hill in the middle part and Mountain in the Northern part. The altitudes of Nepal is varied from 70 m of Kechanakal of Jhapa district to the world highest peak Mt. Everest with 8848 m. of Solukhumbu district. As a result, she harbors various natural resources including forest, water, land, and rich biodiversity.

Forest in Nepal have high ecological and economic values in terms of stabilizing soil, protecting watersheds, water sources, maintaining natural habitat and biodiversity supporting subsistence farming system, providing fuel wood for majority households and building national economy through ecotourism and sale of timber and other forest products. Nepal has diverse forest types ranging from tropical hard wood to temperate coniferous and to alpine shrubs land.

### 1.1 Background of the Study

This unique geographical setting, broadly divided into those ecological zones via the mountain, the hill and the Terai having diverse nature in terms of religious, castes, cultures and languages. Nepal is one of the least developed

countries in the world. The role of education to enhance human potential is crucial. Enhanced potential is important to unleash and foster the empowering human capacity to overcome poverty as well as anxieties. Therefore, opportunities for easy to education for all use crucial in countries like Nepal.

Forest is very important in the context of Nepal. Forest the second largest renewable natural resources after water, which can provide a sustained economic and social contribution for the development of the country. Besides, the above roles, forests play an important role in maintaining a stable ecosystem & precipitation. In Nepal, forests have an enormous role to play in protecting the hilly topography natural calamities like floods, landslides and soil erosion. Forests have been proven as a means of recycling waste materials and every. Forest are essential to maintain and protect the flora and fauna gene pool forests maintain moisture in soil, reduces ultra violet radiation coming from the sun. From the very beginning of human civilization forests have been playing an important role and are considered as an essential resource for environmental protection. It also performs multifarious functions providing timbers, poles, pulps and stakes and fodder for the cattle maintenance of watersheds, moderating effect on climate, source of oxygen, reservoir of plant species including fish, wildlife and place of recreation and amenity values (DoF, 2007).

Forest plays an important role in sustaining the productivity of the land by using the organic manure of the animal dung supported with the bedding materials from the forest. Wood biomass is the most predominant from the energy for rural households, rural industries and village activities for their daily energy needs a large majority of people use wood more than any other single source of energy. Forest is an integral part of man because it helps human society by providing firewood, fodder for livestock time, raw materials for industries,

fruits and herbs for medical purposes and also a major source of income for people.

According to the Nepal Australia Forestry project (1984). Many countries have realized the importance of natural resources such as forest. In Nepal, these are the most important because forests are a renewable natural resource which can provide a sustained economic and social contribution for the development of the country, forest has an enormous role to play in protecting the hilly topography from natural calamities like flood, land slides and soil erosion. Forest provides aesthetic appeal throughout the land but most importantly are a proven means of recycling waste material and energy. This function is very important in maintaining a stable ecosystem. Forests are essential to maintain flora and fauna gene pool. Consequently, forests are the best appreciated from these aspects as a renewable natural resource as an effective core for soil and water conservation. For providing a pleasant aesthetic appeal to environment, or a means by which waste materials and energy are recycled and utilized and as a buffer to the flora and fauna gene pool (ibid).

Nepal has a total land area of about 147 thousand sq.km of which 55 thousand sq.km (37%) is natural forest. The rest is divided into shrub land (5%), grassland (12%), tree covered land adjacent to farms (4%), cultivated land (21%) and other (Settlement) rocky areas, perennial ice and snow lakes and rivers 21%. Most of the forests (89%) are distributed in Terai siwaliks middle Mountain and high mountains.

In the earlier days government did not pay any attention regarding the preservation of forest. Before 1975, 57% of Nepal land was under forest cover which gets reduced to 29% and Nepal needs to have 43% of forest to maintain ecological balance of the country.

Forest, rainfall and agricultural productivity are closely inter-linked. Forest support agriculture and livestock rearing making important contribution to the highlands farming economics. Of the total 14,225,000,000 tones of major forest products consumption 39.5% consist of fuel wood. Thus the forest is regarded as the main energy resource of Nepal this resource can be divided in following types according to geographical variations.

- Tropical forest - below 1000 mtr.
- Subtropical forest - 1000 -2000 mtr.
- Temperate forest - 2000 - 3100 mtr.
- Sub-Alpine forest - 3100 - 4200 mtr.
- Alpine (No forest but shrubs) - upto 4500 mtr (MoF, 2007).

But now a days Nepal's forests are declining dramatically in both quantity and quality over the last two decades, more than half a million hectares have been lost.

Forest are converted into brush land in the hills and agricultural land in the Terai because of spontaneous unorganized encroachment into Terai forest by hill migrant's more than 100000 hectares prime forest in the Terai have been converted to agricultural land in recent years.

On the basis of land use data available for 1986, it is estimated that present forest area of Nepal ranges from 4.9 to 4.3 million hectares from 32% to 30% (in 1978-79 and 1991-92 year book) of the total area of the country. However more recent estimate would be far below this figure.

The main cause of forest decrease is over cutting of wood for fuel, heavy logging for fodder, cross border timber smuggling, extension of agriculture land

for food, setting fire to obtain bush growth of grass to feed livestock and clearing forest for resettlement program during 1950 to 1985 and to certain extent illegal settlement.

The damage and destruction done to the forest have aggravated soil erosion and down stream sedimentation and have caused losses in agricultural productivity. The gradual degradation of forest have posed ecological system and there by it has called forth the attention of all the people over exploitation the forest resources initiate a vicious cycle so the future in Nepal. Society is definitely threatened.

Conservation and development of forest have been regarded as a social responsibility of the government and people. To maintain this entire condition community forestry program is the urgent need in the concept of Nepal. Community forestry can be broadly defined a people oriented forestry programme or activities. Sometimes it is simply described as forestry of the people and by the people others define it as any forestry activity aimed at providing goods and service for the benefit of rural communities.

The FAO of the United Nations (FAO/UN) defined it in 1978 as any situation which intimately involves local people in a forestry activity. It excludes large-scale industrial forestry and other form of forestry which contributes to development slowly through employment and wages but includes activities by forest industry enterprises and public services to encourage and assist forestry activities at each community forestry are the following;

- Forestry for local community development.
- Village forestry
- Social forestry
- Rural forestry

Since, woman occupies about 51% of the total population in Nepal, women empowerment and resource accessibility is required to enhance rural development. Women are the keys to open and manage the problems and resources respectively since the long period ago. To strengthen their role in rural development, Nepal also has included women in different development activities and one of them is in community forest management. Community forestry is the most vital option to cope with the women underdevelopment and backwardness. In Nepal, CF has introduced the concept of community forestry in 1978 A.D. with the assistance of World Bank. However, it lacked to involve women particularly in its initial period.

This study is drawn in the Himali Sundarpur Community Forest established in 2063 B.S. of Chyangthapu VDC of Panchthar district. It lies in the east of district headquarter and extension in 190 hac of land with Rai community. It is well exemplary model which is managed by both women and men and majorities are women. There are two women FUGs in which backwards are genuinely involved. This study area has been settled by Rai in majority and other caste such as Bamans, Gurungs and others have also inhabited. In order to analyze the of this community forest in women empowerment, this study is focused on this remote rural rural area.

## **1.2 Statement of the Problem**

Though Nepal is rich in forest resources and there was a saying that "HARIYO BAN NEPAL KO DHAN" in the year of 2036 B.S. But, at present, it has been depleting very rapidly. Nepal's forest is decreasing in both quantity and quality over the last few decades. The rapid socio-economic change in Nepal has placed a new demand on forest resource. People are cutting trees; farmers are clearing

trees for expanding agriculture land. Therefore, Nepal's forest is gradually disappearing causing a major ecological crisis. The natural forests in Nepal's hill have been degrading considerably due to over exploitation and absence of systematic management an over-increasing human and livestock population intensities the growing pressure on forest resources. As the forest declines number of problems related to environmental degradation such soil erosion land slide desertification, climatic hazards etc emerge.

In the case of developing countries like Nepal, the situation of women is very miserable. Our culture, society, religion are to some extent bounded the female. So many legal provisions also support to control the female right and dominated by male. Every part of female life, male dominant system occur indifferent way. Female role are change in the case of different situation. Like, when she plays the role of a daughter, always stay under the elder/younger brother or father. Again when she plays the role of the wife, stay under her husband. At last, in the old age of last, she stay under hew own son. This is the scenario of actual Hindu women. We take about the 21<sup>st</sup> century of advance development, gender equity & equality all aspect of society. Therefore many questions arise here in contrast (MoF, 2007).

