

Chapter I

INTRODUCTION

1.1 General Background

Nepal is a landlocked mountainous country situated between two giant economic powers of Asia, China and India and located along the Central Himalayan range that provides immense physical and cultural diversity. With 147181 square Kilometers' area the country accounts 0.03 percent area of the Earth.

Nepal offers almost all the climatic touch within a very short geographic distance. The diverse ecological zones with rich bio-diversity and unique socio-cultural identity have termed Nepal as one of the most fascinating tourist destination of the World. The mountainous landscapes of Nepal provide significant potential to use nature-based tourism as a low-cost, eco-friendly alternative to support socio-economic growth and fight poverty (SNV 2003).

Nepal is considered as a paradise for ornithologist, nature lovers, hikers, trekkers and researchers of various disciplines. The country is recognized for its unique and pristine natural and cultural diversity with immense heritage sites of aesthetic, architectural, historical and social significance. With its natural beauty and cultural heritage, like Mount Everest(crown of the world), snow peak mountains, birth place of Lord Buddha(apostle of peace), a number of lakes and rivers, etc. Nepal has become an attractive destination for tourists from all over the world. With wider prospect in promoting tourism, Nepal is probably one of the most fascinating and beautiful countries in the world.

Tourism Industry, being a comparative advantage industry of Nepal, has important role in Nepal's economy. According to Professor Noriaki Kano

Nepal's comparative advantage in tourism is unbeatable because of its strategic locations and natural resources (Himalayan Times, 28 July 2006).

Development of tourism sector has contributed to increase employment and income generation and to improve the balance of payment of the country. It is important not only from the point of view of earning foreign exchange but it also enhances scope for various industrial branches, like hotels motels and other types of accommodation, restaurants and other food services, amusement, and other activities, and other leisure activities, gift shops and large number of other enterprises such as fruit production and processing etc. Nepal where the possibilities of exporting manufactured goods are limited cannot ignore tourism's role because of its multifaceted effect such as the balance of payments situation, diversification of the economy, augmentation of revenues, and generation of employment opportunities directly and indirectly.

Tourism is instrumental to the economy of Nepal in the process of regional development of an economically backward region which has insufficient resources for development of agriculture and industrial sector. Nepal has immense potential for tourism development as it is full of places that attracts tourist throughout the globe and unique products like Everest and Lumbini. So a landlocked, mountainous and poorly resource based economy like Nepal, can be benefited from the development of tourism. Tourism is significant from the viewpoint of butter and bread in this beautiful Himalayan country besides including other activities of the economy.

Tourism is the only industry, because of its multiplier effect and capacity to influence all other sectors that can provide true leadership for rest of the industries including export business. Therefore, Nepal should create a vision of development based on tourism development (Upadhyay and Grrandon 2006).

The country is predominantly rural country where about 85 percent people of total population reside. Poverty is more severe in rural areas. Thus, tourism can be a vehicle to eliminate rural poverty. Rural Tourism is a means of sustainable tourism development. It requires tourist staying in or near village, often-traditional village in remote area and learning about the village way of life. This kind of tourism involves provision of local style accommodation, locally produced food items and local tourism and the activities. The attention given for Rural Tourism in the 10th plan as well as the forthcoming Interim Plan validates it as a means of income and employment generation, diversification and direct effect on local economics without having environmental and ecological adverse impacts.

Nepal has a huge potential for eco-tourism which provides the visitors on opportunity to observe rural hamlets in habited by different ethnic groups with exotic cultures. Visitors can stay at typical Nepali village, eat delicious local food and drink, and enjoy comfortable accommodations provided by host family and get their culture, tradition first hand. Villages like Ghale Gaun, Ghandruk, Sirubari, Palpa, Bandipur, Tatopani and other places have already been promoted as model tourist villages. In this context Gulmi district also might be proposed as a model rural tourist destination.

Gulmi lies in the Middle Hills Region of Nepal, in its Western Development Region. The most important feature of Gulmi is the gift of nature. It has a dense mixed forest which is very rich in biodiversity. It is also rich in timber, fuel-wood and fodder trees and other non timber forest product species like the bamboos, nigalo and medicinal herbs. Additionally, a number of important species of wildlife are also found within the Gulmi district. These flora and fauna are central features for tourism development in the district. As such Gulmi has been attracting nature loving tourists both domestic and foreign. It is also well known for its religious sites like Ruru and Resunga which are popular pilgrimage destinations for the people in the region. The destination thus has high potentials for nature-based tourism/eco-tourism development as well as religious tourism.

This district has got great potentialities for tourism development. It has got such a potentiality that varieties of tourism can be promoted here. Rafting, mountaineering, trekking, hiking, pilgrimage, cultural, environmental, holiday pleasure, village tourism what not! Any kind of tourism is possible. Since Gulmi has a great potential for sustainable tourism development, concerned organizations and institutions should not neglect it any more.

Situated in Western Development Region of Nepal, Gulmi is an important historical and pleasurable religious place. Although with high potentials and of great possibilities to make a tourism destination, it is neglected and hidden behind a horizon for the long years. The study has revealed that bringing this place into the national and international market can herald economic revolution in this district

1.2 Statement of the Problem

Review of literature reveals that very little progress has been achieved in the area of tourism diversification, be it in terms of product or place. The main tourism products and places remain the same and very little has been added in it since 1972 when the first Tourism Master Plan was formulated. Tourism promotion and development is largely concentrated on urban area, and a few of the traditional sites outside the Kathmandu valley.

Benefits of tourism are disproportionately distributed to the centre (Kathmandu) from incoming tourists. Much of the tourists' dollar remains in Kathmandu and little finds its way into other parts of the country. There exists a situation of core-periphery dependency in which the centre controls to a very considerable extent of the distributions of tourism around Nepal, accumulating most of the income generated, organizing much of the travel activities in pre-paid packages, and supplying many of the needs from the centre so that benefits flowing out to rural areas and small towns are limited (SNV, 2003).

A series of general problems are vivid in the context of tourism development in the rural areas of the country. There are poorly developed access and local

institutions in the rural areas. Lack of means, knowledge and opportunities and poorly developed backward and forward linkages have seriously hindered tourism development in the remote rural areas of the country. Similarly, weak coordination between the centre and local institutions, limited ability of the local, persistent inequalities and fragile biophysical environment are some other major problems in this field.

In Nepal there are many places and sections, which are distinct and carry huge potentials for tourism development. Among them Gulmi is such a unique place where there are many natural, cultural and other attractions which can attract domestic as well as foreign tourists. As most other districts, Gulmi is a multi-ethnic district. It is rich in cultural, religious sites which could be attraction centers for the religious tourists. The increasing interest of foreign tourists in diverse rural life styles and diverse culture and pristine nature have made it imperative to do some thing for the development of tourism in Gulmi district.

In this context the research problem, can be drawn as follows:

- i) Problems and prospects of rural tourism in Gulmi District
- ii) Development of rural tourism linkages in the Western Development Region
- iii) Rural tourism model for Gulmi District
- iv) Relationship between tourism and indigenous culture
- v) Role of the rural tourism for poverty alleviation

1.3 Objectives of the Study

The major objective of the study is to develop and establish Gulmi as a prime tourist destination. It has highlighted the natural heritage of historical, archaeological and religious importance and the economic and social life patterns of the people in surrounding local communities against a rural background. It has also identified and recommended main tourism infrastructures that are local environment and culture friendly.

General objective of the study is to analyze the potentialities of tourism development in an integrated manner in and around Gulmi district along with the problems and challenges in realizing the potentialities. The specific objectives of this study are as follows:

- i) To find out the important tourist spots and products in and around the study area
- ii) To exhibit available facilities with regard to tourism supply components in the study area
- iii) To identify the problems and prospects/potentialities of rural tourism in and around the study area
- iv) To suggest policy measures along with the institutional arrangements and incentive packages in order to promote rural tourism in the study area
- v) To draw attention to Gulmi District by establishing it as an attractive tourist destination and by linking it with other major tourist destinations in the Western Region

1.4 Significance of the Study

Nepal is recognized as an ideal tourist destination for culture and nature lovers. Diversity in terms of geography, ethnic communities and cultural heritages is the defining characteristic of Nepali society. Tourism development in Nepal is largely dependant upon expanding linkages between nature conservation and tourism. While Nepal's rich natural heritage attracts a large number of nature loving tourists, the country also suits the taste of other types of visitors like the culture lovers, sports persons and adventure seekers as well. Its hospitable people and their rich and colorful socio-cultural heritage are the major attractions for the people from the western parts of the World.

Tourism can be regarded as the most potential and feasible sector of Nepali economy. It has been recognized as one of the most important sectors of national economy. The potential of tourism to contribute to pro-poor growth and hence poverty reduction in any given area clearly needs to be considered in the light of the alternative opportunities available. In many rural areas of the

country there are no viable alternatives other than tourism. Therefore, tourism should be considered as one of the most important economic development opportunities available to the developing countries like ours (UN WTO 2001).

Majority of Nepali people dwell on the rural areas and villages and the villagers have been generally visitor friendly. Receiving guests and looking after them well has been an age old tradition and a way of life. Guests, in a rural setting in particular, have been considered god sent (Athiti Devo Bhava) even when they arrive uninvited.

Rural tourism is being recognized as viable means to support local incomes and employment generation and help in addressing the problem of poverty among local population. Similarly, community-based rural tourism is also seen as an effective means to directly benefit the local people through local employment and income generation, thereby, helping to reduce poverty in the area. Therefore tourism needs to develop strong linkages with the local rural economy. Gulmi district presents important potentials for the promotion and development of rural tourism, and helping in the socio-economic well being of the people in local communities. The opportunities to develop tourism in the district are plenty.

This study has provided basic information and general guidelines to the local people, tourists and other concerned agencies about the way to attain sustainable tourism development in Gulmi district. It has also be of immense help and guidance for the development planners, Ministry of Tourism, Nepal Tourism Board, INGO's, District Development Committee, Gulmi and the all organizations (public and private) related to tourism. Gulmi is famous for its own natural beauty, commercial cash cropping and public homage. There are many places that can be promoted as rural tourism spots and cultural tourism destinations in Gulmi. This research will be an important milestone for the development of tourism in general and rural tourism in particular in Gulmi district.

Besides all this, the following points also highlights on the rationale of this study:

- i) The study has highlighted on the socio-economic and cultural reality of the local people.
- ii) It has raised the level of awareness among the people in and around the study area to preserve nature, culture and environment.
- iii) It has also explored the major problems and prospects to promote rural tourism in Gulmi District.
- iv) It has paved the way for the development of rural tourism in Gulmi district.
- v) It will have significant contribution in tourism diversification of the country in terms of both place and product once its success stories are replicated by other districts that would contribute in attaining the overarching goal of poverty alleviation.

The study is location centric focusing on the Gulmi district and it's surrounding Western Development Region. A diagnosis and design pattern of work is being adopted to accomplish the task.

1.5 Limitations of the study

The study has referred some of the major tourist sites and tourism models of the western development region. However, with limited budget and time it has not gone in detail on these aspects and is primarily based on the socio-economic and cultural realities of Gulmi district. Therefore, findings of this study may not be readily applicable to all places of the country with regard to the problems & prospects of rural tourism.

1.5 Chapter Plan

The research report has been broadly divided into five chapters. The first chapter has introduced the topic with some background information. It has also presented the problem, objectives, and significance of the study. The second chapter has reviewed relevant literature. The third chapter has built theoretical

frameworks for analysis. The fourth chapter has presented relevant data and information that include findings of field survey and overall introduction of the study area. This fifth chapter has dwelt on rural tourism. The sixth chapter has settled on problems and prospects of rural tourism in Gulmi district. The last chapter has concluded the study and putted forward recommendations to promote Gulmi as an important tourist destination for both domestic as well as international tourists that would contribute in achieving overarching goal of poverty alleviation.

1.6 Expected outcomes with policy implications

The research has highlighted on the prospects of rural tourism in Gulmi district. Being the first in its type, it will help as a solid foundation for further research on rural tourism development. It could also be helpful to the Ministry of Tourism in tourism policy making both at micro and macro level. Furthermore, it could contribute in building linkages among various tourist sites in the western development region that is the crux of tourism development. It could be of immense help to the policy makers, planners, researcher, local government such as DDC and VDC, INGOs, NGOs and other organizations which intend to implement new rural development programs especially in the western development region. At a time when the government is emphasizing on rural tourism to ensure tourism diversification and distributive justice that will contribute in achieving the overarching goal of poverty alleviation. Thus policy implications of this type of study are self-revealing.

CHAPTER-II

LITERATURE REVIEW

The study has reviewed a wide range of relevant books, journals and research reports to avoid duplication and maintain quality in research. Books on rural tourism, ecotourism, community tourism and principle of tourism have been reviewed to build theoretical as well as analytical frameworks. Books on culture, sociology, social studies, behavior science and political economy have been consulted to give practical touch on the study.

a. Review of related Research Reports and Literatures

Sharma, Om Prakash (2001), mean in his Ph. D. dissertation named “Tourism Development and Planning in Nepal” has effort to deliver through the role and impact of tourism on the economic development process of Nepal. He has made a thorough analysis on the impact of tourism in Nepal on government revenue, gross domestic product, exports and balance of payments with data for the period of 1974-1996 which has shown very positive results. His study has shown positive correlations between gross shaving of the country and an increase in tourism return.

