

PARTICIPATION OF DALITS IN COMMUNITY FORESTRY
*(A Case Study of Kalika Community Forest User Group in Latikoili-
1 VDC, Surkhet District)*

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RECOMMENDATION

This is to certify that Mr. Shankar Sunar has completed the thesis entitled, **“Participation of Dalits in Community Forestry”** (*A Case Study of Kalika Community Forest User Group in Latikoili-1 VDC, Surkhet District*) under my supervision and guidance. I recommend this report for final approval and acceptance.

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This thesis entitled “**Participation of Dalits in Community Forestry**” (*A Case Study of Kalika Community Forest User Group in Latikoili-1 VDC, Surkhet District*) submitted by Mr. Shankar Sunar has been accepted for the partial fulfillment of the requirements of Master's Degree in the faculty of Arts in Rural Development by the evaluation committee.

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ABSTRACT

This study entitled " Participation of Dalits in Community Forestry" (A Case Study of Kalika Community Forest User Group in Latikoili-1 VDC, Surkhet District" was based on primary data collected in January, 2008. The main objective of the study was to assess participation of Dalits in forest management, decision making, monitoring and evaluation and benefit sharing in the community forest. The other specific objectives included analyzing the socio-economic characteristics of Dalits households population and Dalit members of the community forest user groups, the obstacles for effective participation in community forest, pattern of participation in the community forest and recommending the ways to make community forest management more inclusive for Dalits.

For the purpose of the study, the researcher had applied both exploratory and descriptive research design. The sources of data were both primary and secondary and the nature of data was both qualitative and quantitative. There are a total of 53 Dalit households in the community forest. Out of them, 30 households were selected on simple random basis for the study purpose. A total of 165 population were enumerated in 30 Dalit households. Thirty Dalit respondents of the community forest user group members (one from each household) and ten key informants were the respondents of the study. The sex ratio of Dalit households population is 108.08 and overall age dependency ratio 30.95. Most of them are unmarried. The literacy figure of the Dalits households population and Dalit community forest user group members are also very low. Farming is the major occupation of both Dalit HH population and Dalit community forest user group members of the community forest. Almost 90 percent of them are living in subsistence and waged labour is a primary source of income of the respondents.

Participation of Dalits in decision making process in the CFUG is not satisfactory because of illiteracy, low level of awareness, lack of leadership development and discriminatory practices of social elites. Most of illiterate Dalits are participating irregularly knowingly or unknowingly and have only passive or supportive role in decision making process.

However, almost all Dalits are participating regularly in monitoring and evaluation process. They have felt a sense of responsibility to protect and manage their forest. On an average, the effectiveness of Dalits participation in monitoring and evaluation is satisfactory.

But, their participation in benefit sharing process is partly satisfactory. Most of the Dalits have access to forest products of daily needs but are unable to grab opportunities to share benefits from community forest fund. Moreover, they have also no access to income generating activities and training programs which are basically considered to be fundamental to uplift their socio-economic status.

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ACRONYMS

| | | |
|---------|---|--|
| AGDP | : | Agriculture Gross Domestic Production |
| BS | : | Bikram Sambat |
| CBDS | : | Community Forest Community Based Organizations |
| CBS | : | Central Bureau of Statistics |
| CFUG | : | Community Forest User Groups |
| DFO | : | District Forest Office |
| FAO | : | Food and Agriculture Organization |
| FUG | : | Forest User Group |
| FUGC | : | Forest User Group Committee |
| HH | : | Households |
| ICS | : | Improved Cooking Stoves |
| i.e. | : | That is |
| IGA | : | Income Generating Activities |
| INGOs | : | International Non-Governmental Organization |
| M and E | : | Monitoring and Evaluation |
| NACFP | : | Nepal Australia Community Forestry Project |
| NGOs | : | Non-Governmental Organizations |
| NHDR | : | Nepal Human Development Report |
| NTFPs | : | Non-Timber Forests Products |
| OP | : | Operational Plan |
| PF | : | Panchayat Forest |
| PPF | : | Panchayat Protected Forests |
| PRA | : | Participatory Rural Appraisal |
| TAL | : | Terai Arc Landscape |
| TFPs | : | Timber Forest Products |
| WB | : | World Bank |
| WWF-NP | : | World Wildlife Fund Nepal Program |