Women and forestry have a closer link in rural areas where life is shaped and dictated by availability and access to basic resources such as water, fuel wood and fodder. Women are the primary user of forest resources. It can be also called as forest as the famine source and it is very nearer to prosper the women capacity. The management of firewood, fodder, liters has been managing by women. For enhancing the present management system and to achieve sustainable management the women's role can not be underestimated especially in rural Nepal. In order to conserve, manage and develop the forest or even to stop the rapidly increasing deforestation process, only government effort and

male participation is not enough, local women themselves should be made conscious for their active participation in forest management and conservation. In turn, their living standard is ameliorating bit by bit in economic, political as well as social level.

### **1.3 Objective of the Study**

The general objective of the study is to assess the role of community forest in women empowerment, and the other specific objectives of the study are as follows:

- To find out the increment of income level of the women.
- To trace out the educational status of women.
- To inquire the decision making position of the women in the CF.
- To suggest CF is a development pyramid to empower the women.

### **1.4 Significance of the Study**

Women capture the half of the population of the world. So, there is no doubt about the necessity to balance the role of both sexes in development. Although, there are some mandatory provisions to women to participate in development fields however, this has not worked in practical grounds. For examples, there is must necessary to women to include in FUG committee but they are not provided decisive role in the meetings. So, they are participated because for the participation theory. In this way, women are virtually underestimated in development overheads as a result it is not in the way of egalitarian sense in the field of development to the women. But, the program of CF follows the concept of **“little things has done”** (NDVS, Training Manual, 2076) to women progress.



Himali Sundarpur is also a developmental pyramid to empower the women of this area since its initiation. Most of fuel and fodder collection is carried out by women and children. It is also the women who are collecting minor forest products such as leaves, seeds, nuts, fruits etc from the forest both for their own consumption and for sale in the market.

It is hoped that, the finding from this study will help to make the policy for forest user group in forest development activities, for extension of community forest in successful way, field workers and the agencies (i.e. NGO/INGO) who wants to works in community forest management.

### **1.5 Limitation of the Study**

Due to time and budget constraints, Himali Sundarpur is selected for the study. The study is focused on meeting it's given objectives in certain period of times with limited budget. Some selective social science research tools were used in the research works which is also the limitation of the study. Therefore, the findings of the study might not be generally conclusive in other areas. It also has not applied the specific statistical tools.

### **1.6 Organization of the Study**

Organization of the study is the sequential and organized form of the whole research report. In it, the first chapter deals introduction of the study, chapter two deals about the review of literature, chapter three research methodology, chapter four descriptions of the study area and chapter five is the composition of Scio-economic characteristics of the respondents. Last chapter, six has described about the summary, findings and recommendations. Thus, the overall organization of the study is managed.

## **CHAPTER - TWO**

### **LITERATURE REVIEW**

Literature review is a part of the research. It provides general ideas about the subject matters and methodology which help the researcher to active to targeted objectives. Thus, this chapter reviews of available literature such as books, journals, research papers and articles, published by various scholars from different perspective focusing in the field of community forest management.

#### **2.1 Origin of Community Forestry**

Community forestry was initially defined by FAO as any situation which intimately involves local people in a forest activity. It embraces a spectrum of situation ranging from world less areas which are short of wood and other forest products for local needs, through the growing of trees at the farm level to provide cash crops and the processing of forest product at the household artisan or small industries level to generate income to the activities of forest dwelling communities. Thus community forestry was planned as encompassing activities by individuals' households, men and women, farmers and other people as well as those involving a community as whole.

Similarly Gerald Foley and Geoffray Berned made the study of farm and community forestry in 1986 A.D. They present a new approach in community forestry. The multiple regress ional analysis based on tree cultivation and approaches to farm and community forestry was also noted.

## **2.2 Definition of Community Forestry**

The term community in its broadest sense may refer to any group of persons united by a community of interest. In this sense a professional group, residential unit or a club or a voluntary association may all be referred to as communities. Forest is biological community dominated by trees and other wood vegetation. Thus community forestry means something like "People Forestry". This acknowledges that community forestry activities are aimed at providing direct benefits to rural people and that "the people" should have a substantial role in decision making. At this level that is, as a statement about the philosophy behind community forestry, there is nothing wrong with the term of Community Forest. (Fisher, 1989).

According to Fisher and Malla, community forestry or village forestry is seen as the control, management and use of forest resources by villagers. It seeks to increase the level of awareness of local people and actively to involve them in all aspects of forestry activities (Fisher and Malla, 1991).

Fisher defined community forestry as any form of forestry activities undertaken specifically and principally to provide communal benefits to the people living in the villages or small communities in the vicinity of the forest area which involves them directly in its management. (Fisher, 1991)

Generally speaking, the community forestry has been implemented in several countries including Nepal, India, Sri Lanka, Philippines, Thailand and Indonesia. The program in different countries covers private planting (encouraging people to plant trees in their own land) and community planting (planting and managing trees in public lands). Community forestry has been

implemented in Nepal means growing trees on public and communal land as apposal to private firms. (Gurung 1987)

The underlying principle of community forestry programme is that the program is of the people, carried out by the people themselves for the benefit of the community as a whole (Shrestha, 199). Community forestry is the forest protected managed and utilized by local forest user groups.

Based on the above definitions, this study views community forestry is forest conservation, management and utilization by the local community. A group of people who are actively participate to conserve and manage their local forests for their benefit by themselves.

### **2.3 Forest Management Practices in Nepal**

The study on community forestry is not new in the present society many government offices, NGOs, INGOs, researchers and higher level students have under taken the study on community forestry in Nepal. Similarly at present many analytical studies on community forestry have been undertaken in different part of the world.

There are a number of studies and community forest published in various books, documents, journals and documents of international organization and ministry of forestry, community forestry offices and departments.

Similarly detail study about community forestry has been sufficiently found in Nepal. In the case of Nepal B.P. Kayastha also made the study on community forestry in the context of Nepal. Community forestry has been introduced in

Nepal with the main objectives of fulfilling the local demands of timber, fuel wood, fodder and other forest products.

Most development specialist recognizes that women play a vital role in forest resource management. Women constitute about half of the total labour force any country, proper mobilization of this section of the population is essential for attaining the development of a country. Several studies concluded in Nepal reveal that women spend enormous time in forest related activities such as farming, collecting fuel wood, fodder and leaf litter, grazing animals, fetching water and cooking food. Thus these studies stress on the need to full involved women in community forest management activities.

Forests have been managed by the local people in their traditional way since time immemorial Nepal's forest history has been divided into three phases; before the Rana regime, during Rana Regime and after the Rana regime. We found two types of efforts (Kayastha, 1996).

## **2.4 Governments Efforts and Practices**

Before the Rana regime, Nepalese forest management practices were in the hand of local community and no special rules were made for forest protection. Religious forest, Niji ban, etc. were found to be well managed by local people (Mahat et al, cited by palit). During Rana regime forest and land were given to army officers and high ranking officials in the name of Jagir, Birta etc. At that time the people in-charge of the forests were Talukdars who were responsible for tax collection as well as distribution of fuel wood, fodder, small timber, grazing, collection of leaf litter and other activities. The local people collected what was needed from the forest without paying any fees, although some sort of gift in return to the functionary has become customary practiced.