Likewise, Sharma has also analyzed employment patterns of trekking sector in Nepal which shows that western development region (WDR) alone generates 56 percent followed by eastern development region (EDR) as 36 percent. Viewing it by destinations, Kanchanjunga and Manaslu have created highest rate of employment per trekker that is 3.7 and 2.8 persons respectively.

Sharma has also minutely studied the expenditure per tourist in absolute terms. By purpose of visit, the conference, culture and business tourists are the highest per day spenders. They have been found spending \$109, \$91 and \$73 respectively. Cultural tourist, and trekkers are the high spenders in accordance with per visit i.e. \$1040 and \$860 respectively. Indeed pleasure and trekking

tourism is one of the major sources of tourism income in Nepal. Altogether 83 percent of total demand originates from pleasure and trekking. Similarly the expenditure on accommodation, transport and other miscellaneous items has been found more elastic while that on food and communication, tax and fees has been inelastic.

Upadhyaya, Rudra (2008) in his report entitled “A Study of Rural Tourism in Nepal, Measures to Minimize the Negative Impact” has given much influence to Tourism products or resources of Nepal, mostly located in villages or rural areas of the country and tourism development in such areas can prove to be an effective vehicle for sustainable economic growth of this sector. But the people residing these areas are not getting appropriate benefits. He has also highlighted on the requirement to make a very conscious efforts to rural sectors of the country as they are living in terrible poverty. He has described that it is right of the people to promote their life standard through the optimum utilization of resources, as most of the resources needed for economic development lie in the rural areas. Tourism development in rural areas needs special proactive planning and some intervention from local government bodies and from national level also. The tourism development till now has not brought effective economic, socio-cultural and environmental impact as per the expectation of people.

Dr. Upadhyay has defined Rural Tourism as the tourism showcasing the rural life, art, culture, and heritage at rural locations, thereby benefiting the local community economically and socially as well as enabling interaction between the tourists and the locals for a more enriching tourism experience. He has organized it under different sorts of models. The major ones are: Sirubari-Community based Tourism Model, Ghalegaun Rural Tourism Model, Ghundruk Rural Tourism Model, Bandipur Model and TRPAP Model.

He further opined that adoption of approaches that TRPAP took for the empowerment of rural community with multidimensional concepts like pro-

poor, pro-women, pro-environmental and pro-community seems very effective to address the pervasive poverty in a community, but caution about the receptive capacity of a community, involvement and acceptance of the product by private sector, sustainable marketing and promotion of the product must be taken from the very beginning of product development process.

Shrestha and Walinga (2003) have highlighted on various aspects of ecotourism in their publication “Ecotourism: Planning and Management”. A paper entitled “Ecotourism, Conservation and Sustainable Development in Sagarmatha National park and Solukhumbu District”, prepared by H. Goodwin for University of Greenwich, London has perfectly analyzed on various aspects of tourism in rural setting and protected areas.

b. Review of National Plans and Policies

To achieve successful development and sustained growth of tourism industry, good management, leadership and organization are crucial and a well thought planning and high level of co-operation among the various key stakeholders is the first and foremost requirement for efficient and effective drive of tourism industries.

The official records do not indicate any planned approach regarding tourism till 1950. The first study regarding tourism potential of the country was carried out in 1959 with the technical assistance from the French Government along with the publication of “General plan for the Organization of Tourism in Nepal.” The first five-year development plan (1955-60) envisaged to identify the possibilities and also initiated to establish infrastructure for tourism development. The establishment of tourism development board in 1957 and Nepal Airlines Corporation, the national flag carrier starting operation in domestic and some international sectors in 1960 are some of the tourism highlights then. The second three year plan (1962-65) was a major step to regularize and promote the tourism activities by establishing of hotels, travel agencies and other infrastructure construction.

Although there was no specific provision for tourism development in the first five year plan, the plan gave adequate emphasis to build requisite infrastructure like road, water, electricity, construction of airport etc. Tourism Development Board and Tourist Information Center were established in 1957 and 1959 respectively. Hotel survey and tourist guide training were conducted during this plan period.

Having realized the importance of tourism as a major source of foreign exchange earnings, emphasis was given to promote tourism in Nepal and abroad and develop travel agencies, hotels, during the second three year plan (1962-1965). One of the most important achievements, of this plan for tourism was the Company Act 1964 to regulate and develop tourism sector. This plan had allocated Rs.2 million for outlay in tourism sector. The new tourist resorts were explored and constructed in Pokhara, Lumbini, Kakani and Nuwakot. The Tribhuvan International Airport (TIA) was under construction and the emphasis was given to improve its modern facilities.

The fourth five year plan sought to enlarge the scope of tourism with trade as an important source of increasing national income by earning foreign exchange. Similarly the fifth plan's focus was exerted on the preservation of historic cultural and natural attractions of the country to promote tourism in the areas other than Kathmandu valley.

Ministry of Tourism was formed in 1977 and the Government constituted a high level tourism task force in 1978 to co-ordinate promotion and development activities and to review the master plan.

The Fifth Plan (1975-80) emphasized on (a) Tourism development through conservation and development of historical, cultural and geographical specialties. (b) Development of tourist centers outside Kathmandu valley in order to reduce concentration of tourists inside the Kathmandu valley. (c) Increasing the Length of stay of the tourist. (d) Developing necessary facilities

in Pokhara, Chitwan, Lumbini, Khumbu etc. and extending training to develop skilled manpower.

The Sixth Plan (1980-85) also adopted policies for the extension of tourism centers in different parts of the country, preserving and protecting the natural, cultural and historical heritage of the country, encouraging domestic products in the tourist industry, providing employment opportunities to the large number of people and making necessary publicity and promotional measures.

Seventh Plan (1985-1990) mainly emphasized on quality tourist over the quantity, expansion of tourism in the areas with infrastructure facilities, creation of new employment opportunities, local production of consumable items, conservation of the environment of the religious places and historical sites. Tourism was envisioned to extend to the outskirts of the urban areas through opening up of new areas and mountain peaks. Domestic air services were extended to additional districts in the mid western development region to support the initiative of the government to reduce the regional economic imbalances. The Plan had also stated to formulate and implement the Second Tourism Master Plan that did not happen.

Eighth Plan (1992-1997) for the first time, felt the need of producing a comprehensive and liberal Tourism Policy. It had, thus, set the way for the declaration of the Tourism Policy in 1995. The Plan had taken the policy of government's involvement in infrastructure development and identification of tourist markets. Creation of additional national parks in the country and extension of tourism inside those protected areas was also envisioned. Emphases were also laid down towards increasing the length of stay of tourists, providing incentives to address the issues of seasonality, encouraging high budget, cultural and religious tourists. The plan opened an avenue to participate private sector in domestic air service operation in the country. Special programs were introduced for promoting trekking tourism in remote areas with the objective of creating rural employment opportunities and establishing

linkages with local food and energy development programs to make the growth of rural tourism sustainable from the environmental point of view.

Ninth Plan (1997-2002) gave more emphasis on environmental protection. The plan was specific on carrying out tourism activities based on the environmental impact assessment on protected areas and their vicinity. It recognized the need of code of conduct for private sector service providers. As a balanced economic and social development, domestic tourism also got special priorities. For the purpose of harnessing optimal benefits from tourism it was proposed to promote all the three categories of tourists namely, Regional or SAARC nationals, International and Domestic.

Tenth Plan (2002-2007) has encouraged value based and quality tourism in the country. It has clearly stated its objective to contribute to poverty reduction initiatives by increasing people's participation in tourism activities while ensuring effective promotion and sustainable development. Diversification of the products, optimal utilization of existing potentials, establishment of regional tourism hubs, encouraging tourists to visit new areas, eco tourism as an over-riding guideline for the future development of the tourism activities, are the major aspects of the tenth plan. The retention of earning in the local areas through increased use of local products is one of the main agenda and the plan states to engage women and deprived section of the society in delivering such services. Development and conservation of heritage sites, managing air pollution, solid waste and air safety, expansion of road and air access, tourism facilitations are few other areas of concentrations. The rural tourism managed by the rural community themselves and the ploughed back resources to be handled by the local communities are the noticeable features of the Plan. It has also emphasized on allowing community participation in managing national and historical heritage sites for the benefit of tourism.

Three years Interim Plan (2007-2010) has accorded high priority to tourism development so as to make this sector a building block of the economy. It has emphasized on tourism diversification that would contribute for balanced

regional development in the country. The plan has focused on rural tourism in order to raise the standard of living of rural people. It has introduced the concept of integrated tourism infrastructure development which is carried by the respective sectoral ministries. The plan has a policy to encourage the youth and the people from backward communities, women and the rural poor to participate in tourism related awareness and employment oriented trainings and skill development and capacity development programs.

The government of Nepal had brought out, for the first time in its history, a separate set of Tourism Policy in 1995. Its cross-sectoral linkages were found crucial to support other sectors of the economy too. With distinct aims of expanding broad based tourism in the country, it has emphasized on the income generating activities at central as well as rural level to support in narrowing down the regional imbalances through tourism. The major objectives of the Policy are to accommodate natural, cultural and human environment for the sake of tourism at the internal front as well as reinventing the prestigious image of the country as an attractive tourist destination internationally. It has also dwelt upon the linkages between tourism and agro-based and cottage industries. The local communities are motivated to take part in tourism and the rural tourism has been especially encouraged.

A commendable part with the Tourism Policy is that the respective roles of the government and the private sector have been clearly delineated. The government is bestowed with the role to act as a catalyst; leader, coordinator and facilitator while the commercial and business activities are set-aside for the private investors. Development of the required infrastructures and facilities in the rural areas, enhancement of the quality of services, promotion of pilgrimage, and development of adventure tourism are also some of the major activities mentioned in the policy document but failing concrete actions to support those initiatives. More critical review is done in the following segments.

c. Others

Nepalese economy is of dual nature (small modern sector and vast poor rural sector), and thus the economic activities out of the poor's reach wouldn't carry any significant meaning to create just, equitable and prosperous societies in the country (Upadhyay, 2008). Poverty reduction measures have to be essentially integrated with the tourism development. Someone has rightly said, Nepal is a live global museum, where hundreds of villages can be developed as tourism attractions. As tourism has tremendous forward and backward linkages it will help to boost other sectors as well as to diversify our economy for balanced development of the country.

According to Nepal Tourism Statistics 2007, 5, 26,705 tourists visited Nepal during 2007 with an increase of 37.2 percent over the previous year. The largest number of tourist, visited Nepal for recreational purposes 2, 17,815 (41.4 percent), similarly, adventure tourists posted the highest average length of stay in the country. The average length of stay was recorded as 11.96 days. It can be fairly said that promotion of rural tourism would significantly increase the average length of stay of tourists in the country.

Investment in tourism sector has positive impact on tourist arrival as well as economic development of the country through increasing tourism activities and foreign exchange earnings.

Tourism growth was one of the greatest success stories till 2000. But in recent years, there have been increasing warnings; the deterioration of some destinations, the overwhelming of some cultures, bottlenecks in transport facilities, and growing hostility of residents in some destinations. Some tourism entrepreneur were earning somewhat before the start of armed conflict in Nepal in 1996. During the decade long conflict period, while, they did not receive a single guest sometime even in a long period of time. Such was the state of the common working man in the long years of destruction and distress during the period of armed conflict in Nepal. The psychological damage has caused

unwillingness in the people to continue or resume their businesses. The significant damage is expected to take long to recover. Therefore, the overriding concern for the industry must be to seek out ways to enhance rather than degrade its core product; the environment, upon which all of humanity must depend for survival, In other words, the environment is tourism's resources. It is our environment or rather the experience of enjoyment of it that the tourism industry promotes and sells. The close relationship between tourism and the environment and the importance of environmental planning and sustainable tourism development planning are becoming increasingly recognized. (Sharma; 2001)

The joint publication of NTB and TRPAP, (2004), "National Ecotourism Strategy and Marketing Program of Nepal, 2004" contains the overall sectors related to the tourism activities, specially the strategic plans for all sectors of Nepalese ecotourism. D. Bhatta has extracted the quotes of Tourism Concern, 1991 in his book, "Ecotourism in Nepal, 2006" about the basic principles of sustainable tourism viz. using resources sustainably, maintaining biodiversity integrating tourism into planning, supporting local economies consulting stakeholders and the public, marketing tourism responsively and undertaking researches.

The famous conservationist Dr. Harka Gurung in his article "Tourism and Tirtha" published by Hotel Associations Nepal in 25 January 2000 has elaborated certain unique features of tourism in the context of a land locked country like Nepal.

Likewise, Dr Gurung in his lectures in "International Conference on Himalayan Biodiversity, 2002" has triangulated conservation, tourism and development as mutually interconnected factors. Conservation gives assets to tourism and takes revenue; tourism provides resources for development and takes framework while conservation ensures sustainability of development by taking its physical and social enhancement. Gurung concludes that conservation promotes

tourism, tourism generates revenue for conservation and development enhances sustainability of conservation.

In an interview to Nepal Television on 18 November, 1998, Tony Hagen asserted that water resources, human resources and tourism are the main resources in Nepal but at present comparative advantages seems to be in favor of tourism which seems to be the most viable sector

Likewise, Sharma (2006) in his article “Village Tourism for the Sustainability of Rural Development” in Nepalese Journal of Development and Rural Studies (Vol 3.1, Jan-Jun 2006) has extracted the quotes of the Tenth Plan (PRSP, 2002)- the tourism sector can be an important instrument of poverty reduction by increasing employment opportunities directly and indirectly in urban as well as rural areas, particularly in the hills and mountain areas along trekking trails and tourism sites. He has asserted that it can be aids-led tourism development where problem of sustainability and indigenous efforts will be overshadowed.

As stated by Nepal Tourism Board. (2006) in “Rural Nepal Guide Book,” Nepal is one of the richest countries in the world in terms of natural beauty due to its unique geographical position and latitudinal variation. Within this spectacular geography are some of the richest cultures of Himalayan heritage and it has also invited tourists to meet the lovely people of rural Nepal, share a meal with them, stay at their houses and family guests, taste their local drink and see them carry on with life graciously. As well, they are expected to receive the heart warming hospitality, to witness some of the most spectacular views of the mountain landscapes or heritage sites along the way. It has also requested to visit rural Nepal through pristine landscapes and colorful mountain cultures, to know the real Nepal but it also gives a chance to educate and empower the local community and be a part of their development process. Similarly money spent in these areas contributes directly to the local livelihood. Therefore, with the aim of showcasing new areas and promoting and developing indigenous people and culture, a new approach to tourism, based on sustainable development has been initiated by Nepal. Community-based

tourism is also being initiated in other parts of South Asia as a tool for sustainable development. It has highlighted as a major tourist attractions of various parts of different regions with the People, Geography, Himalayan Region, Mountain Region, Terai Region and History as well. It has also paid attention to East Nepal, Central Nepal, West Nepal, Mid and Far West Nepal, Major Tourist Activities, Brief Ethnic Profiles. In Western Nepal, it has focused on Lumbini (Rupandehi) but it has not indicated any thing about Gulmi district, the district which is full of tourism potentials for religious tourism as well as nature based and rural tourism.

Similarly, “Pro-poor Rural Tourism Initiatives and Its Sustainability in Nepal, 2007”, the research highlights published by TRPAP is found useful for rural tourism analysis. It highlights on and takes abstracts of 21 research studies done within the TRPAP regions through the country, most of which belong to the academic works by the Masters’ and PhD students, those consisting students of different departments of Tribhuvan University, Kathmandu Academy of Tourism and Hospitality (Purbanchal University) and others as well.

Household Socioeconomic Surveys in TRPAP areas performed and published by TRPAP in partnerships with NTB; Tourism Resource Mapping Profile of Chitwan, 2006; TRPAP Annual Reports of 2002, 2003, 2004, 2005 and 2006 including the other contemporary reports; there are other huge publications done by TRPAP are reviewed consequently.

TRPAP’s publication, “Pro-poor Rural Tourism Initiatives and Its Sustainability in Nepal, The Research Highlights” includes one specific research on “Development and Promotion of Agro tourism Industry in Chitwan District, with special reference to TRPAP Area”. It illustrates, Agro tourism can bring about some rays of hope in lives of the rural people by diverting the tourists to those areas, where there is range of agricultural activities, services

and amenities provided by the farmers and rural people in order to generate extra income for their business.

In the global changeable trend, we need to handle according to the changing human psychology or we should modify the policies and strategies that will extend tourist stay in the country and since tourism is an active industry we should change with international trends. In this regard a noted tourism industrialist of Nepal, Karna Shakya puts forward, “Tourism is not a trade; neither just an industry. It’s a science of understanding human psychology and we need to change with the changing trends and psychology if we want to keep up with the international community.”

Dhungana (2008) has written in the form of a record; unfold Nepal’s glorious history, culture and traditions as well as the present carnage of violence and political instability engendered by the unleashing of the hitherto dormant social and political forces. Despite the rather grim scenario of the present, the author offers a ray of hope for the future through his own patriotic affection for the genuine philosophical heritage of the motherland, the natural beauty of the landscape abundant in diverse flora and fauna, and the sense of inner peace and harmony that is to be gained by living a truly religious, non-violent, philanthropic and contemplative life dedicated to the well being of all.

Tourism before 1950: When we come across the development history of tourism in Nepal, we can say that Tourism Prior to 1950 is the first. There was not institutional and formal development for the tourism before 1950s. But there were different practices of tourism even before 1950s. The ancient history of Nepal is the history of Kathmandu valley and the ancient history of tourism is also related to the Kathmandu valley. It is believed that Kathmandu valley took birth when a visitor named Manjushree came here from China, cut the edge of the hill in Chovar with a sword and emptied the water of the lake. After this in 249 BC, ruler Ashok of India visited Nepal as a pilgrim and creates a Monastery entitled ‘Charumati Bihar, and also four Buddhist stupas in the four

corners of Patan. During the Lichhavi period, most of the foreigners visited Nepal as pilgrims. At this period, the great emperor of Tibet named Shrangchong Gampo visited Nepal and married the daughter of King Anshuvarma, princess Bhrikuti. The Chinese visitor Huan Tsang described in his travel accounts the Kailaskut Bhawan and Mangriha of Lichhavi dynasty. Similarly, around 6th century, in the Kirati Regime, some foreigners visited Nepal as pilgrims. In Malla Regime there was a significant development in art and culture, and then rulers of Nepal were more or less interested in greeting travelers who entered into the kingdom of Nepal as pilgrims. Krishna Mandir of Patan, Nyatpol Darwar i.e. a place of 55 windows, Pashupati Temple, Swayambhu and Stupas of Buddhist were built or renovated during this period. After the unification, the rulers of Nepal had not made any attempt to develop tourism in Nepal on the contrary the policy of the government was not let tourist enter into Nepal, except in some special cases. In the Rana's regime for 104 years the policy of the government was not favorable for tourism development. Only during the great festival of Shivaratri, permission was given to Indians to enter into Nepal as pilgrims. Till 1950 only 100 foreigners visited Nepal. The restrictions on tourists to enter into Nepal during the Rana regime of 104 years adversely affected tourism in Nepal. As a result there was a lack of foreign exchange earning, from tourism for the development of infrastructure in the country. In that time, the religious tourism was highly flourished in Nepal because different monks and other religious personalities had visited to Nepal. On the other hand, the other persons from different dynasties used to visit to Nepal either for the political purposes or the religious purposes. After the unification of Nepal, Prithivi Narayan Shah had visited to Banarash and different other parts of India for the religious as well as political purposes. King Ashok had visited to Lumbini and had created a religious pillar which is still there.

Tourism after 1950: The second stage of Tourism started after 1950. The Tourism of 1950 is called Diplomatic Tourism where diplomats spread the word about Nepal. A great political change took place in Nepal in 1951. The

Rana government was overthrown from power and democracy was brought into the country. Thereafter a rage of development in the country, internal as well as external communication and transportation tasks began to start. After that only Nepal opened its access for foreigners. Swiss geologist Tony Hagen and Edmund Hillary from New Zealand who was also one of the first to climb the peak of Mt. Everest, were among the most significant tourism promoters of Nepal. Edmund Hillary also introduced and promoted mountaineering in Nepal. After the initial years of tourism, the country was rich in culture and blessed with nature's bounty emerged as one of the most popular adventure destinations in the world with its offer of mountaineering and trekking. In actual sense the promotion of tourism started more or less only in the beginning of 1960s. The then government made attempt for the development of tourism with relatively more liberal tourism policy than there before. A new era of Nepalese tourism started in November 1957 when a 'Nepal Tourism Development Board' was established under the chairmanship of the minister of trade and industry.

We called the tourism of 1960 is Hippie Tourism, in this stage a lots of hippies were here as tourist to go into hiding towards toil as Army force.

In 1970, Nepal Tourism Development committee was constituted under the chairmanship of late prince Himalayan Bir Bikram Shah. In 1972, the committee published 'Nepal Tourism Master Plan' with technical assistance from the government of Federal Republic of Germany. The master plan had been prepared for further development in the field of tourism started to be considered the country, tourism started to be considered as an industry and for its development efforts have been made to distributed posters, booklets to international organization and to provide sufficient hotel facilities and transportation facilities to tourists. As a result, there was 41 fold increases in tourists visiting Nepal, 6179 tourists in 1962 and 2,548,885 in 1990. In 1965, John Copman, who was running 'Tree Top' in Africa, came to Nepal and was begin impressed with dense forest and wild animals started 'Tiger Top', first jungle Resort. Similarly, James Robert, Ex-British Army-man who was in

British India came in contact with Nepalese Gorkha soldiers and with their links came to Nepal and introduced trekking tourism by opening company named 'Mountain Travel' in 1965, which still runs today. The 1970 decade is also called as Trekking and wildlife Tourism decade. Similarly 1980 is Cultural Tourism decade.

Tourism after 1990: Accordingly after 1990 is third stage which is Ecotourism and now Endemic Tourism of the 21st century. By the late 1990s tourism evolved as one of the main industries of Nepal contributing 18 percent of the foreign currency earning and 4 percent of the GDP. Analysis of the event related to the development of tourism in Nepal suggested that in the decade for nineties there have been much more conscious effort to globalizing the economy of Nepal. However, here we are taking up only some important events that reflect upon globalization of tourism related activities in Nepal.

These are:

-) Formation of Tourism Council(1992)
-) National Civil Aviation Policy (1993)
-) Tourism Policy (1995)
-) Visit Nepal Year (1998)
-) Formation of Nepal tourism Board (NTB) in 1999
-) Destination Nepal 2002-2003.

From then onwards however, there has been a steady decline in terms of tourist arrival as well as income generation owing to several national and international misfortunes. Tourist arrival in Nepal was on a steady rise in the late 1990s, with almost half a million tourists visiting the country wholly during the Visit Nepal'98 period, it suddenly plunged to low numbers in the after years with the hijack of the Indian Airlines in December 1999, followed by the street riots caused by the alleged statement of Indian actor Hrithik Roshan. Since then tourist arrival has not picked up the expected numbers. The main cause behind the lagging tourist numbers in the country has been the civil strife in the country started by the Maoists and the political turmoil that has followed.

Although there have been regional and global incidents as well, Nepal's own armed conflict and political uncertainty have been the biggest obstacles to this fledgling industry. As the political strikes and harsh security measures obstruct tourists from movement, cancellations of bookings are but the natural outcome. The main causes of the Maoist insurgency and the decade-long armed conflict are: asset inequality, unemployment, unequal access to public services and over taxation, economic mismanagement, lack of democratic right and suppression. In stead of trying to find peaceful measures to end the violent conflict, the government adopted coercive methods initially to cope with it. The other massive loss Nepal's tourism industry is facing today is the negative publicity being carried out by national and foreign media as a war prone zone. Political instability, frequently organized mass rallies, and strikes have significantly contributed to negative publicity in the international market. This has also led to issuance of negative travel advisories by many embassies of the primary and secondary market countries. Finally, with the royal take over of political power in October 2002 the country plunged into an emergency and further political turmoil. The brunt of all these have been borne by all sectors in the country, and tourism is no exception. But after the peace accord we are in revival stage and belief of 30% increment in tourism.

Peace has been elusive in Nepal, ever since the start of the armed conflict, even though all governments formed after 1996 stated peace as the primary agenda. In the past two attempts at peace and cease fire were total fiascos. With the success of the April 2006 Peoples Movement carried out jointly by the seven major political parties in coordination with the Maoists, a third attempt at peace between the democratic government and the Maoists was initiated. With the declaration of constituent assembly in recent days, a ray of hope seems to have been seen among all Nepalese. However, the endless civil strife and upraise of ethnic conflict, difference in power sharing, issues concerning decommissioning of arms and management of the militia, process of and representation in the constituent assembly, restructuring of the state etc. are

some of the contentious issues and challenges that have to be met with before sustainable peace can be attained in the country.

Poverty is greater and more pervasive in rural areas, while compared to urban areas, and it is varied across regions. The Mid and Far Western Region as well as the Mountain Belt, is much poorer than the Eastern Region. (CBS, 1999). In 2002 the situation is hardly different. Overcoming human and economic poverty is the biggest challenge for Nepal of which rural poverty ranks at the top.

Tourism links unique natural resources with an exciting living cultural heritage and friendly and hospitable people. It provides significant potential to use nature-based tourism as a low-cost, eco-friendly alternative to support socio-economic growth and fight poverty. (SNV, 2003)

It is safe to assume that the centre (Kathmandu) benefits disproportionately from incoming tourism. Much of the tourist dollar remains in Kathmandu and little finds its way into other parts of the country. There exists a situation of core-periphery dependency in which the centre controls to a very considerable extent the distribution of tourism around Nepal, accumulating most of the income generated, organizing much of the travel activity in prepaid packages, and supplying many of the needs from the centre so that benefits flowing out to rural areas and towns are limited. (SNV, 2003)

Chapter-III

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The study has employed various methodologies since there is no single methodology being sufficient to this type of research work.

3.1 Research Design

This study has combined both an explorative and descriptive research. It has used both the qualitative and quantitative techniques depending on the nature and source of data and information.