Community forest was introduced in Nepal with the enactment of panchayat protected forest (PPF). There after, the local people were taken as the main managers and user of those forests. After the restoration of democracy, in 1991, the government owned forest was handed over to villagers as a community forest. The regulation assigned the right and responsibility for forest protection to the local people, for their own benefit. (Kharel, 1995)

The government of Nepal nationalized all types of forest in 1957 that act snatched the use right of local people and deprived people from their traditional use practices of forest (Gilmore, and Fisher, 1991, Chhetri, 1994). The main aim of government was to increase state revenue through the forest. However, land area under forests decreased. The forest act of 1961 provided legislation for state administration of the forest. The act defined forest categories and covered description, registration and demarcation of forests. It also defined the duties of the department of forest, listed forest offenses and prescribed penalties. The government was unable to manage the forest effectively because of the lack of requisite infrastructure (both technical and administrative) forest was categorized into national, religious forests, panchayat forest and private forest. Management decision also remained with the government. However, ninth plan took a significant step towards community forestry through the forest conference hold in Kathmandu in 1974. Forest officers from all parts of Nepal attended the conference. A community oriented group of foresters working in districts strongly favored in involvement of people in the management of forests, a form of forestry to be later known as community forestry. (Palit, 1996)

The government of Nepal's forest sector policy was first declared in the sixth five year plan (1981-1985) which emphasized community participation in the management conservation and uses of forest resources. This policy was further

promoted with the passing of the decentralization act 1982 and 1984 rules for its implementation. The act and rules aimed at handing over responsibility for planning to the panchayat and district level. The act formalized the duties and responsibilities of village panchayat and wards communities and empowers them to farm user groups. The master plan for forestry sector 1988 has objectives to meet the basic need to promote peoples participation in forestry resources development, management and conservation. In addition the enactments of forest act 1993 and the forest rules 1995 have made implementing community forestry programme easier (Chhetri, 1994). Stated that in 1971 and 1978 panchayat forest and panchayat protected forest (PPF), were introduced under the community forest development programme (DFDP) with the purpose of handing back the protected forest and its management to the people.

## **2.5 People's Efforts and Practices**

It is already mentioned that many ethnic groups of Nepal have been managing and operating the forest resources in their own way. In the eastern hilly region, people mostly managed the forest resources under the kipat system (Gautam, 1995). Under this system all land irrespective of its use was owned by the community. This system itself is evidence of local management for local benefit. Similarly, Dahal (1994) writes that before 1964 there were kipat and Raikar system of land ownership in eastern hilly region of Nepal. Both types of land and forest resources were hold under control of Subba, Jimawal, Pagari and Their who were not only responsible of maintaining low and order and collecting revenue for the government, but also responsible for the sustainable use, allocation and management of forest resources.

### Box 1 : Historical Time Line of the Forest Management Policy in Nepal

Year	Policy/Act/Regulation	Remarks
Up to 1846	Conversion of forest to agricultural land protection of terai forest	Increase the tax base of the state as a buffer against foreign invasion
1846-1950	Forest land given as Birta to influential officials. Exploitation of	Conversion of forests to agricultural and of timber of India
1957	Private forest nationalization Act	Indiscriminate cutting of forest
1961	Indiscriminate cutting of forest	Protection, management and utilization of forests entrusted to the DFO
1967	Forest preservation act (special provision)	The power of the DFO as a law enforcement agent strengthened further
1976	National forestry plan	Recognized the need for people's participation in forest management
1978	Panchayat forest regulation, panchayat forest regulation	Handing over of limited grass of government forest land to the control of panchayat(s)
1981	Forestry sector policy of the sixth five year plan (1981-85)	Emphasized community participation in the management, conservation & use of forest resources.
1982	Decentralization act	Moves towards transferring the control of forests of local people strengthening
1988	Master plan for the forestry sector plan	Covered all aspects of forestry designed to take Nepal's forestry into strongly emphasized community forestry recognized the role of real user in forest management.
1993	Forest Act	Regulatory function of DFO still intact but significantly softened, forests can be handed over to FUG by the DFO.
1995	Forest Regulations	Procedural guidelines for implementation of the forest act 1993

Source : ICIMOD, 1999



According to new forest policy of 1990, any patch of the forest can be handed over to local community for its managements, conservation and utilization in which land is still owned by government and trees are owned by community. The community has full authority to control over resources and to decide conservation, management and utilization plan. Community has to prepare a simple operation plan in collaboration with DFO's where major decision are made by users themselves expect some technical knowledge are borrowed from forest technicians. All the revenue and benefits divided from the community forest go to the community fund. Community can decide income and expenditure for the various rural development purposes without any approval of local authorities.

Some of the important features of community forestry policy are as follows:

- All the forests can be handed over to users. (no area limit)
- The forest users groups have to manage the forests as per the approval constitution and operational plan.
- Any national forest suitable to be converted into community forest will not be assigned to other such as leasehold forest.
- District forest officer can hand over forest to FUG.
- FUG can use surplus fund in any kinds of community development Works.
- The FUG can fix the price of forestry products irrespective of government royalty.
- The FUG can plant long term cash crops without the main forestry crops.
- FUG can transport any forest products simply by informing the DFO.

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- FUG will not be disturbed by political boundary while handing over the forests.
- The FUG can establish forest based industries.
- FUG can punish misuses who offend against the ruled of the operational plan.

Community forestry is considerable a successful mode of forest management in the hills of Nepal. However, the implementation of community forestry in the terai region has been slower than in the hills. There has been widespread skepticism in the forest administration and among international donors about whether community forestry is also feasible in the terai region. In contrast to the extensive body of knowledge on community forestry in the terai (Chakraborty and et al, 1997)

## **2.6 Peoples Role in Community Forestry**

The concepts, people's role have been used since ancient time of Plato and Greek philosopher in public affairs especially in political science. The role of people, those days was merely a matter of voting, holding office, attending public meeting, paying taxes and defending the state (Joshi, 1995). The meaning of participation however has changed with the passage of time. The role of people in the affairs of the state is necessary for a modern welfare state. The participation (role) ideology. "Bottom Up" approach was originated reaction to colonial Bureaucratic failure in 1950s.

Social activist and field worker advocated on the side of participatory desk, against the top down approach. During the later half of the 1970s the concept peoples participation in development becomes more popular and fashionable as

oppose to the "Top down" approach (Lisk, 1981, cited in Joshi, 1995). World bank also realized the participatory development approach develop to far less achievements on expected output from billions spent on development project through "top to bottom" approach of development. The concept people's participation has become a politically attractive slogan; it is perceived as in instrument for greater effectiveness as well as new source of investment participation is becoming a good fund. Raising device and it could help the private sectors to be directly involved in the development business. Community participation is now generally taken as necessary pre condition to the successful implementation of any renewable or rehabilitation project. Community participation is generally agreed to be important for the long term success of local resource management system (Kortun, 1986 cited in Joshi, 1945).

Peoples role has been used in variety of context such as community development, social mobilization, community participation, pubic participation etc. various authors define people participation in divergent way. It regards community participation as the means of involving people outside of the government in the planning process, while Bhandari (1997) sees it as a means of reducing power differens and therefore, contributory to equalization and social justice. It calls it as involvement of the people activity in the decision making concerning development project or in the implementation (quoted in Joshi, 1995). World Bank defines, "participation means their active not passive involvement & it should be transformative". People's participation is often narrowly defined as the voluntary contribution of labour and or cash by the local people. However, conceptually people's participation includes their participation in identifying needs, decision making, implied benefit sharing and evaluation. People's participation has been taken as a means by the government agencies and the projects for achieving their goals. "A problem free situation of people's participation is not easy". There is no common understanding

regarding what people's participation. Different level of people has different perception about it participation in the sense of only physically involvement is passive participation. Such participation does not seem to last long. (Joshi, 1993)

Community forestry of Nepal is one of the popular programs in the context of people's participation. Many scholars and professionals have defined community forestry as any situation, which intimately involves local people in forestry or tree growing activities for which people in forestry activities. Likewise, It describes, "Social forestry as referring to any situation which closely involves local people in forestry or tree growing activities for which people assume responsibilities and from which they derive direct benefit through their own efforts". In the context of Nepal Gilmour and Fisher (1991) define "Community forestry is the control and management of forest resources by the people who use them for their domestic purposes and as an integral part of subsistence and peasant farming system". Similarly, Kharel defines "Community forestry as management of forest by the local people who depend upon them for fuel, fodder, timber, food and raw materials" (Kharel, 1995).

People's role is the most essential feature of community forest in field practice, idea of people's participation in community forest has gained high level of popularity in Nepal. The institutional arrangement and policy behind this program is popularity in Nepal. It behind this program is quite good in the sense of people's participation. But the gap between rhetoric and realities is seen in the practices. It is happening because of an inadequate understanding of how the idea of people's participation and empowering the people could be effectively put into practice. This research on Chyangthapu VDC of Panchthar district gave feed back to know that there is no real participation of people in plantation work carried out by forest user group with the help of district forest office. Most of the user's involved in plantation in return for wages. This

involvement is given name of fall participation. All seeding were pulled out in the same evening of plantation work when researcher asked the users during his field visit about such behavior; it was known that they were thinking that plantation of government seeds means loosing their convenient land from this research it was concluded that the type of people involved in decision making were elite while some other people were not fully informed and the need of general people was not recognized.