3.2 Nature and sources of Data

The study has used both primary and secondary data and information. Primary data has been collected through checklist and observations. Similarly, secondary data has been collected from various published and unpublished materials by the concerned organizations. Publications of the Central Bureau of Statistics, Ministry of Culture, Tourism and Civil Aviation and District Development Committees' reports are the major sources of secondary data.

3.3 Sampling procedure

The study has adopted stratified sampling technique. The people involved in tourism industry, tourism policy making or implementation or the people engaged in teaching tourism in higher education with special focus on rural tourism have been interviewed through checklist method.

3.4 Methods of Data Analysis

Data has been presented in various units and forms depending on its nature to conduct thorough analysis on it to fulfill the set objectives. A number of statistical tools have been employed as analytical tools. The data and information are presented in table, bar diagrams and maps etc.

Chapter-IV

INTRODUCTION OF THE STUDY AREA

4.1 An overview of Western Development Region

Western Development Region is one of the five development regions of Nepal that includes three zones covering sixteen districts where Gandaki has six districts, Lumbini also has six districts and Dhaulagiri has only four districts. The basic indicators for all these sixteen districts are presented in tabular form as follows:

Gulmi	Area in Sq. km.	1,249
	Elevation (m)	610-3,050
	District Headquarter	Tamghas
	Literacy (%)	57.48
	Human Development Index	0.326
	Total Road in km	171
Arghakhanchhi	Area in Sq. km.	1,193
	Elevation (m)	305-2,512
	District Headquarter	Sandhikharka
	Literacy (%)	55.9
	Human Development Index	0.331
	Total Road in km	336
Palpa	Area in Sq. km.	1373
	Elevation (m)	152-1,936
	District Headquarter	Tansen
	Literacy (%)	75.94
	Human Development Index	0.337
	Total Road in km	290
Rupandehi	Area in Sq. km.	1,360
	Elevation (m)	100-300
	District Headquarter	Bhairahawa
	Literacy (%)	65.95
	Human Development Index	0.361
	Total Road in km	267
Kapilvastu	Area in Sq. km.	1,738
	Elevation (m)	100-185
	District Headquarter	Taulihawa

	Literacy (%)	41.46
	Human Development Index	0.286
	Total Road in km	336
Nawalparasi	Area in Sq. km.	2,162
	Elevation (m)	91-1,936
	District Headquarter	Parasi
	Literacy (%)	41.46
	Human Development Index	0.286
	Total Road in km	336
Syangja	Area in Sq. km.	1164
	Elevation (m)	366-2,515
	District Headquarter	Syangja
	Literacy (%)	66.32
	Human Development Index	0.378
	Total Road in km	185
Gorkha	Area in Sq. km.	3,610
	Elevation (m)	488-8,156
	District Headquarter	Gorkha
	Literacy (%)	53.85
	Human Development Index	0.308
	Total Road in km	133
Lamjung	Area in Sq. km.	1,692
	Elevation (m)	793-8,155
	District Headquarter	Besisahar
	Literacy (%)	56.61
	Human Development Index	0.375
	Total Road in km	81
Tanahu	Area in Sq. km.	1546
	Elevation (m)	1,220-2,134
	District Headquarter	Damauli
	Literacy (%)	61.68
	Human Development Index	0.384
	Total Road in km	285
Manang	Area in Sq. km.	2,246
	Elevation (m)	1,880-8,156
	District Headquarter	Chame
	Literacy (%)	59.91
	Human Development Index	0.306
	Total Road in km	0
Kaski	Area in Sq. km.	2,017
	Elevation (m)	450-7,939
	District Headquarter	Pokhara
	Literacy (%)	71.9

	Human Development Index	0.45
	Total Road in km	410
Baglung	Area in Sq. km.	1,784
	Elevation (m)	1,000-7,244
	District Headquarter	Baglung
	Literacy (%)	61.4
	Human Development Index	0.337
	Total Road in km	33
Parbat	Area in Sq. km.	494
	Elevation (m)	762- 8,091
	District Headquarter	Kusma
	Literacy (%)	56.82
	Human Development Index	0.357
	Total Road in km	42
Myagdi	Area in Sq. km.	2,297
	Elevation (m)	915- 8,157
	District Headquarter	Beni
	Literacy (%)	55.74
	Human Development Index	0.309
	Total Road in km	14
Mustang	Area in Sq. km.	3,573
	Elevation (m)	1,372-8,167
	District Headquarter	Jomsom
	Literacy (%)	51.75
	Human Development Index	0.316
	Total Road in km	0

All the three zones of Western Development Region are very rich in terms of attractive tourist destinations. Gandaki zone has famous tourist destinations like Bandipur (Tanahu), Pokhara, Ghandruk (Kaski), Ghalegaon, Rainaskot (Lamjung), Manaslu area, trekking routes and the famous Gorkha Durbar area (Gorkha), Sirubari (Syangja), Tilicho and Milarepa Cave (Manang) etc.

Similarly Lumbini Zone which is named after the birth place of Buddha, the light of Asia has Lumbini (Rupandehi), Tiloarakot (Kapilbastu), Ram Gram (Nawalparasi), Tansen and Ranighat (Palpa), Historical and Religious places like Balkot, Arghakot and Chetramaharaj (Arghakhachi). Very famous religious places like Puruleshetra and Resnga area. Dhaulagiri is also rich with

the destinations like Dhorpatan conservation area (Baglung), Muktinath, Damodar Kunda and the famous trekking routes in the area (Mustang), Gupteswor cave (Parbat) and Kagbeni and Ghoepani (Myagdi).

Besides all these there are numerous other tourist destinations that are yet to be fully explored and developed. Western Development Region is very potentials for tourism development especially the rural tourism that would contribute for rural poverty alleviation in the region. The important tourist places in the region are enumerated as follows:

a. Tourist areas in Gandaki Zone

Kaski district

Pokhara is the district headquarters of Kaski district at a distance of 200 kilometers from Kathmandu. It is a remarkable place of natural beauty. Situated at an altitude of 827 meters from the sea level, the city is known as a center of adventure. The following places are bright in the viewpoint of tourism development:

- Annapurna First
- Annapurna Second
- Begnash Tal (Lake)
- Bhadrakali Temple
- Bindhabashini Temple
- Bishoshanti Stupa
- Chamere Gufa (Cave)
- Dhampush or Landruk
- Dharmashila Buddha Bihar
- Dipanga Tal (Lake)
- Fishtail Mountain
- Ghandruk
- Gorkha Memorial Museum
- Gude Tal (Lake)

- Gupteshwor Gufa (Cave)
- Harihar Gufa
- Indra Gufa (Cave)
- International Mountain Museum
- Kharpani Tato pani (Hotwater)
- Khaste Tal (Lake)
- Krishti (Matikhan)
- Bharatpokhari (Pond)
- Nirmalpokhari (Pond)
- Laxminarayan Temple
- Armala
- Mahendra Gufa (Cave)
- Maldi Tal
- Narayansthan Temple
- Newreni Tal (Lake)
- Panchase area etc.
- Patale Chhago(David Fall)
- Phewa Lake
- Pumdibhumdi Tourist area
- Putali (Butterfly) Museum
- Regional Museum
- Rupa Tal (Lake)
- Sadashiva Temple
- Dhungeshagu
- Sarangkot
- Seti River
- Shaklungkot
- Shovha Bhagwati, Ranipauwa
- Talbarahai Temple etc.

Gorkha district

Gorkha bazaar is the district headquarters of Gorkha district at a distance of 143 kilometers from Kathmandu and 115 kilometers from Pokhara. A 25 kilometer connecting road off the main highway of Pokhara and Kathmandu bring to Gorkha. Following places are bright in the viewpoint of tourism development:

- Manakamana Temple
- Gorkha Durbar (Palace)
- Gorakhnath Gufa (Cave)
- Gorakhkali Temple
- Ram shah Chautara
- Rangamahar
- Tanwo Durbar (Palace)
- Bajrabhairav Temple
- Muralidhar Narayan Temple
- Bakreshwor Mahadev Temple
- Ligligkot
- Manaslu Mountain
- Shringi Mountain
- Ganesh Mountain
- Himalchuli Mountain
- Boudha Mountain
- Siddha Gufa (Cave)
- Purano Fu Gufa (Cave)
- Tintale Gufa (Cave)
- Gumbas
- Kalchuman Lake
- Thulo Dudhpokhari
- Sano Dudhpokhari
- Birendra Lake
- Chhoshong Lake

- Tatopani
- Tsum Valley etc.

Manang District

Chame is the district headquarters of Manang district at a distance of 245 kilometers from Kathmandu. However it is not connected with any roadways yet although a road is under construction. Manang lies about 50 kilometers due north of Pokhara across the Annapurna range. The following places are bright in the viewpoint of tourism development:

- Tilicho Lake
- Chame Bazaar
- Bagarchap
- Pishang
- Humde
- Manangbhot
- Thorangphedi
- Khangshar
- Naar gaon
- Phu Gaon
- Taal Gaon
- Gumbas
- Main boarder
- Tilicho Peak
- Ratnachuli
- Che Yo Mountain
- Himlung Mountain
- Pishang Mountain
- Chulu East and Chulu West
- Thorong Peak
- Larke Bhanjang etc

Lamjung District

Besisahar is the district headquarters of Lamjung at a distance of 175 kilometers west of Kathmandu. The following places are bright in the viewpoint of tourism development: Lamjung said to have been derived from Lama-dzong or the castle of great Lama, holds a special fascination for all. The following places are bright in the viewpoint of tourism development:

- Beshi Sahar
- Ghale Gaon
- Bhujung
- Ilampokhari
- Barha Pokhari
- Khudi
- Bhulbhule
- Dadi
- Bahun Dada (Hill)
- Dharme Beshi
- Jagat
- Bhote Odar
- Dudhpokhari
- Lamjung Mountain
- Annapurna Second
- Boudha Mountain
- Himalchuli Mountain
- Annapurna Circuit etc.

Tanahu District

Damauli is the district headquarters of Tanahu district at a distance of 146 kilometers from Kathmandu. Midway on the daylong drives between Kathmandu and Pokhara lays the hilltop settlement of Bandipur, a newar town with its age-old flavor still intact. The following places are bright in the viewpoint of tourism development:

- Bash Gufa (Cave)

- Bandipur
- Dhorfirdi
- Vimad
- Siddha Gufa
- Rising Ranipokhari
- Chundi Ramgha
- Chimkeshowari Lek
- Chhabdi Baraha
- Devghat
- Sital Cave
- Tanahusur Durbar etc.

Syanja District

Putalibazar is the district headquarters of Syangja district at a distance of 265 kilometers from Kathmandu via Pokhara. Siddhartha Highway named after Gautam Buddha crosses this district east to west. Many different ethnicities of people live in this district. The following places of this district are bright in the view point of tourism development:

- Panchase Area
- Sirubari
- Budhakot
- Kolmakot
- Nuwakot
- Dahare Deurali
- Ramdighat
- Chan Chandi
- Manakamana
- Kailash Gufa (Cave)
- Andha Andhi Daha
- Alamdevi Mandir
- Sahasrabdi Travel Areas etc.

b. Tourist areas in Dhaulagiri Zone

Parbat District

Kusma is the district headquarters of Parbat district at a distance of 250 kilometers west of Kathmandu. Located on a high level terrace between the Kali Gandaki and the Modi rivers, Kusma was a mere garrison depot at the turn of the century. However, since being made the headquarters of the Parbat district in 1962, it has a piped water supply, shops, government offices and a high school. The following places of this district are bright in the view point of tourism development:

- Gupteshwor Mahadev Cave
- Modibedi
- Sahashra Dhara
- Saligram
- Kaligandaki and Rafting
- Lunkhuko Mahashila
- Panchaseko Lek and Taal
- Durlungkot
- Dahareko Lek
- Seti devi ko Sila
- Hampal ko Forest and Herbal
- Paiyukot Durbar
- Khaniyaghat ko Shiva Temple
- Goarlang Area
- Haljure Area etc.

Baglung District

Baglung Bazaar is the district headquarters of Baglung district at a distance of 272 kilometers from Kathmandu. It is situated on a plateau overlooking the Kali Gandaki valley. More recently, it is visited by tourist seeking to trek to Annapurna, Dhaulagiri, Dhorpatan and Dolpa. The following places of this district are bright in the view point of tourism development:

- Kalika Bhagwati Temple
- Bhairavsthan Temple
- Jaimineshwor Shiva Temple
- Dhorpatan Taalbaraha Temple
- Tripurshwr Mahadev Temple
- Thalthapi Mai Bhagwati Temple
- Devisthan Temple
- Shivalaya Temple
- Satyawati Temple
- Dhorpatan Area
- Ghumte ko Lek (Dhuri)
- Gaja Ko Daha
- Bhakunde Daha
- Sanshar Kot etc.

Myagdi District

Beni is the district headquarters of Myagdi district at a distance of 290 kilometers from Kathmandu. Myagdi district lies in the west-centre of Nepal and is famous for being the home of the world's deepest gorge dividing Dhaulagiri and Annapurna massifs- the Kali Gandaki gorge. It is home to predominately Magar, Thakali and Chhantyal indigenous communities along with Brahman, Chhetri and Newars. Area is rich in medicinal plants and endangered wildlife. Following places of this district are bright in the view point of tourism development:

- Dhaulagiri Mountain
- Churen Himal
- Manapati Mountain
- Gurja Mountain
- Tatopani Kunda
- Round Dhaulagiri Travel Route
- Ghodepani, Punhill
- Malika Dhuri

- Khayarbarahi Tal
- Kajibhume
- Beni Shivalaya
- Galeswor Dham
- Pulatsha Ashram
- Laxminarayan Temple
- Kurila Maharani and Boudhagumba
- Malika
- Pula Jaganath Temple
- Giddheshwor Kunda
- Pula Dholthana
- Chistal ko Peri Bharani Tal
- Rupshe Chhahara
- Andha Galchi
- The biggest forest of Rhododendron etc.

Mustang District

Jomsom is the district headquarters of Mustang district at a distance of 370 kilometers from Kathmandu. It is a place with isolated landscapes and lavishly adorned monasteries; great rivers and fields created through the painstaking labor of humans over time, with the highland that extends endlessly northward, and the immaculate white peaks of Annapurna and of the Nilgiri which mark the south. Following places of this district are bright in the view point of tourism development:

- Muktinath
- Kagbeni
- Lomangthang
- Chhushang
- Tetang
- Damodhar Kunda
- Marpha
- Tukucho

- Dhaulagiri Mountain
- Nilgiri Mountain
- Tilicho Peak
- Yakkawa Peak
- Dhampush Peak
- Tukucho Peak
- Thumpa Lake
- Kowang
- Ghas, Kunjo and Larjung
- Lete
- Echo Museum etc.

c. Tourist areas in Lumbini Zone

Palpa

Tansen is the district headquarters of Palpa district at a distance of 300 kilometers from Kathmandu. Bordering the flatlands of Tarai to the immediate south, Palpa's high hills command an impressive view of Nepal in all directions with the great Madi Valley in the west and the powerful Kali Gandaki along its northern border. Tansen is a hill town with a long history and one of the most scenic places in Nepal. The following other areas are potential for tourism:

- Amarnarayan Temple
- Shreenagar
- Baldendadi
- Bhairavsthan
- Siddhi Gupha
- Ranighat Palace
- Ronaajeswori Bhagwati temple
- Satyawati Tal
- Baikuntha Dham etc.

Nawalparasi

Parasi is the district headquarters of Nawalparashi district at a distance of 242 kilometers from Kathmandu. Nawalparasi is famous for its many places:

- Triveni Dham
- Balamiki Aashram
- Daunne Devi etc.

Rupandehi District

Bhairawa is the district headquarters of Rupandehi district at a distance of 275 kilometers from Kathmandu. It is one of the major industrial hubs of the country. Following places are important around Rupandehi in the view point of tourism development:

- Siddhartha Nagar,
- Durga Temple,
- Shiva Mandir in Siddharthanagar-8
- Narayansthan
- Dandakhola and Phaklihawa etc.

Kapilvastu District

Taulihawa is the district headquarters of Kapilvastu district at a distance of 305 kilometers from Kathmandu. It is a world famous district as Lord Buddha was born here. It has many places relating to the life of Lord Buddha. Following places are important in the view point of tourism development:

- Tilaurakot
- Kapilvastu
- Bolbam Dham
- Kapilvastu Museum
- Lumbini-The birthplace of Lord Buddha
- Niglihawa
- Gotihawa
- Sagarhawa
- Phulbari (Butwal)

- Jitgadhi
- Sainamaina
- Ramgram
- Bhagawati Temple
- Sreenagar Hill
- Bhairabsthan Temple etc.

Gulmi District

Tamghas is the district headquarters of Gulmi district at a distance of 375 kilometers from Kathmandu. It is famous for coffee farming. Ruru now known as Ridi is a very famous holy place and a market centre. Resunga is another famous holy place in the district. Its rich biodiversity and its historic value are some of the major attractions of Gulmi District

Important places around Ridi:

- Ridi, Resunga, Rurukchhetra
- Ridi-Rishikeshab Temple
- Satyashwar Mahadev Temple etc.

Important Places around Resunga:

- Wami
- Aanpchaur
- Dhurkot
- Purkot
- Ismakot
- Charpala Durbar
- Marbhung
- Argharajasthal etc.

Arghakhanchi District

Sandhikharka is the district headquarters of Arghakhanchi district at a distance of 440 kilometers from Kathmandu via Lumbini. Arghakhanchi used to be two

different states Argha and Khanchikot before the unification of the country in 1786 AD by Bahadur Shah. Popular Hindu epics Ramayan and Mahabharata mention some stories about the places. Arghakhanchi was declared as a separate district in 1961 A.D. Chure and Mahabharata both ranges in Nepal are located in Arghakhanchi and Palpa districts. Most of the settlements are in villages of Argha side. Rest of the part mostly remains forest. Only Rapti flows from west side of the district. Following places are important in the view point of tourism.

- Chetramaharaj
- Balkot
- Arghakot(Religious and Historical)
- Kerunga, Kinneri Vir
- Mathura Phat
- Jabundada
- Mathuradada
- Maulipokhara etc.

4.2 Introduction and Status of Gulmi district

Gulmi district is situated in Western development region in Lumbini zone. The total area covers 1, 24,938 hectare or 1249 km² (District Development Committee, 2056). The absolute location of Gulmi lies between 27⁰55” to 28⁰27” north longitude and 83⁰10” to 83⁰35” east latitude (District Profile 1999). There are Syangja and Parbat districts in east side, Pyuthan in west, Palpa and Argakhachi in south and Baglung in North side of this area. Tamghas of Tamghas VDC is head-quarter of this district. This district is in the height of 465 m. (Ridi) from the sea level to 2690m. (Thaple ko lek). Forest and tree-plants covers around 37.67 percent of this area. Over all the districts physical structure is in slopping condition.

Geographical area and population characteristics of Gulmi District are presented in concise form as follows:

Area	1249 sq.km.	Kami	9.46 percent
VDC	79	Sarki	3.37 percent
Municipality	0	Religion	
Sector (Political Unit)	13	Hindu	96.10 percent
Electoral Area	3	Buddhist	3.69 percent
Population	2,96,654(2001)	Muslim	0.14 percent
Pop. Per sq. km	258	Christian	0.04 percent
Women	1,62,883	Other	0.03 percent
Men	1,33,771	Mother Tongue	
Male-Female ratio	lowest in the country	Nepali	94.70 percent
Avg. family pop	5.01 percent	Magar	3.30 percent
Educational Institutions	525	Newar	1.08 percent
Teachers	2,875	Majhi	0.09 percent
Students	98,276	Occupation	
Toilet usage	60 percent	Agriculture	82.15 percent
Drinking Water Supply	79.9 percent	Other than agro	17.85 percent
Electricity Usage	15.1 percent	Agro Land (rice, corn, wheat, millet, barley, potatoes)	21,182.6 hector
Household Ratio	61 percent	Livestock	
Average marriage age		Buffalo/Cow	1,72,402
Men	23.20 years	Goat/Sheep	1,01,059
Female	19.43 Years	Chicken/duck	2,09,995
Ethnicity/Caste Population		Road length	171 kms
Bhramin	28.47 percent	Post Office	76
Chhetri	23.14 percent	Industrial Unit	6
Magar	19.93 percent	Ind. Employment	65

According to 2001 census, Source (in Nepali):

www.cbs.gov.np

Gulmi district is full of high and low hills, plain, base, gorge etc. made by rivers flows. In the view point of agricultural land it is the most sloped area of Nepal as there are 30° slop of 17 percent land which used for farming.

Angle	Particular	Area(Hector)	Percentage
0-3°	Level to nearly Plain	3748.14	3
3-8°	Gentle sloping to undulating	6246.9	5
8-18o°	Undulating to rolling	12493.8	10
18-30°	Rolling to moderately steep	46227.06	37
30-50°	Steep hills and mountains	24987.6	20
More than 50o°	Very steep hill and mountains	31234.5	25
	Total	124938	100

Source: District Land Rescue Office (Land Protection Office), 2057

On the whole, Gulmi district is a rural/remote area but there are some social and physical development in the recent years which is slowly urbanizing the settlements. Most of the settlements are of small sizes and there are limited big settlements.

Roads with Transportation	Distance (Km.)	Types of Transportation
Tamghas-Palpa	75	Bus
Tamghas-Butwal	114	Bus
Tamghas-Sandhikharka	42	Tractor
Tamghas-Kathmandu	375	Bus
Ridi-Rudrabeni-Bamitakshar	46	Tractor, Jeep, Bus
Tamghas-Bhairahawa	134	Bus
Tamghas-Ridi	45	Bus
Tamghas-Baletakshar	31	Bus
Tamghas-Gaidakot	15	Bus

Source : District Development Committee

While studying the table below it is clear that district's main economy is depends on primary sector, which is slightly decreasing. In 2036 BS there were 98 percent people depending on this sector which slightly decreased to 91.03 percent in 2048. In the total economic structure the second sector could not show any countable earnings, only 1.76 percent in 2048. But the third sector

was increasing from 1 percent in 2028 to 6.71 percent employment in 2048, this is a positive sign.

Table 4.5: Economically Active Population or Employment Situation

Particular	2028			2038			2048		
	Total	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female
Economically Active Population	117248	61415	55833	108158	64403	43755	98877	46163	52714
Primary Sector (Agriculture, livestock, Forest.)	114931	59365	55566	103516	60764	42752	90012	38847	51165
Employment % in Primary Sector	98.02	50.63	47.39	98.71	59.66	41.97	91.03	39.29	51.75
Second Sector (Production, Industries)	1096	1029	67	594	446	148	1738	1623	115
Employment % in Second Sector	0.93	0.88	0.06	0.55	0.44	0.15	1.76	1.64	0.12
Third Sector (Professional or Technical, Administrative, Sales and Services)	1221	1021	200	2425	1943	482	6637	5330	1307
Employment % in Third Sector	1.04	0.87	0.17	2.24	1.91	0.47	6.71	5.39	1.32
Others				1623	1250	373	490	363	127
Total				1.5	1.23	0.37	0.5	0.37	0.13

Source: CBS, 2028,2038,2048

Per-capita income of Gulmi district is very low. It is lower than the national average and far below to the neighboring districts. The table below highlights on the level of income of Gulmi district as compared to the neighboring districts.

Table 4.7: Comparison Statement of Per Capita Income (1996)					
National, Hilly Sector and Related Development Sectors					
National Average	Hilly Sector Average	Western Sector Average	Districts	Income Rs.	Positions in Comparison with Neighboring districts
7,673	5,896	6,999	Gulmi	7,163	7
			Arghakhanchhi	7,857	5
			Parbat	7,245	6
			Baglung	8,290	2
			Syangja	10,064	1
			Palpa	7,988	4
			Puthan	8,141	3

Source: CBS, 1996

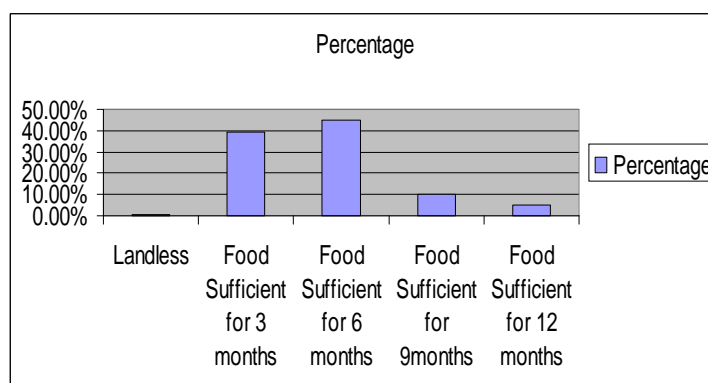
Table 4.8: Poverty on the basis of Ownership in Lands				
S.No.	Particulars	Number of Family	Percentage of Family	Remarks
1	Landless or less than 0.25 hector	2980	5	Agricultural Labour
2	(0.2-0.5) hector	5958	10	Small Farmers
3	(0.5-1) hector	14898	25	Small Farmers

Source: District Agriculture Development Office, 2057

Agricultural labour who are engaged in agriculture throughout the year are landless or having very few lands. Land holding pattern is presented above.

Despite the fact that large sections of population are dependent on agriculture, livestock and forest, very few people have sufficient food production. Only five percent people have agricultural production sufficient through out the year.

Table 4.7: Food Consumption on the basis of Agricultural Production	
Particulars	Percentage
Landless	0.50%
Food Sufficient for 3 months	39.50%
Food Sufficient for 6 months	45%
Food Sufficient for 9months	10%
Food Sufficient for 12 months	5%
Total	100%
<i>Source: District Agriculture Development office, 2058</i>	



According to the National Census of 2048, 91.03 percent people of this district are dependent on Agriculture and 85 percent people don't have food for more than 6 months from their own production. Hence there is little food safety as only 5 percent have sufficient food for the whole year. Though there is no relevant data available for Gulmi district describing the level of income and poverty for individual households, it can be fairly said that poverty is rampant in this district.

According to the height of land the weather conditions of Gulmi District can be divided into three parts as it is presented in the following table. Average rainfall is 1,939 mm. The main rivers or sources of water are Badiguard, Chaldi, Panaha, Nisti and Ridi and the main rivers flow with the edge of Kaligandaki. Badiguard, Nisthi, Ridi, Kali Gandaki, Panaha and Chhaldi are the main Rivers and streams of this area.