It is realized that people's participation is the best way to achieve the objective on effective protection and management of forest resources. It is suggested for popular participation that existing local practices, institution, organizational structure and local user group should be recognized people should be convinced that they are not only the protector but the immediate beneficiaries as well. Effective participation can be further increased if people are well informed about the program and sense of belonging is created through motivation and awareness.

According to the Luitel, (2007), Nepal has successful implemented community forestry program with the active participation of local people. Forest community formed by user groups take the responsibility of protecting, planting and conserving natural forest people participate in all stage of decision making, planning and reaping benefits. They show ample interest *Step of decision making* in nursery and plantation works. Even the poor are willing to participate in community forestry program because they can collect fuel wood and fodder from the community forests and save their time for earning wages. Role of women is crucial for the success of community forestry women are the major collectors of the forest products such as firewood, fodder and dry leaf. So consequences of deforestation directly impact on women. District forest office

and other line agencies most motivate women to participate or handover in community forestry program through extension and awareness classes.

## **2.7 Role of Women in Community Forestry**

Involvement of women is crucial for the success of community forestry. Women are the major collectors of forest product such as firewood, fodder and fruits, grass etc. They have done most of domestic works. Therefore it is they who suffer the social and economic consequences of deforestation, must directly having to spent more and more time and walk longer distances to in search of these essential forest products. However, they should not be considered in isolation and total community participation should be effected. It is also enhanced the capacity of the women.

Kharel, Fisher and Malla, have pointed out that a number of problems have been identified by various programs and projects that it is very difficult to involve women in forestry due to the particular nature of Nepalese society where women have a minimum role in decision making, rural women are illiterate and have a localized view of life. The society is male dominated where men are not willing to share their power and authority, without which approaching rural women is impossible (Kharel, 1987, Fisher and Malla, 1987).

Most of the case are not single women participated in the forest users group program through self-interest and motivation. Most women were simply nominated and they had no idea that they were participation as members said that they were there because their husband or father had forced them to participate (Dahal, 1994: 78).

Regmi concluded in his study women's involvement in forestry committee could definitely help the government to solve deforestation problem in Nepal. Several studies conducted in different parts of Nepal have also shown the heavy reliance of women on the forest. These studies have also recommended women's active participation in community forestry program so that the community can protect and development the local forest resources (Regmi, 1989).

Shrestha point out that, women interact with the natural environment much more than men. But they were not involved in the approval of the management plan and in the selection of forest watchers women also did not participate in any of the user meeting, committee in which included political male leaders as members (Shrestha, 1987).

Women have worked successfully on both annexed and all female forestry committees in Nepal. Rural people and professional foresters generally agree that women are capable for doing committee work of learning how to do it. Gurung mention that people participation is the most essential feature of community forestry. A genus participation approach is important and the association of participation in the programme is the community organizing process (Gurung, 1999).

The need and necessity of women's participation having been accepted as reality in forestry and their situation being understand in it's true perspective, the strategy proposed visualize all men and women concerned with the program promoting the required focused on women. The importance of women in forestry activities is acknowledged by policy makers. The master plan for the forestry sector emphasis on extension approach, aimed at gaining the

confidence of wood cultures and others, particularly women, who actually make the daily management decisions (HMGN, 1989).

The involvement of women must be recognized as an essential element of achieving success in and development work including community forestry. In community forestry this means women's involvement in all activities, right from the formation of user's groups to the distribution of forest products. When women participate actively in all the stages, only then can we say that women are truly involved in community forestry. Women's participation in forestry needs to be understood in this light and taken up as a major concern for all forestry personnel (Siddiqi, 1989).

Siddiqi (1989) views that rural women are among the most frequent and most important forest user in Nepal but still have a very marginal role in forestry programs. Although the government policy is to empower women to participate in community forestry planning and implementation process never the less Nepali socio-cultural practices. Still seem to be reluctant to let women go ahead.

Shrestha (1987) points out that, women involvement is noticed higher than men in household production and collecting fodder and fuel wood are. But they were not involved in the approval of the management plan and in the selection of forest. Watchers women also did not participate in any of the user meeting committee in which included political male leaders as members. She concludes that if women are not involved in project planning and decision making they may have difficulty conceptualizing projects ideas are expressing their own needs.

The plans and program should provide equal opportunity for women and men to participate in forest activities, "Women as primary users and protectors of forest



due to lack of participation and to the potentials of success through women's involvement" (ICIMOD, 1991). Without their proper participation the efforts of government will not be successful peoples participation is a solution of effective protection and management of common property resources such as forest and participation of women is very necessary in forest management activities.

Kharel (1987), have pointed out that a number of problem have been identified by various programs and projects that it is very difficult to involve women in forestry due to particular nature of Nepalese society where women have a minimum role in decision making; rural women are illiterate and have a localized view of life. The society is male nominated where men are not willing to share their power and authority. Without which approaching rural women is impossible. It is also felt that it will take a long time before one can expect any major involvement of women in forestry.

Several studies have confirmed that women's labour contributed to Nepalese agriculture is substantial and at least equal to that of men. And Nepalese people who subsist on agriculture heavily depend on forest resources.

Most development specialist recognizes that women play vital role in forest resource management. Women constitute about half of the total labour force of any country, proper mobilization of this section of the population is essential for attaining the development of a country. Several studies conducted in Nepal reveal that women spend enormous time in forest related activities such as farming, collecting fuel wood, fodder and leaf litter, grazing animals, fetching water and cooking food. Thus these studies stress on the need to involve women in community forest management activities.

Regmi (1989) concluded in this study that women's involvement in forest committee could definitely help the government to solve deforestation problem in Nepal. It is concluded that the role of the CF in women empowerment through managerial point of view is very successful project of Nepalese forest.

Similar studies have been done by other two foreign scholars namely in Panchthar district in eastern region Nepal. In this study, they have also shown how rural people heavily depend on fire wood consumption that is produced from the forest. Thumberg and Werner write “ wood consumption in Panchthar is for fire wood. The consumption is estimated to be 0.75 bhari per day and households or in other words 796 kg per capita and year below the works of fuel wood.

Upreti in his article Social transformation through community forest focused that The level of awareness is increased whereby quantity and quality of participation of users, especially poor, women, Dalit, etc. is improved. Knowledge and skills of local organizations on facilitation and people's mobilization is increased, local knowledge, skills and other resources are efficiently mobilized. Leadership skills decision making capacity and conflict resolution skills of local people are developed, employment opportunities from forest resources is expanding. Dramatic improvement of forests resource management has been observed.

The role of facilitation is central to exert positive impacts on community and MNRB as it helps to bring about self-willed and learned transformations. CFP implemented in the study area is learning intensive to maintain adaptive responses to changing circumstances based on shared knowledge. From the study it is clear that the needs and the willingness of stakeholders, conducive

policy contexts, effective facilitation, regular monitoring, valid knowledge and information, effective feedback, feelings of ownership and trust among the actors, common visioning and goals, and mobilization of local resources are important conditions for making the CFP successful.

Overall, the above literatures mainly are focused on the management aspect of the CF; however, the researcher has linked these assets through the eye of women empowerment. Because, the skills they have developed to manage the CF is the main property of empowering to them. Beside, the lack of authorized document in the role of community forestry in women empowerment is another factor to take the help by managerial literatures.

## **CHAPTER - THREE**

### **RESEARCH METHODOLOGY**

This chapter provides the way and design of actions taken in the study. This study has been based on the following methods;

#### **3.1 Research Design**

Since, it is the micro level study, this study was limited in exploratory research design to dig out its role in women's prosperity and together with its descriptive character. The former had applied to investigate the contribution of CF in women empowerment where as, later for analyzing the information obtained from the field and secondary sources. In addition, case study had been applied for households' survey.

#### **3.2 Rationale of Selection of the Study Area**

Community forestry programme is one of the successful program of forest management. This program is running in Chyangthapu VDC of Panchthar district which lies about 100 Km far from the district headquarters.

This VDC is composed different ethnic groups such a Limbu, Rai Magar, Dalit, Kshetri, Brameen, Tamangs etc. Furthermore, it is felt easy to collect data and carry out the study because the researcher is already well known to this area and it is accessible to the researcher to collect data. So, this site is selected.