Table 4.8: Climate

S. No	Height	Area	Average Yearly Temperature
1	Less than 1000 m.	Sub-Tropical	More than 20o C
2	1000m-2000m	Warm-Temperate	More than 15o
3	More than 2000m	Cool-Temperate	0-15oC

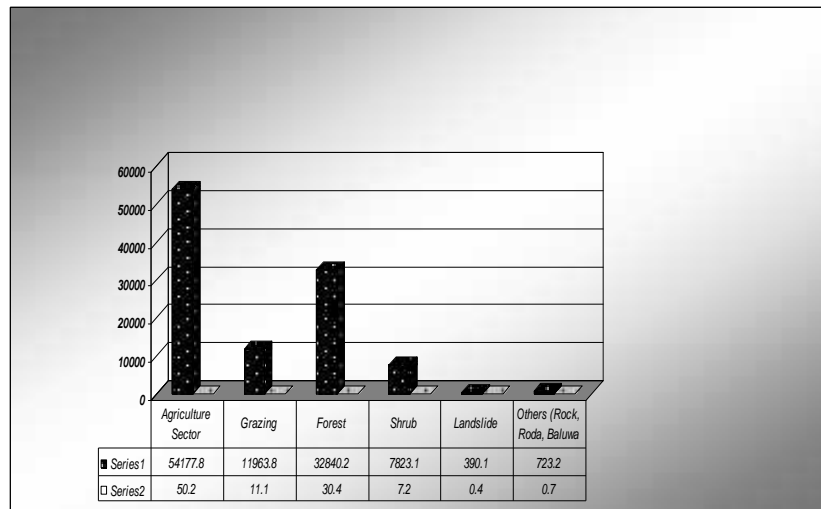
Source: District Forest Office, 2057

As stated by the result of National Census, 2001, there are 1, 33,771 male population and 1, 62,883 female population and the growing ratio is 1.10 percent. According to the census of 1991 density of population in Gulmi district was 232 sq. km., which increased to 259 in 2001. The most populated area is Tamghas VDC where it is 1,066 per sq. km. and lowest dense is Bharse VDC where it is 94 per sq. km. The main castes of this district are Brahmin, Chhetri/Thakuri and Magar. According to 2001 census, 28.47 percent people are Brahmin, 23.14 percent are Chhetri/Thakuri. After that Magars are 19.93 percent. Other casts are Kami, Sarki, Kumal, Newar, Yadav, Kayastha, Kumhar, Baniya, Dhobi, Kurmi, Tharu, Muslim, Dhanuk, Limbu, Rai, Gurung, Thakali, Tamang, Danuwar, Majhi, Sunuwar, Gaine, Chepang, Kumal, Churaute, Bote, Lepca, Raute, Raji, Dhami, Damai, Sherpa, Bhote etc. 94.70 percent's Mother tongue is Nepali, other spoken languages are Magar, Newari, Majhi and Rai/Kirati etc. 96.10 percent people are Hindus and other religions are 3.69 percent Buddhist, 0.14 percent Muslim, 0.04 percent Christian and others are 0.03 percent.

The following table showing the situation of land utilization, which shows that in agricultural sector, Valley Cultivation land is very low in comparison to Hill Slop Cultivation area. 50.2 percent area is covering by agricultural sector while grazing land is 11.1 percent, Forest sector is covering by 30.4 percent, the area occupied by shrub is 7.2 percent, the areas holding back by landslide is 0.4 percent and others(rock, roda, sand etc.) are there in 0.7 percent area.

1	Agricultural Sector		
	a. Hill Slop Cultivation	49456.1	45.8
	b. Valley Cultivation	4721.7	4.4
2	Grazing	11963.8	11.1
3	Forest Sector		
	a. Hardwood Forest	19522.2	18.1
	b. Coniferous Forest	6187	5.7
	c. Mixed Forest	7131	6.6
	Total Forest	32840.2	30.4
4	Shrub	7823.1	7.2
	Total Forest and Shrub(3+4)	40663.3	37.6
5	Landslide	390.1	0.4
6	Others (Rock, Roda, Baluwa etc.)	723.2	0.7
	Total	107918.2	100

Source: District Forest Office, 2057



In Human Development, Gulmi is in around National level however besides Pyuthan, it looks miserable with comparison to other districts Syangja, Palpa, Arghakhanchi, Parbat and Baglung. According to 1996 data, per-capita income of Gulmi district was Rs. 7163, lowest in comparison with other neighboring districts. Per capita purchasing power and income index was also lowest (US\$ 1107 and 0.166) while comparing with other neighboring districts.

Table 4.10: District Comparison with National Level and Neighboring Districts								
National Level/Districts	Nepal	Syangja	Palpa	Argha khachi	Gulmi	Puthan	Parbat	Baglung
Rank		13	30	32	36	37	20	29
Life Expectancy	55	58	54	57	55	56	58	58
Adult Literacy Ratio (%)	36.72	42.69	42.81	33.9	38.98	32.96	43.64	33.93
Means Years of Schooling (1996)	2.254	2.659	2.467	2.282	2.295	1.853	2.816	1.849
Per Capita Income-NRs. (1996)	7673	10064	7988	7857	7163	8141	7245	8290
Per Capita Purchasing Power Parity-US\$ (1996)	1186	1556	1235	1214	1107	1258	1120	1281
Life Expectancy Index	0.5	0.55	0.483	0.533	0.5	0.517	0.55	0.55
Educational Attainment Index	0.295	0.344	0.34	0.277	0.311	0.261	0.354	0.267
Income Index	0.179	0.24	0.187	0.184	0.166	0.191	0.168	0.195
HDI, 1996	0.325	0.378	0.337	0.331	0.326	0.323	0.357	0.337
<i>Source: UN/CBS, 1998</i>								

According to 1996 data, per-capita income of Gulmi district was NRs. 7163, lowest in comparison with other neighboring districts. Per-capita purchasing power and income index was also lowest (US \$ 1107 and 0.166) while comparing with other neighboring districts.

From the point of industrial development Gulmi District seems to be at preliminary stage. There are no large or medium scale industries. There are some traditional, cottage and small industries. However, these are not much prosperous and thus many of such industries are not renewed status of industrial development in Gulmi district is presented in the above table.

S · N	Types of Industries	2053/54			2054/55			2055/56			2056/57			2057/58		
		R eg ist er ed	Ren ew ed	Cl os ed	R eg ist er ed	Re ne w ed	Cl os ed	R eg ist er ed	Re ne w ed	Cl os ed	R eg ist er ed	Re ne w ed	Cl os ed	R eg ist er ed	Re ne w ed	Cl os ed
1	Agricultural Industries															
2	Forest Industries	1									1					
3	Mineral Industries	3			4			6			8			7		
4	Energy Industries	1	222	3		242	3		229			194	2		262	261
5	Tourism Industries	1														
6	Services Industries	28			22			20			25			38		
7	Other Industries	12			6			7			5			9		

Source: District Development Committee, 2058 (copied from Cottage and Small scale Industries)

S.N.	Name	Level	Number of Beds
1	Hotel Ever Green, Tamghas	Tourist	30
2	Resunga Guest House, Tamghas	Local	45
3	Arjun Hotel, Tamghas	Local	44
4	Hotel Pratima, Tamghas	Local	25
5	Hotel Manish, Tamghas	Local	30
6	Sagar Hotel, Tamghas	Local	15
7	Hungeli Hotel Tamghas	Local	26
8	Sapkota Sakahari Bhojanalaya, Tamghas	Local	30
9	Hotel River Side, Ridi	Local	20
10	Hotel Kaligandaki	Local	20
11	Sarma Hotel, Baletakshar	Local	10
12	Gulmeli Hotel, Baletakshar	Local	20

Source: Field Survey

Chapter –V

RURAL TOURISM

Introduction

Different countries of the world have different parameters to define the term 'rural'. It means the word 'rural' has contextual meaning in the nations. But in general term, in the underdeveloped countries, rural means those places, which are isolated, deprived, with dispersed settlement, far from the center, agro-based economy, etc. Rural tourism is also concerning with the same type of activities but it is mainly associated with the tourist activities in the rural areas. Rural tourism is possible only when there is distinctiveness in the rural areas, it means the rurality. Thus, there should be sustainable rural tourism. Farm based or agricultural tourism is also one of the most important forms of the rural tourism.

The concept of rural tourism was started by Club Mediterranean, with the view that people who live and work in cities need holidays in totally different surroundings. The Club Mediterranean started its first "vacation village" on the Spanish Island of Majorca in 1950 (Kunwar, 1997). Similarly, the best example of planned and programmed village tourism developed in Nepal as a new agenda in travel and trade tourism industry institutionally propounded by Kathmandu Research Centre.

Now we can argue that Rural Tourism in its purest form should be located in rural areas, functionally rural built upon the rural world's special features of small-scale enterprise, open space contact with nature, heritage, traditional societies and traditional practices.

To maintain the notion of Sustainable Tourism Development in mind, it is very essential to provide visitors with quality experience. In favor of the reason it is necessary to find out what motivates a visitor to a destination and to what extent they are satisfied by their trips to the destination.

Travelers look for peaceful places apart from common trekking areas, they are looking for the ultimate experience and for a better insight into the diverse Nepalese cultural traditions. The Home-concept as well as the main design of the trails all satisfies these demands. But instead of enjoying a traditional environment, it is important for travelers to receive the familiar commodities like having a bathroom.”

Objectives of Rural Tourism:

- The main objective is to achieve maximum human welfare and happiness through sustainable socio-economic development of rural areas.
- To reduce growing poverty, inequality and regional imbalance
- To generate employment and income for the villagers
- To establish and sustain the cottage and small scale industries based on local resources
- To establish and develop the micro-business
- To revitalize demolishing local art and crafts
- To learn positive things from visitors
- To preserve the social and cultural heritage of the rural community
- To impress the visitors from our culture, traditions, human values and guests friendly behaviors.

Lane, Bernard (1993), in his books “What is Rural Tourism, has presented a list of contrasting features between Urban Tourism and Rural Tourism. In this existing rurality as a concept is connected with low population densities, open space, with small scale settlements, generally of less than 10,000 in habitats. Farming, forestry and natural areas dominate land use. Societies tend towards traditionalism, the influence of the past is often strong, and government policies lean towards conservation rather than radical change. According to him, “Rural tourism is a complex multi-faceted activity: it is not just the farm-based tourism. It includes farm-based holidays but also comprises special interest nature holidays and eco-tourism, walking climbing and riding holidays,

adventure sports and health tourism, hunting and angling, educational travel, arts and heritage tourism, etc”.

Therefore rural tourism is located in rural areas, assembling in rural areas and is rural in terms of structure and settlement. However all the rural areas will not be purely rural; they may have certain urban characteristics, such as establishment of resort in rural areas. In this context, the continuum concept of rural and urban may play important role in the planning and development of rural tourism. The management strategy in rural tourism should aim to protect rurality as an important resource for the sustainable rural tourism.

As compared to agriculture and hydropower, tourism is less capital intensive yet high yielding economic sector. A traditional house with simple facilities for accommodation and food is enough to host a tourist. One tourist can directly employ a minimum of 5 people. Out of the total land only 17 percent is arable. So there is doubt whether agriculture can actually lead and sustain the economy of Nepal. Even those arable land have limited irrigation facilities thus agriculture is highly dependent on monsoon which itself is uncertain. Therefore, agriculture sector can also bear bad shocks. For example, agro production in certain land may really go low due to bad monsoon. Even tourism is also vulnerable but the market which it creates like garment; carpet and handicraft in an established way don't become vulnerable equally because demand for other sectors can happen from abroad itself. (Upadhyay and Grandon; 2006)

Ecotourism is comparatively a new concept. First of all, the operator of Costa Rica used this word in 1983. This tourism is closely related with the concept of sustainable development. It is environment and nature based tourism. Some writers term it nature tourism. It is concerned and quite sensitive towards the local environment. Ecotourism can be considered as one of the important parts of rural tourism. Ecotourism leaves minimum or no impact upon the local environment, culture and lifestyle of the community. In ecotourism, there are

mainly two factors, which can attract to the tourist; unspoiled natural beauty and the local culture.

According to Buckley, ecotourism should include the following factors:

- a. It should support conservation
- b. It should be sustainably managed
- c. Concentrate on ecologically sensitive area
- d. It should include environmental education

According to Ceballos Hascurain Manican “Ecotourism is environmentally responsible travel and visitation to relatively undisturbed natural areas in order to enjoy and appreciate nature that promote conservation has low visitor’s impact, and provides for beneficially active socio-economic involvement of the local population.”

Again according to Ecotourism society, “Purposeful travel to natural areas to understand the cultural history of environment, taking care not to alter the integrity of the ecosystem, whilst producing economic opportunities that make the conservation of natural resources financially beneficial to local citizens.

Thus we can say that the ecotourism is very new concept of tourism, which is related with the sustainable development of the tourism and it is very important part of the rural tourism, which has great potentiality in the context of Nepal.

Ecotourism involves more than just conservation-it’s a form of sustainable tourism that gives something back to the community, environment and economy. This may be achieved by using local materials in construction recycling, and employing local people or through programs where tourists contribute money or labor to community activities such as tree planting or conservation of a local monument or site.