### **3.3 Sampling Procedure**

The area of this study is selected by applying purposive sampling. Sampling due to its advantages like saving time, money and human resources, is being adopted in this research study. The population of this study is dispersedly located in different settlements. Households' survey from ward no 6 of this VDC was done by using random sampling. The researcher had made preliminary visit to this site in order to identify the representative for this study. There are 50 HHs out of which 25 HHs i.e. 50 percent were taken as sample in due course of research study.

### **3.4 Method of Data Collection**

For the collation of the primary data from the field, research needs various data gathering tools and techniques. This study has also applied the following data collection tools and techniques;

#### **3.4.1 Household Survey**

Household survey was conducted to using structured questionnaire to obtain detailed information about population characteristics like as age & sex composition, marital status, caste/ ethnic, religious, occupation and educational status etc.

#### **3.4.2 Observation**

Observation had been used to collect qualitative information like role of this CF in women development along with their activities in decision making, monitoring

and evaluating activities, program implementation and cost and benefit sharing. It was done twice time during the study period.

### **3.4.3 Interview**

Interview was applied to find out the past and present participation of women in CF management. This tool had become useful for the researcher to find out the women's perception about CF management, income level & methods of controlling deforestation.

### **3.4.4 Focus Group Discussion**

Focus group discussion proved helpful to find out relevant information like decision making, evaluation process of CF management activities. Formal group discussions had been hold in Chyangthapu VDC to the CF women groups, local social workers and Dalits male.

### **3.4.5 Key Informant Interview**

The key informant interview was conducted together more information through checklist which is an important tool to collect a quantitative data.. For this local elites development partners, teachers, former VDC representatives, chairperson of the CFUGs and other members as well as forest specialists were interviewed.

## **3.5 Data Analysis**

The data were collected through various sources using various data collection techniques and tools. The qualitative data had been analyzed and interpreted descriptively making the argument in logical way. The quantitative data were coded and the basis of nature of data and then presented in various tables by using simple statistical tool such as table, percentage, and figures with the help of simple computer programme.

## **CHAPTER FOUR**

### **STUDY AREA DESCRIPTION**

Panchthar is one of the Hilly district of Nepal situated in the eastern region near to the Sikkim of India. It is the inhabitants of different castes. The dominant caste is limbu. Out of 41 VDC in this district, Chyangthapu VDC lies in the eastern part from the district headquarter.

#### **4.1, Introduction to the Chyangthapu VDC**

##### **4.1.1 Topography**

The word of 'Chyang' means Chyangra and Chyangthapu is derived from the limbu words and 'Thapu' means Tar. So the literal mean of Chyangthapu according to the limbu language in the land of Chyangra. It is located at the height of 1600 to 2200 m from the sea level. It is the foundry VDC of Panchthar with India that is why the socio-economic activities of this VDC has linked with the activities of Indian Sikkim state.

##### **4.1.2 Climate**

This VDC has the alpine climate condition since it is on the lap of high himals, the climate is very cold. It is due to also the seasonal snow fall in this VDC area.

#### **4.2 Population**

The total population of this VDC 2659 consisting male with 1313 and female 1346 having 492 total number of households. The inhabitants of this VDC are from

different castes. The following table presents the caste wise distribution of total population of this VDC.

**Table no 4.1**  
**Population by caste ethnicity**

Castes/ethnics	No. of population	Percentage
Limbu	596	22.41
Rai	1040	39.11
Bahun	447	16.81
Chettri	103	3.87
Tamang	19	0.71
Dalit	90	9.38
Magar	96	3.61
Gurung	172	6.46
Newar	18	0.76
Others	78	2.93
Total	2659	100

*Source: Intensive study and Research center,2008.*

The above table mirrors that, the predominant caste of this the VDC is ‘Rai’ which occupies 39.11 percent of the total. It is followed by 22.41 percent by Limbu. Other castes occupy 16.81 percent, 6.46 percent, 3.87 percent, 3.61 percent, 3.38 percent, Bahun, Gurung, Chettri, Magar, Dalit respectively.

### **4.3 Education**

Education is the cornerstone of development. If there is minimum number of educated people, the developmental overheads will no longer exist. Development is counted according to the level of educational status.



According to CBS, Nepal's literacy rate is 54.04 percent which we can declare that half of the country's population outreached from the facility of education. This VDC has 61.7 population are literate which is higher in comparison to national level. This shows that the social infrastructures are more convenient.

#### 4.4 Community Forest

Chyangthapu VDC has more than half of forest coverage. After the restoration of the democracy the concept of community forest had got great momentum in this VDC too. There are several CFs out of which Himali Sundarpur CF is larger in terms of population. it occupy. Most of the FUGs are from the Rais community. It is also visualized that the forest of this VDC has conserved not only by that program of CFs but also from the commercial farming of cardamom.

There are two types of forests land as CF and private forests. Leasehold forest is zero in this district. In terms of forest types, the following figures can be observed;

**Table No. 4.2**

#### **Forest Types in Panchathar Distict**

<b>Types</b>	<b>No. of FUGs</b>	<b>Area in hec.</b>	<b>No. of HHs</b>	<b>Average Income of FUGs</b>
CF	135	11126	14434	28344/ yrs.
PF	-	1.28	-	-
Leasehold	0	0	0	0

*Source: ISRC, 2008.*

#### **4.5 Use of Forest Products in Daily Livelihoods**

Based on the VDC profile, the researcher had dug out that around 60 percent production of this VDC depends upon the forest in respect to cultivate different crops, manure the land, residue for the animals, grass for the animals, herbals, woods, log and so on. Most of the villagers made bamboo materials as *maligo* bookshelves, chairs, *doko*, roofs etc. The most magnificent trees of this area is CHAP which is counted as hard wood in Himali region. It is most expensive wood of this area also in Nepal too. Local people use this wood for almirahha, tables, chairs, cupboards etc.

## **CHAPTER – FIVE**

### **DATA PRESENTATION AND ANALYSIS**

This chapter presents the data from the field visit and analysis. It is the major part of any researcher study. It sheds light the conclusion of the study. Based on the households survey of the sampled population, the following socio-economic and demographic characteristics are found.

#### **5.1 Socio-Economic Characteristics of FUG**

Socio economic backgrounds of the respondent affect the whole study. The population composition predicts the level of development of any society. Western development think tanks viewed that heterogeneous cultures devalue the development activities where as eastern believe on the diversity of culture is a source of development. So, development itself is the product theory of human beings as a result population play very omniscient role to erect society in prosperity.

##### **5.1.1 Sampled Population**

Population of a locality structures socio-economic and political features in designated area. It is also the basic source of any developmental pyramid. It means population as the human resources contribute the economic development a of society. The population structure of the sampled respondents has been presents below on the table.

**Table no: 5. 1**

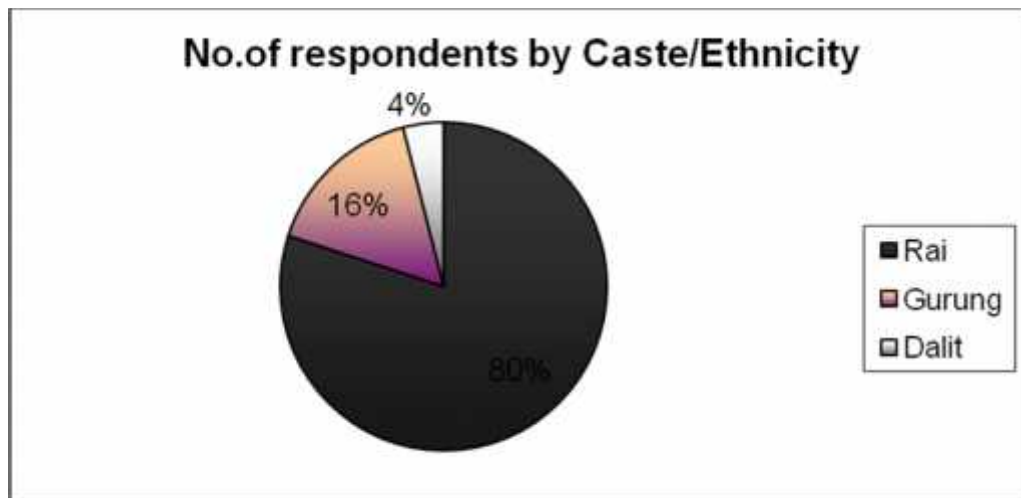
**Caste/ Ethnicity composition of sampled population**

Caste/Ethnicity	No.of respondents	Percentage	Sex
Rai	20	80	Women ,15 (60%)
Gurung	4	16	
Dalit	1	4	Men, 10 (40%)
Total	25	100	
			25

Source: *Field survey, 2010.*

This above table mentions that the majority caste is Rai i.e. 80 percent occupied out of the total 25 households and followed by the 16 percent of Gurungs. Similarly, 4 percent are of Dalits out of the total. In case of the sex composition, women occupied 60 percent and 40 percent of the male. It is clear from this data that Rai are the dominant castes. This has been visualized in the following pie chart;

**Figure 5.1**



### 5.1.2 Population Composition by Age

Age structure declares the economically active and non active population of a society. Higher the economically active population in a society, the greater will be the advancement. The age structures of respondents have listed below;

**Table No. 5. 2**  
**Age structure of the Population of Sample Household**

S.No.	Age Group	Total	Percentage
1	0-19	2	8
2	20-39	16	64
3	40-59	4	16
4	60 to above	3	12
	Total	25	100

*Source : Field Survey 2010.*

The above table shows that 64 percent out of total are from the age group of 20-30 yrs. It is followed by 16 percent of 40-59 age group and 12 percent of 60 age group population. Similarly, the minimum sample is the age group of 0-19. Cumulatively, this clears that majority are the economically active population.

### 5.1.3 Family Size

The average family size of the sampled households in the study area is found 5.1 persons. Distribution of respondents' households by family size is presented in the table below:

**Table No. 5.3**

**Family Size of the Surveyed Household**

Family Size	Households	
	Number	Percent
0-5	15	60
6-9	10	40
above 9	0	0
Total	25	100%

*Source: Field Survey 2010.*

The above table indicates that most of the household, were found having 0-5 members in the family which is 60 percent of coverage of the user group. Likewise 40 percent households were found having 6-9 members, 0 percent household were found having above 9 members. It concludes that there is the dominancy of single family residents.

#### **5.1.4 Population Composition by Religion**

Religion is one of the important parts of the population analysis. It affects the habit and nature of the people. The population by religion in the study area is mainly composed of Hindus, Kirat and Buddhism. Among the total sample population 25 percent are Hinduism and rest 75 percent are Kirat and Buddhism.

#### **5.1.5 Educational Status**

Education is one of the basic needs and fundamental rights of the people in this contemporary world. The Educational status of the rural people is still lower than national average data and also the Nepal's status has remained below other SAARC countries. In Nepal, there is only 42.5 percent of women literacy which is very low in comparison to the male with 65 percent (CBS, 2001). In this sense,

women position in education is average with the male in the study area but very low than national figure. The Educational status of the field surveyed population is given in the figure below:

**Table No. 5.4**  
**Education Status of the Surveyed Households**

<b>Level</b>	<b>No. of Respondents</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
Illiterate	4	16
literate	10	40
School (Primary to Secondary)	10	40
Intermediate	1	4
Bachelor	0	0
Total	25	100

Source: *Field Survey, 2010.*

This above table mirrors that 40 percent respondents are literate out of total 25 which is followed by 16 percent are illiterate and primary level succeeded respondents. Likewise, 40 percent is secondary and SLC completed respondents. It is 40 percent who are at school level education. 4 percent of the total respondents have been done intermediate level of education. From this data, the researcher had concluded that the majority are literate population in this VDC. It is also due to the implementation of program because, women education has increased in response to the saving of time to collect firewood and grass from the forest. The following line diagram has shone the figurative analysis.

### 5.1.6 Land Holding

Land is the most important factor for rural income and employment generation. The households can be categorized (Rich households, Medium household and poor households) according to the quantity of ownership of the land. Households having more land ownership are called rich, their income and living standard are obviously better than the others; those having low ownership of land are called poor. The size of the landholdings in the study area is unequally distributed. The landholding size of the surveyed households is given in the table below:

**Table No. 5.5**

**Land holding size of the Samples Household (Land in ropani)**

Land Size	No. of Respondents	
	Households	Percentage
Less then 5 Ropani	4	16
5 to 10 Ropani	10	40
10 to 20 Ropani	10	40
More than 20 Ropani	1	4
Total	25	100

*Source: Field Survey, 2010*

The above table shows that the households of the study have the at least small land. According to the above table most of the household have possessed below 5 ropani land i.e. 16 percent. Likewise, respectively, 40 percent households have 5 to 10 ropani land, 40 percent households have 10 to 20 ropani land and 4 percent household have more than 20 ropani land. It shows that majority have small size of land even though it is the rural zone and agriculture is the prime occupation.



### 5.1.7. Occupational Structure

Agricultural is the main occupation of the Nepalese people. It has also been remaining as mainstream of the employment for livelihood and income generating activities. Similarly, agriculture is the main occupation of the people of the study area. But, agricultural production is not sufficient for their livelihood. So, people of this area involved in subsidiary occupation in various types of services as well foreign employment and labour work. The following table provides the scene of occupational structure of the respondents.

Occupation is the daily way of a life and it enhances the capacity of society. The occupational structure of the respondents has been given below.

**Table 5.6**  
**Occupational Structures of respondents.**

Primary	No. of Respondents	Percentage	Secondary	No of Respondents	Percentage
Agriculture	25	100	Animal husbandry	14	56
Service	0	0	Trade	4	16
Others	0	0	Service	2	8
			Social workers	4	16
			Labour	1	4
Total	25	100	Total	25	100

Source: *Field Servey,2010.*

This above table no. 5.6 mirrors out the primary and secondary occupations holder in the total respondents. 100 percents respondents i.e. almost all 25 have taken agriculture as primary occupations. It shows that, this is an agricultural zone

represented the whole condition of Nepal where about 80 percent population are engaged in primary activities of agriculture.

In this same table, secondary occupation holders have been given in which 56 percent had taken animal husbandry as secondary occupation followed by 16/16 percent of trade and service. 4 percent out of total respondents/ consisted by social workers as their occupation. It can be concluded that agriculture and animal husbandry has been interconnected and in separated occupation done in this VDC.

### 5.1.8. Types of House of Respondent

One of the most important basic needs for human beings is the shelter in the form of house. The types of it signify the level of economic prosperity. The house types of the taken respondents have presented here under;

**Table no. 5.7**

**Types of House of Respondents**

House type	No. of Respondents	Percentage
Cement	0	0
Stone and mud	18	72
Wood only	2	8
Bamboo	5	20
Total	25	100

Source: *Field Survey, 2010.*

This table reveals that 72 percent of the total respondents have their house made with cement. It is followed by 20 percent of the bamboo built and 8 percent of the stone and slay built. It is concluded from the above description that majority of the local people have their house as in the rural scene of Nepal.

## 5.2 CF related characteristics

### 5.2.1 Accessibility Pattern

One of the aspects of development is to access the available resources equally. Community forest has been introduced as to distribute the forest resources based on social justice. This community forest also has done the improvement measure to access the resources among the rich and poor. The accessibility pattern of forest based resources before and after has been presented below the table;

**Table no. 5.8**  
**Accessibility of Forest Resources of Respondents**

<b>Responses</b>	<b>Before</b>		<b>After</b>	
	<b>No. of Respondent</b>	<b>Percentage</b>	<b>No. of Respondent</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
High	0	0	25	100
Low	25	100	0	0
As it is	0	0	0	0
Total	25	100	25	100

*Source: Field Survey, 2010.*

The above table 5.8 mirrors out that the comparative accessibility pattern of resources after the intervention of this community forest. Regarding to the respondents view on the level of accessibility before and after the CF programs. 100 percent respondents responded there is low accessibility pattern previously. And it is totally vice versa after the HSCF intervention. That why, it is cleared that the local people got more opportunity in accessing the forest resources.

### 5.2.2 Skills Generated by this CF

Development is a change but all changes are not development that means positive change is development. For it, skills should be given to the locale individuals. Skills uplift the socio-economic condition and self employment opportunities. This community forest having motto to transform the society from backwardness to forward has adopted the following training for skills generation in this local community.

**Table no 5.9**  
**Skills given by this CF**

Trainings	No. of Respondent	Percentage
Leadership	10	40
Cooperative	1	4
Improved cooking stove	2	8
Herbal processing	2	8
mixed	10	40
Total	25	100

*Source: Field Survey, 2010.*

The above table shows 40/40 percent skills generated by this CF is on the leadership and more than one skill. 8/8 percent viewed that HSCF provided the training on improved cooking stove and herbal processing. Similarly, 4 percent of the respondents got cooperative related trainings. It clears that this HSCF benefited to all level of people and it placed in the heart of every local people.