Community based tourism, as the name suggests, occurs when decisions about tourism activity and development are driven by the host community. It usually involves some form of cultural exchange where tourists meet with local

communities and witness aspects of their lifestyle. Many such remote ethnic communities may be vulnerable to outside influences and decisions about the way tourists are hosted must be owned by the community for successful and sustainable tourism. Sustainable tourism implies that the activity can be maintained, and will continue to deliver benefits, over a long period of time. An activity is said to be sustainable if it can be maintained over generations without destroying the resources on which it is based. The most significant issue for development projects is that the community will be able to maintain an activity after the project team departs. The motto of sustainable tourism is also applicable in the condition of cultural tourism.

5.1 Prospects of Rural Tourism

Tourism is growing very fast and is considered maintaining a rapid growth in the foreseeable future. It is now reflected as the world's largest industry and contributing about 10 percent of World GDP and has created about one job in every 12 jobs in the world. The vision 2020 has estimated that there will be about 1.6 billion international arrivals by 2020 AD and it is estimated that the growth of tourism will remain 4.1 percent annually. The year 2007 has witnessed 6 percent growth in international tourist arrivals culminating to 900 million along with a very steady growth of about 8 percent in South Asian Region. The national arrival figures also recorded a very healthy growth of 27 percent in air arrivals in 2007. Looking at the national and global tourism trends, the prospects of tourism in the country seems very promising. It's high time for both policy makers and people of tourism industry to think seriously to translate the potentiality of Nepalese tourism, embedded in socio-cultural and natural elements of the country, into reality. All this needs is serious commitment to create vision and plan for what we want to achieve and how we fulfill it along with unfailing action for the cause. (Upadhyay, 2008)

There are lots of tourism resources in Nepal especially in rural areas. With the distinctive socio-cultural and geographic attributes, Nepal can be the best place for adventurers. The country has the immense potentials of various aspects of

tourism, including the rural agro tourism, ecotourism, cultural tourism and other adventurous forms of tourism, mountaineering, white-water rafting, kayaking, skiing, bungee jumping, paragliding, parachuting, hiking, jungle safari and many more. The tourists' options are readily available and unboundedly promising in each and every parts of the country.

Rural tourism is both need based and right based concept. More particularly it is need based approach because rural area needs to have more jobs created and revenue to be generated. However, most of the authors have concluded that Rural Tourism is need based. Development of tourism calls for even distribution of income from tourism. Moreover, the possessors of the richness of our culture and nature is with the village and they should have right to claim for development of rural tourism for their sustainable development. The community needs to have developed the alternative more productive non-farming activities to switch off the excess labor force from less productive farming sector. Agriculture sector has less multipliers effect with weak backward economic linkage and this sector has very marginal impact to other sectors bearing high multiplier effect and productivity. But due to our geographical feature, our natural resources and cultural heritage can prove to have comparative advantage in tourism sector.

Rural Tourism helps to create employment and income for the community through tourist catering services such as trekking, guiding, touring and entertaining and so on. Besides, rural tourism can generate indirectly other non-farm economic activities such as micro business enterprises, local art and crafts, food processing enterprises, teashops and many others in the community.

The rapid environmental crisis in urban area mostly in Kathmandu has been further widening the scope of tourism outside the urban areas. Nepal should therefore develop its tourist destinations in the potential rural areas to move our tourism from where it is now to where it could be. In this direction Rural Tourism is the only preferable option for tourism industry in the true sense and

to out maximum advantage. Hopefully the idea will be looked upon favorably by the planners, policy makers and decision makers in the field.

Rural tourism is the tourism which takes place in the country side. The stress and strain of modern urban life have turned a number of holiday makers to countryside visitors for peace and rest. Charms of agriculture and farming, culture evolved with harmonious relationship with nature attracts visitors to rural tourism. Buying and ownership of second home in rural areas has increasingly become popular to urban dwellers in western countries as a result of increased income, more leisure time and the wish to escape from the pressure of urban life, have made Agro-tourism popular these days.

Agro tourism is a new concept for Nepal though it is an expanding sector around the world. It is an economic activity that occurs when people link travel with products, services and experiences of the agriculture and food system. The concept of agro tourism is a direct expansion of ecotourism, which encourages visitors to experience agricultural life at first hand. Agro-tourism is gathering strong support from small communities as rural people and it is realized that the benefits of sustainable development brought about by similar forms of nature travel can be accrued from agro-tourism. Visitors have the opportunity to work in the fields alongside real farmers and wade knee-deep in the rivers and rivulets with fishermen hauling in their nets. Agro-tourism is the specific rural tourism focusing on agricultural diversity, variety of produces like mushroom, honey-production, different organic farming practices for vegetables production, fishing, hunting, medical plant cultivation, agriculture related fair and festivals, boating, swimming, horse riding, bird watching, visiting different nurseries, herbal farming, botanical garden, plugging with pair of bullock, Ropai Jatra, different Hat bazaars, that attracts both internal and international visitors.

5.1.1 Economic Benefits of Rural Tourism

- Brings money particularly foreign currency in the economy
- Creates job and increases family and community income
- Helps to diversify and stabilize the rural economy
- Provide broader business base for the community and creates an opportunity for attracting other business and small industries
- Provide the opportunities for existing business and services
- Helps to develop local craft and trade

5.2.2 Social benefits of Rural Tourism

- Helps to build up a community infrastructure
- Provides the opportunities for cultural exchange
- Promotes a community team spirit particularly through the development of cultural and entertainment activities
- Creates conditions for safeguarding and enhancing local cultural identities

5.2.3 Environmental Benefits of Rural Tourism

- Creates environment awareness and emphasis on harmonious relationship
- Emphasis on the use of alternative sources of energy by developing solar, micro hydropower through the development of tourism industries people awareness and lessen pressure on forest resources
- Resource generation for the conservation of flora and fauna
- Promotion of sanitation and hygienic condition of people in community

All these show that Nepal has varied high prospects for rural tourism be it nature based, farm based or culture-based. It is only the rural tourism that can bring change and more difference to the majority of the rural poor.

5.2 Problems of Rural Tourism

Tourism brings both positive and negative impact in the country. The pressure on the natural resource base is very high in rural tourism areas. Many species of flora and fauna may be threatened and disturbed in their habitat. Moreover, those who are directly taking benefits of tourism are not taking any serious steps to minimize the environmental damages.

There are other major problems that tourism is facing in the country. Lack of management skills, knowledge and financial capacity for marketing and promotion of tourism products, infrastructures development, and lack of information on what visitors actually want are the major problems that are hindering development and expansion of rural tourism in the country.

Lack of sufficient air or road transport and local road and trails is one of the main problems of rural tourism in Nepal. Thus the local bodies like DDC and VDC have to play active role to facilitate a community with a mechanism for constant monitoring of impact of tourism in the rural areas.

People residing in rural areas are not getting due benefits of tourism. Rather people who are not getting even any benefits of tourism are suffering from different kinds of social, economical and environmental impact. There is also a great concern about the commercialization of culture.

The main problem that the rural tourism is facing is the lack of management skills among the ones involved in tourism projects, most have little knowledge or experience of tourism development. This has created a major problem to successfully select a tourism site to be developed and to make continuous monitoring and evaluation of tourism business so that future development can be kept in right track. This problem gets many fold amplified in remote places where most of the businesses are handled by less educated community people.

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Most rural tourism facilities tend to be significant and widely scattered. This makes it difficult to market them to potential visitors, and they do not have marketing expertise how to segregate market along with identifying their customers. Most of the markets of Nepal's tourism products are niche market, the potential customer of niche market then to be highly scattered and thinly spread among different countries. Even after broad community participation, and a great commitment of community to run a tourism business, visitors' number in these places turn to be very low, incapacitating the strength of the local business.

Lack of infrastructure is the burning problem in the development of rural tourism of Nepal. Tourism in Nepal is developed in a much selected places, and most of the places of tourism potentials are in remote or inaccessible sites. People in the local areas are very poor, and investment from outside is shy mainly because of the poor infrastructure, as the investors see very low prospect of tourism development in such places which is deprived of basic infrastructure. The main negative factor seen in tourism development in some places like Ghalegaon, Panchase, Sandakpur is the problem of infrastructure. Moreover, the cost of running rural tourism in such places is considerably high which further deteriorates the prospect of rural tourism development.

Rural tourism places receive most of their tourists during the height of the season. This limits the number of days in which tourist accommodation and other facilities are used, and reduces the return on investment. Seasonality in tourist arrival in Nepal is a decanting problem, which needs a serious destination marketing and promotion to lessen the problem of tourism seasonality.

The availability of easy credit and soft loan for the poor of rural areas is very difficult. When they are too enthusiastic to run business, they find loan only at exorbitant interest rate, which ultimately drags the return on investment down.

Despite the high prospects of rural tourism development in Nepal, we are able to catch up a very tiny part of it because of the number of problems and challenges. Rural tourism can be developed, expanded and sustained only when we overcome these problems and challenges.

5.2.1 Economic Cost of Rural Tourism

- Involves risk for the operators and community
- Creates demands on public goods
- May only give part time employment
- May increase cost of living for community residents because of inflation

5.2.2 Social Cost of Rural Tourism

- Rural Tourism may cause the introduction of conflicting ideas and style into the community
- It may cause the increase in crime, theft, prostitution and drug abuse
- Overcrowding and congestion,
- Break on privacy in household and in the sharing of important community resources with tourism
- Institutional community and family jealousies, as all may not share the benefit equally.

5.2.3 Environmental Cost of Rural Tourism

- Degradation of roads and trails through overuse
- Poaching of wildlife, and piracy of species
- Increase in Pollution, garbage, littering
- Deforestation and increasing danger on flora and fauna

Chapter –VI
PROBLEMS AND PROSPECTS OF RURAL TOURISM IN
GULMI DISTRICT

6.1 Prospects

Gulmi is the storehouse of vast tourism products like diverse culture and unique bio-diversity, adventure and panoramic nature etc. It is totally a rural area, so we can promote rural tourism as well as community based in this area.

There are some linkages and accessible routes to the neighboring districts from Tamghas, so there is a great possibility to develop tourist packages with the tourist areas of these neighboring districts. Tourist can enjoy different places of different districts in one package. For example tourist can start from Lumbini of Rupandehai to Tamghas to Resunga forest and Madane Lekh(hill) to Gupteshwor cave of Parbat district and many more.

There is also a great possibility of Herbal Tourism in Resunga Forest. Similarly, there are other VDCs, Aglung, Banjhakateri, Malayagiri, Hwandi, Darling, Khadkakot and Bharse with some natural developments. All the above areas are also suitable to conserve biodiversities, flora reserve, fauna habitat, aromatic plant extension, water resources protection, and outdoor recreational activities

We can also develop Farm Tourism in this district; there are various farm houses of Orange, Ginger, Potato, Off-season Vegetable, Coffee, Aalaichi, and Milk Production. Main areas for Orange farming are Bhanbhane, Hadhade, Pipaldhara, Nayagoun, Aarkhale, Gaudakot, Hastichour, and HarmiChour etc. Similarly there are possibilities for unseasonable vegetable, Coffee and Alaichi farming and Milk Production.

There are various activities by NGOs, INGOs and the Government to promote women, in most of the VDCs to raise their employment opportunities, and increase the level of income to improve their living standard. Institutional agencies related to women empowerment can be linked with the tourism development that could contribute in attaining both the objectives.

With wild and sparkling scenic beauty, rich cultural heritages and well-known rural settlements, Gulmi district could be one of the major tourist destinations in Nepal. This district is a paradise for nature lovers, gorgeous place for adventure seekers and holy place for the religious people. This district could be popular for all kinds of visitors.