### 5.2.3 Income Generating Activities (IGAs)

Income generating activities by this CF is accounted high after the intervention. It is also proved by the respondents view on the query of “Has this CF improved the IGAs?” as following;

**Table no 5.10**  
**IGAs by HSCF**

Responses	No. of Respondents	Percentage
Yes	13	52
No	7	28
Unknown	5	20
Total	25	100

*Source: Field Survey, 2010.*

This above table shows that 52 percent of the total respondents responded ‘yes’ in this query and 28 percent favored of ‘no’. Similarly, 20 percent said ‘unknown’ in this respect. It is clear from this analysis that majority are in the favor in its positive responses.

### 5.2.4 Women Health Status

Due to the program intervention, the firewood has economically used. As a result, most of FUGs households have made improve cooking stove. It brought double benefits as the saving of forest resources and improving the health status women. It is because of the clean kitchen or less polluted. Because of this CF provided the trainings about improve cooking stoves, women got better health position. The respiratory problem of women has been ameliorating day by day.

### **5.2.5 Role of Women in Community Forest Management**

This is the main section of the study. Basically, it concerns with the specific objectives and their corresponding results. The results are totally based on the data collected from primary and secondary sources. There are different role of women involvement in process, monitoring and evaluation process and benefit sharing are discussed as their role in community forest management. These dimensions included various sub-dimensions. However, only common but important issues of each dimension are considered while analyzing the results.

### **5.2.6 Women's Involvement in Decision Making Process**

In HSCF, the FUG makes decision through committee meetings and group assemblies. Meeting of group or committee relied on the issue to be decided. Committee members decide minor issue whereas group decides major issue.

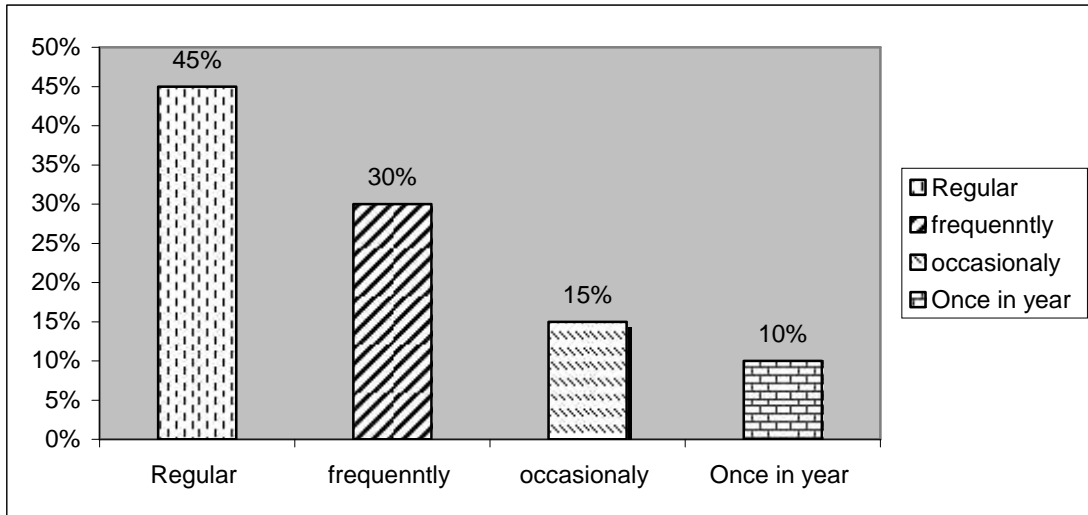
Women's involvement in decision making process in CF development and management is considered in terms of their involvement in committee regular meeting and general assembly, constitution preparation meeting, name registration in CFUG involvement in operational plan preparation, using voting right for executive committee member selection and involvement in conflict management.

### **5.2.7 Frequency of Women's Participation FUG Meetings and Assembly**

FUG meeting and assemblies are means of decision making. Therefore, the frequency of meeting attends by women also determine the women involvement in decision making process of CF because major decisions are made between

committee members during the regular meetings and the general assemblies. However, women's pattern in FUG meetings is shown in figure below:

**Figure 5.2: Women Participation Pattern in FUG Meetings**



Source: Filled survey,2010

Above among the women figure shows that 45 percent women have attending CFUG committee regular meeting and general assembly. Likewise 30 percent women are frequently attending community forest users groups committee,15 percent women are have occasionally attend CF related meeting and 10 percent women have been attending annual once in a year

### **5.2.8 Women's Involvement in Implementation Process**

Implementation is the real practice of operational plan, constitution and other decision made by the user group. It is the main responsibility of the user committee to implement all decisions an operational plan with the full participation of users. It is the responsibility of forest users to be involved in implementation of rules and plan for effective implementation of CF program; protection and management are major implementation activities of community forestry. Implantation of decision includes which area of the forest is considered

for the application of management operation, what period of the year is allocated for the harvesting of forest products, planting and distribution of forest products, how and what practices are to be applied in the planting, harvesting and protection and so on.

**Table No.5.11**  
**Women's Participation in Forest Management Operation**

S.No.	Description	No. of Respondents	Percentage
1	Plantation	6	24
2	Weeding	3	12
3	Thinning/Pruning	4	16
4	Bush clearing	7	28
5	Collection of Forest products	5	20
	Total	25	100

*Source: Field Survey 2010.*

The above table shows that majorities of women, about 16 percent of the total respondents are involved in thinning and pruning forest products and 12 percent of women respondents are involved in weeding 28 percent of women respondents are involved bush clearing. 24 percent and 20 percent women respondents are respectively involved in plantation and collection of forest products. It shows that the involvement of women in implementation part of the CF management is higher than other parts like decision making monitoring and evaluation.

Intensive farming roles of women and their inherited roles of managing, collecting and using of various plants and animals from forests and pastureland is vital. Therefore, women are the key actors in the managing forest products and agricultural plant resources.



### **5.2.9 Women's Involvement of Benefit Sharing**

Benefit sharing is an important element of people's participation. If there is no equal sharing of forest products, people may be frustrated with the CF programmed. Equal sharing of forest products may make user's to realize the CF as their own. Some common issues of benefit such as forest products sharing, opportunities to participate in training and utilize the benefits to be available from social activities launched from the income of community forest are analyzed in the study.

The women members of HSF user group were asked whether they share the benefits from the Community forest equally or not and they are satisfied with the present condition of distribution system or not. It was found that benefit is shared equally on household basis

Human Resource Development: Mainly the training, workshops and study tour were considered under the HRD activity. The younger and adult user was found very enthusiastic in HRD activities. However, elderly people were found not so interested to participate in training and visits.

### **5.2.10 Role of HSCF in Women Empowerment**

The role of this community forest in women empowerment is accounted as vital and the respondents answered that they are getting more benefits from it. In respect to the women leadership development, the respondents viewed that majority women lacked the confidential level which hinders their capacity enhancement but now they can give speech in front of others. Income level of the women was a little bit higher in comparison to the before. In nut shell, this study showed and concluded that CF will be the convenient development pyramid in reduction of women backwardness in Nepal.

## **CHAPTER - SIX**

### **SUMMARY, FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATION**

This chapter summarizes the major findings of the study, draws results above the role of community forest in women empowerment and provides recommendations to make women more active in CFM and their development.

#### **6.1 Summary**

The concept of community forestry programs a vital one for preserving and developing natural resources in general and forest resources in particular in Nepal. Forest is one of the major resources of rural livelihood. It is the source of food, firewood, timber, fodder, leaves and liters etc. The rapidly increasing population growth and its subsequent effects on natural resources particularly forest resources has been noticing since the long.

For the better management and enhancing the forest resources the CF program is launched in Nepal since 1978. The community forest is the forest handed over to the local community on which they have the full authority to use, protect and manage CF in their own way so that they can fulfill their basic needs for firewood, timber and other forest products in a sustainable manner. Women are the primary user of forest resources and their roles increasing in CFM. Thus, the ultimate manager's and uses of the forest are women.

HSCF is used mainly for fire-wood, fodder, grass, leaf litter, poles and timber. The forest products are collected for the domestic purposes. General rules for

using forest products are outlined in the FUG constitutional forest operational plan.