Gulmi district which is naturally and culturally endowed encompasses impressive cultural heritages, rich flora and fauna, white rivers and rivulets and the places with panoramic beauty. There are immense potentials for tourism activities like, hiking, trekking, rafting, mountaineering, bird watching, resting cum sightseeing, picnic, pond, cave (den), organic farm, healthy environment, pilgrimage, rural and community tourism etc. Major tourist destinations include:

Table 6.1: Historical Religious and Tourist Places in District		
Name of Places	Special Day	Specialties or Importance
Ruru (Ridi)	Maghe Sangranti, Maghe Aunshi, Haribodhini Yekadashi, Harisayani Yekadashi	Historical, Religious, Rafting and Boating
Resunga	Haribodhini Yekadashi, Harisayani Yekadashi	Historical and Religious Ponds in the height of 2,360 m., Temples of Sidha Baba, Bishnu and Shiva, Popular for Beautiful Forest, White and Red Rhododendron (flower), Wildlife and Natural Beauty
Tamghas	Krishnastami	Shows related to Bhagwan Krishna
Choyaga, Chatradevi	Kojagrat Purnima	Religious
Arje	Kojagrat Purnima	Religious
Bami maidan	Chaite Dashain	Religious
Purkot	Chaite Dashain	Religious

Malpokhari		
Dibrung Ashram	Marga Krishna Cahurdashi and Mahasivaratri	Historical and Religious
Apchour Koteshwor Gupha	-	Tourism
Rudrabeni (Ram Mandir)	Maghe Sangranti, Maghe Aunshi, Yekadashi, Ram Nawami	Historical, Religious and Rafting
Baletakshar Shringeshwor Tapo Bhumi	Month of Shrawan	Historical and Religious
Purkot Daha Kanke Deurali	Sunday and Tuesday	Religious, Tourist and Panoramic View (View Tower)
Digam	Chaite Dashain	Religious
Purtighat Gupteshwor	-	Tourism
Jaye Khani Gupha	Shivaratri	Religious
Jayaswanihile	Touristic Place	Tourism
Bastu Kaliksthan	Dashain	Religious
Purtighat Ghumne	Bala Chaturdashi	Religious
Dhurkot	Kojagrat Purnima	Historical, Religious and Cultural Sarain Naanch (type of dance with traditional weapons)
Ismakot gala	-	Historical and Religious
Madane ko Lek	-	Flora and Fauna, Natural Beauty, Red and White Rhododendron
Thaple ko Lek	-	Flora and Fauna, Natural Beauty
Bhichitra Cave Dhurkot	-	Cave, Tourist Place
Limba Budi Satyewoti	Mangshir Chaturdashi	Religious

Source: District Development Committee, 2056 and 2058

If developed and promoted properly, Gulmi District has a prospect of developing various types of tourism, some major types of tourism that can be flourished in the district with clear linkages with the neighboring districts are as below:

- Pilgrimage Tourism
- Village Tourism
- Nature Based Tourism
- Trekking
- Adventure Tourism

- Rafting and Boating
- Farm Tourism
- Health Tourism
- Floriculture Tourism
- Home Stay tourism
- Community based Home Stay Tourism
- Community based Resort
- Tented Camp
- Mountain Biking
- Pony Trekking
- Para Gliding
- Rock Climbing
- Fishing
- Floriculture Tourism
- Sports Tourism
- Holiday Pleasure
- Rural Tourism
- Community based Tourism

To reap the full potentials of tourism the following types of tourism facilities can be developed in this district:

- Bird Watching Spots
- Resting-Cum View Points Development(construction of view Tower)
- Picnic Spots and Parks Development
- Organic Farming
- Short and long Trekking Routes
- Preservation and Conservation of Historical Sites
- Development of Cottage type Accommodations
- Museum (Natural/Cultural) Establishment
- Buddhist Chaitya/Stupa/Monastery Construction

- Other Activities : Awareness raising, Local capacity building/training and Research

With road transportation networks among the major tourist destination and spots of Gulmi Districts and the surrounding places with touristic importance, tourism development in the district has high prospects for the near future. There is a blacktop road from Palpa to the district headquarter. Tamghas has road networks to Arghakhanchi, Pyuthan and Baglung Districts as well the regular bus services to Palpa, Butwal and Kathmandu. Besides the road networks, the government is also developing air transport facilities in the district. The current three year Interim Plan has listed Simichaur Airport Construction Project in its three years program.

There are plenty of prospects but it is required to locate, promote and further develop infrastructure like roads, communications, electricity, hotels etc. in religious, historical ecological and other tourism areas. The Government has a plan to build Regional Airport in Lumbini with international airports facilities. This could be helpful in developing a tour packages and routes to Palpa, Ridi, Resunga, Swargadwari and Dhorpatan of Baglung.

Gulmi District has high potentials for domestic as well as external tourism. Places like Ridi, Resunga, Marbhung Malika, Rudrabeni can attract a large number of religious domestic tourists in the district. Eco-tourism, Home Stay Tourism, Adventure Tourism, Organic Farming Tourism, Trekking, Rafting and Visit to the Places of historical importance like Dhurkot, Purkot, Ismakot, Charpula, Musikot, Chandrakot can be popular among the foreign tourists.

Gulmi is situated in the middle side of Puthan, Arghakhachi, Baglung, Parbat, Syangja and Palpa. Hence we can develop inter district tour packages with linking the tourist places of other neighbor districts like

- Linkages with Dhorpatan of Baglung
- Linkages with Swargadwari of Puthan

- Linkages with Balkot, Arghakot of Arghakhachi
- Linkages with Tilaurakot of Kapilbastu
- Linkages with Rupandehi of Lumbini
- Linkages with Ramgram and Devdaha of Nawalparashi
- Linkages with Ranighat and Bhairavsthan of Palpa
- Linkages with Sirubari of Syangja
- Linkages with Gupteshwor Gufa of Parbat

6.2 Problems

With low level of overall development, Gulmi district has a myriad of problems for tourism development. Low levels of infrastructure development is one of the major bottlenecks for tourism development. Most of the roads are temporary in condition and the settlements nearby roads are very dusty. Transportation facilities are not up to the tourist standards. There is no air connection with the capital or other major cities of the country. There is no prospect of developing air transport in the district at least in the near future mainly because of the difficult geographical location and low level of feasibility to run air transport service.

Degradation of environment and adverse effect on biodiversities is likely to have significant negative impact on eco-tourism. Even the local routes and trekking trails are not good enough to attract tourists.

There are very few hotels, restaurants and lodges to cater the demands of tourists. Most of the people in the rural settings are accustomed with the subsistence agriculture system. Thus development of entrepreneurship for rural tourism is not that much easy. There are no trained and educated man powers in hotel and travel sector. As discussed earlier the level of human development in the district is considerably low. Moreover tendency of migration of the educated people to the city centers prevalent in the district. Only the dependent and uneducated populations stay in the district throughout the year.

There are lack of proper conservation and preservation of historical sites. Most of the old palace and temples are getting ruined day by day.

Tourism is yet to get priority in the district. There is no effective tourism unit in the local units of the government. Investment on tourism development is negligible. The linkages of tourism with other economic sectors is yet to be realized, recognized and established.

Imitation of urban life style both domestic as well as foreign has caused typical Nepali culture, life style and traditions tarnished and disappeared which is a very important requirement for the development of rural tourism in the country. There is not a large deal with International tourist in this district. The main reason is lack of suitable infrastructure, like roads, hotels and communications etc. There is no institutional process and suitable marketing, promotion and protection mechanism of Historical, Religious and Tourist places.

All this shows that, Gulmi District through full of potentials for rural tourism development with the application of various rural tourism models in different localities, reaping the tourism potentials is still a daunting task for all of us that demand genuine commitment, sizeable investment and tireless efforts on the part of the government, tourism entrepreneurs and the local people.

Chapter-VII

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION

7.1 Conclusion

In the scenario of low productivity in agricultural sector, tourism can be a high productive sector to compensate the unemployment and disguised unemployment prevailing in the country as well as Gulmi district. It has comparative advantages than other industries such as , it has low opportunity cost, it takes low gestation period to give returns it can involve the lower strata of the people of all ecological zones, involves women and ethnic groups and bears direct relation to all dimensions of life like culture, environment, nature, behavior of people. Tourism also has a very significant contribution to GDP, foreign exchange earnings, government revenue, employment and its indirect and induced effects. It fulfills basic requisites of development such as; it adjusts with decentralization and good governance, open base for greater role of women as partners for development and space for gender equity. In this basis tourism can be a leading sector and a socio-economic force in the economy of Nepal.

Western Development Region is a repository of nature and living culture with immense potentials for rural tourism. The whole Western Development Region has been a role model for rural tourism development in the country. Ghandruk, Dhampus, Sirubari, Bandipur and Ghale Gaon are some of the well-known and well-established rural tourism destination of the country. However, there are a number of places in the Western Development Region with virtually untapped tourism potentials.

From the available data, information and researcher's observation along with the interpretations and discussions in the proceeding sections, now it is obvious that Gulmi district has a very high prospect and promising future for tourism development. Religious sites like Ridi and Resunga, Herbal Products in Resunga and Madane Forests, Historical places of Principalities like Dhurkot,

Isma, Purkot, Charpala, foot hills with amazing scenic beauty rivers with fresh water appropriate for white water rafting and small mountains with high potentials for adventure tourism like Trekking, Rock-climbing, Para Gliding, Mountain Biking and many more if developed properly and marketed strategically, there will definitely be a huge inflow of domestic as well as foreign tourists. All this should be backed with Nepali type hospitality and well-managed rural tourism services to reap the benefits of tourism in the district.

In order to achieve the goal of economic development and poverty reduction, it is required to explore/identify various tourist places in Gulmi district that are existing now or would be potential due to an increasing flow of tourist in this district. This study attempts to link the rural tourism with the rest of the rural economy. Creation of tourism infrastructures is expected to result in an increased flow of tourist, which would create demand for various local products for the consumption of tourists arriving in the districts. This is expected to create various types of production opportunities for income and employment generation. In addition, Gulmi its diverse geo-climatic belts and proximity to Tansen, Butwal, Bhairahawa and even to India has various production and marketing possibilities. The local communities, including poor, Dalit and Women would be benefited through the exploitation of such production possibilities. Various income generation activities could be conducted and that would have very positive socio-economic impacts on the community people including disadvantaged groups such as poor, Dalit, Women and Children.

The main type of tourism we can and need to develop is Rural Tourism which can engage most of the women, dalit, employed and under employed people of this district.

There are various types of rural tourism models which could build up in this district like Community Based Tourism, Home Stay Tourism, Farm Tourism

and Herbal Tourism. There are Great potentialities for Trekking, Rock-Climbing, Mountain Biking, Pony Trekking, Paragliding, Rafting and other Adventures Tourism in this district. There are also various possibilities to promote Nature Based Tourism, Village/Urban Tourism, Pilgrimage/Religious/Cultural Tourism, Health Tourism, Floriculture Tourism, Sports Tourism, Holiday Pleasure and Rural Business Tourism etc.

All these assets and potentialities do not accrue benefits automatically. With the initial phase of overall development including tourism development there are a number of problems, challenges and constraints in front of the rural tourism development in the district. Low level of infrastructure development, lack of awareness, entrepreneurship and investment on the part of local people and lack of marketing to the previous tourism products are, to name a few challenges in front of all of us willing to develop Gulmi District as a vibrant rural tourism destination, Nevertheless, all these problems and challenges can be overcome with the concerted efforts of public private partnership.

For the above types of tourism development, various kinds of tourism facilities can be developed in this district like Places for Birds Watching, Resting Cum-View Points, Picnic Sports, Organic Farms, Clean and Healthy Environments, Rearrange and Develop Clear Tourist Routes, Visitor Information Center, Welcome Gates, Museum (Natural/Cultural) Establishment, Buddhist Chaitya/Stupa/Monastery Construction and required other activities like awareness raising, local capacity building training and research etc.

7.2 Recommendations

To promote sustainable rural tourism development which could generate maximum alternative employment opportunities to underemployed and unemployed people of this district or to reduce poverty, enhance income level and to make better lifestyle of this district, the local people along with the local and central government, need to concentrate on these points:

- Conduct mass awareness programs to create conducive environment for tourism development
- Identify the major tourist destinations in the district with the stoppage points and take leaders and entrepreneurs in those spots to familiarization trips to the established rural tourism destination in the Western Development Region.
- Conduct entrepreneurship and skill oriented training programs targeting the youths in those spots.
- Prepare immediate action plan to preserve and conserve sites with historical, cultural and archeological importance.
- Establish linkages with the surrounding districts to build tourism packages.
- Build Nepali type accommodation facilities in the major stoppage points.*¹
- Resunga should be developed as gorgeous Yoga and Meditation tourism center.
- Organic farming should be encouraged at the satellite area of major tourism spots.
- District Development Committee should set up a dedicated tourism unit with necessary facilities.
- Short and long trekking trails should be developed targeting tourists of different age group. A short trekking trail can be developed around the district headquarters that would be suitable for senior tourists.
- The government should initiate to establish rural tourism cooperatives that would develop maintain and enhance small infrastructures.
- Nepal Tourism Board, in consultation with the District Development Committee Gulmi and the surrounding districts should help in preparing

¹ The government should help the locals to explore financing arrangements in addition to the technical assistance to the potential tourism entrepreneurs.

tourism packages. NTB should also promote major tourist destinations of those places in its promotional materials.

- Small and Cottage industries should be encouraged and protected to increase the retention of tourist's spending.
- Ruru-Resunga Conservation and Tourism Development Committee should be made more functional by equipping with tourism experts and additional resources.
- Construction of the Proposed Airport at Simichaur should be commenced at the earliest possible time and with proper ground works.
- Pioneers of rural tourism in the district should be encouraged and honored.
- Tourist should be informed and made aware of making tourism sustainable and eco-friendly. Protection of biodiversity should get due attention and priority while running tourism business.
- Consultations with regard to tourism should be made on regular basis among the Gulmi, Arghakhanchi, Palpa, Pyuthan, Syunja and Baglung districts for getting the common benefits from rural tourism.
- Gulmi District Development Committee, in participation with the local tourism entrepreneurs, Nepal Tourism Board and the ministry of Tourism and Civil Aviation should immediately start a plan with robust strategies to make use of visit Nepal 2011 campaign successful in Gulmi District by attracting welcoming and accommodating unprecedented number of tourists.
- Rural tourism should be promoted in accordance with the potentials of the particular destinations with clear linkages. To this end a tourism map has been proposed that is attached in the annex.

Adoption and implementation of the above mentioned measures will lead to increase the number of tourist inflow significantly with comparatively high rate of retention that would ultimately contribute in raising the standard of living of rural poor in Gulmi District. This will have meaningful impact on

attaining the overarching goal of poverty alleviation and making remarkable progress on fulfilling the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs).

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