During the field observation most of the women were busy the whole day in doing productive as well as reproductive work. Most of women were involved in vegetable arming, animal husbandry, farming, caring family members and labor work. Due to this women had no leisure time, while men were only busy in productive work.

Women collect firewood during the scheduled community distribution time. They fulfilled their additional requirement of firewood from agricultural residues. It took average of 5.27 ours of for collecting a Bhari of firewood in the past. These days fire wood collection from CF is much more time saving and easier.

Timber is used for house construction and HHs tools. Except very few houses, other houses are made by the timber and forest products. Fodder is the main animal feed for the live stock in this area. People used this fodder for stale-feel which is important for animal husbandry. Every HH maintain livestock for domestic purposes. Therefore, collection leaves and flitters become the main job of the local people. Tree leave a litter are collected specially for bedding purposes.

Forest is an integral part of the faming system in general and therefore, the management of CF has helped to protect the fragile ecosystem Nepal succeeded to protect the several species of medicine plants in particular.

Role of this CF in women empowerment is important in almost all aspects. Women were empowered by the self-motivated participation. The importance

of women's participation noticed from the period of formation to the protection of forest.

## 6.2 Findings

The study “ Role of CF in Women Empowerment ” was conducted in HSCF of Chyangthapu VDC-6, Panchthar district aiming to assess the status of CF in the role of women empowerment. Among the total 50 households 25 households were surveyed. On the basis of the study, some major findings of the study can be summarized as follows:

- ❖ There are various caste and cultural groups who are the users of CF. The HSCF user group is a multi ethnic group where Rai , Gurungs, Brameens and Dalits together.
- ❖ Agriculture is the main occupation of the people in the study area. But agricultural production is not sufficient for their livelihood. So, people of the area are involved themselves in subsidiary occupation in various types of services as well as labour, driver, trade.
- ❖ The HSF FUG has made rules for protection, management, benefit sharing and implementing following those rules and regulations. The main leadership has been taken from women community.
- ❖ Women participation in general assemblies and regular meetings of FUG is not satisfactory. In the study area, women's participation in CFM is found limited. Women's involvement in operational plan preparation is found very low and was not active and decisive.

- ❖ The study has revealed that the involvement of women in implementation part of the CFM is higher than that of other parts like decision-making, monitoring & evaluation. Some exceptional women have been found contributing in decision-making process to a certain level.
- ❖ Access of ordinary women in sub-dimensions of decision-making found lower.
- ❖ Regarding conflict management the involvement of women was negotiable.
- ❖ The women members seem more dependent on male members due to lower confidence and knowledge on subject matter.
- ❖ Both women & men found involved in forest products collection and transportation. However, the degree of women's involvement was again higher in the actual field.
- ❖ There is lack of special program targeted to women like, skill development and income generating activities which support them to become self-reliant.
- ❖ Majority of the respondents of the study area were involved in forest resource management for the fulfillment of day to day requirement of forest products.
- ❖ Majority of the respondents guided to involve in CF management. Likewise, lack of knowledge, self-humiliation and illiteracy among women found other problems.

### 6.3 Recommendation

Community forest itself is a complex phenomenon, which is interrelated with various stakeholders in different steps and aspects of its management. The policy-makers, local governmental organization and non-governmental organizations are major stakeholders of CF. Therefore, some recommendations are provided to the major stakeholders to boost up role of community forest in women empowerment separately. The following recommendations are made in this study;

- ❖ A mandatory provision should be formulated ensuring at least equal and proportional participation of women in executive committee, which leads to compulsory participation of women.
- ❖ Being a corporate body the FUG empowered to develop operational plans independently.
- ❖ Compulsory mandate should be given to FUG to organize the AGM with equal presence of users and active participation of women.
- ❖ FUGs should be reviewed, categorized and awarded based on their performance.
- ❖ A special meeting of all women FUGs should be arranged annually at district level.
- ❖ Focus should be given to introduce alternative strategies to bring women in to main stream of development in general and their role in decision making process in CFM in specific for gender equity.
- ❖ Key positions such as chairman, secretary and treasurers should be assigned to women. Such type of practice helps to boost up knowledge, moral and feeling of responsibility among women that ultimately will increase women's participation plus empowerment.

- ❖ User groups have no sufficient technical knowledge on forest management. Thus, more training should be conducted in this field.
- ❖ User group has given more emphasis only on protection but is not applying management operation effectively. They should increase their participation in forest management.
- ❖ Women participation in decision making should be increased through awareness. They should be encouraged to hold responsible position in user committee.
- ❖ The FUG should organize non-formal education program to women. So that the importance of CFM for the present as well as future generation could be well understood.
- ❖ A gender sensitizing training should be organized at village to minimize the feeling of misconception regarding women's involvement and their leadership in development process.
- ❖ User to users especially women to women system (Peer education) of awareness should be adopted for awareness and women empowerment.
- ❖ Operational plan should be prepared with equal presence of both sexes and maximum number of users.
- ❖ Training materials of technical aspect should be provided to user committee as reference material especially to the Women Empowerment.
- ❖ Several studies could be made on this subject with more explanation and emphasis on ethnic perspectives and women issues.

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## Appendix I Questionnaire for the HHs Survey

### PERSONAL INFORMATION

1. Name of the respondents:
  - i. Cast      ii. Age      iii. Ward no.      iv. Address      v. locality
2. Marital status:
  - i. Married      ii. Unmarried      iii. Divorced      iv. Widow      v. Separated
3. Education:
  - i. Illiterate      ii. Literate      iii. Primary      iv. Secondary      v. SLC
  - v. Intermediate      vi. Bachelors      viii. Master Degree
4. Main Occupation:
  - i. Agriculture      ii. Service      iii. Animal husbandry
  - iii. Retail trade and shop      iv If other (specify)
5. Secondary occupation:
  - i. Service      iii. Animal husbandry
  - iii. Retail trade and shop      iv If other (specify)
6. Households Members:

Members	Age	Gender	Education	Primary occupation	Secondary occupation

7. Information about family:
  - i. Nuclear Family (up to 5)
  - ii. Joint Family (up to 9)
  - iii. Joint family (large above 9)
8. House Type:
  - i. Cement built      ii. Stone and mud      iii. Wood      iv. Bamboo
9. Who is the Head of family?
  - i. Male      ii. Female
10. How much land do you possess?
  - i. Less than 5 ropani      ii. 5 to 10 ropani
  - iii. 10 to 20 ropani      iv. More than 20 ropani
11. Is this land enough to your family?
  - i. Yes      ii. No
 If no. how is you maintained?  
 .....
12. Do you know about community forestry?  
 .....
- 13 Who will frequently go to the FUGs meetings?
  - I. Women      ii. Men
14. How many times do you participate in FURGs meetings?
  - i. All      ii. Two only      iii. Three only      iv. Unknown
15. Accessibility of resources before and after this CF?

Resources	Before	After
Firewood		
Fodder		
Timber		
Herbs		

16. Has the accessibility improved after involving in this community forestry?

- i) Yes      ii) No      iii) Do not want to say

17. Are all females' members literate?

- i) Yes      ii) No      If no, why they don't?

- i) Households activities      ii) Male dominants      iii) If other (specify)

18. Sources of income after and before this program:

Before		After		Change
Sources	Income	Sources	Income	
a. Animal husbandry				
b. Agriculture				
c. Forest				
d. Handicraft				

19. What are the trainings or skill given by this CF to the community?

- i) Leadership Community fund      ii) Co-operative  
 iii) Herbal production      iv) Improve cooking stove      v) Gobar gas

20. Has the program helped in income generating activities?

- i) Yes      ii) No

If yes, in what areas?

- i) Weaving      ii) Goat farming  
 iii) Handicrafts      iv) Vegetable farming

21. Level of women participation

Meeting	
Total meetings	Total participation

22. Do you think, is this women managed co-operative provided credit to the local women equally?

- i) Yes      ii) No

23. Is women health status improved after this program?

- i) Yes      ii) No

24. Is this program effective in forest in conservation?

- i) High      ii) little bit      iii) as it is      IV) Unknown

25. What are the problems faced by you in this program?

Example: Deforestation.....

26. What do you think about its prospects?

- i) Skill development      ii) Income generating  
 iii) Forest conservation      IV) Herbal production  
 V) Tourism      VI) Biodiversity-rich

27. Any suggestion to the policy makers

.....