

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background of the Study

The word, 'Participation' has become a *buzzword* in every development discourse and become an umbrella term for a supposedly new style of development intervention in many ways (Oakley, 1991). The words 'participation' and 'participatory' appeared for the first time in the development jargon during late 1950s (Rahnema: 1992). Over the years, the notion of participation has an exercise of empowering rural people, has gained wider support (Oakley et al, 1991). The philosophy of a 'people-based' development "from below" assumes that participation is not only an end in itself but also a fundamental pre-condition for any development strategy. The failure of past development strategies is fundamentally linked to the absence of the missing ingredient of participation. Participation is viewed as a 'people-centered' approach and places people at the center of any development discourse because it is seen as a strategically important (Oakley and Marsden, 1984). The population of a village or an area, or any group of people, having some common interests (such as residence, kinship or religious affiliation) is known as community. Therefore, community participation is an active process by which beneficiary or client groups influence the direction and execution of development project with a view to enhancing their well-being in terms of income, personal growth, self-reliance or other values they cherish (Paul, 1987 cited in Oakley 1991). Therefore, community participation through the perspective of rural development should be viewed as an active involvement of people in decision making process so far it affects them (Uphoff and Cohen, 1979 cited in *ibid*). The local community has the basic knowledge of factors responsible for the degradation of natural resources and can apply

indigenous means of protection and management (Bannet, 1991 cited in Manandhar, 1993).

In this context, Nepal's attempt to encompass the ingredient of participation in development has been reflected in the forestry program. Formal forestry program was initiated with financial assistance from the World Bank and other donor funded projects in which groups of local people called 'Panchayat' at the beginning and later Forest User Group (FUG), together with the District Forest Office (DFO), were involved in the management of forest. Local participation was emphasized in 1970 by decentralizing authority of forest protection and utilization of local government organization as Panchayat protected forest.

The Master Plan for Forest Sector (MPFS) of Nepal was laid in 1989 AD. by the government in order to achieve peoples' participation in forestry development with the objective of fulfilling the basic needs of people from forests and increasing food production by conserving and managing the forest resources but the concept of participatory forestry was evolved in Nepal after 1990s with the evolutionary changes in the forest policies. The forest regulations of 1993 framed community forestry policy in Nepal.

In this perspective, community forestry is defined as the situation where rural people develop and manage forests as common property to support their farms and households economics (Nepal-Australia Community Forestry Project, 1996). It is perceived as a small scale village level forestry practices where decisions and actions are made on a collective basis so that community people can interlink forest with their social life. Community Forestry Program is based on partnership between local people and government and is one of the nationally prioritized forestry programs in Nepal. Its main objective is to achieve forest resources by converting accessible national forest into a community forest. Although this program is

ranked to be the most successful, a bulk of development critiques suggest that large number of Dalits in different parts of Nepal are deprived from having access to forests. Nepal is hardly alone among the numerous countries worldwide that have allowed both historical and contemporary factors to perpetuate the gaps between haves and have not. Discriminatory practices deeply rooted in ethno-caste system have dominated Nepalese culture for centuries which have perpetuated both practices of untouchability and exploitation of the backward community. Although the National Code of 1963 abolished the caste system, it remains alive in practice in many rural areas of Nepal. Dalits are religiously discarded, socially oppressed, economically exploited, politically suppressed and educationally deprived. Due to all these reasons, they remain backward and far from modern development initiatives. The status of Dalits in the study area is not far from the reality. In such scenario, it is imperative to question whether the participation of Dalits in community forestry is reality or rhetoric and empowering or disempowering.

1.2 Statement of the Problem

Forest is a renewable source of energy. Local people's involvement in the forest management activities has been acknowledged as a main strategy of the forest policy of Nepal for sustainable and effective management and conservation of the forest (Chhetri et. al; 1992). At the same time, poverty alleviation has become the development agenda. Nepal's efforts for the poverty alleviation have been reflected in its periodic plan. The ongoing tenth plan, too, emphasizes the forest as a major sector to reduce poverty.

Despite the various legal reforms and policy initiatives, the exclusionary practices of development and the discriminatory caste based-practice still continue to touch the rural scene. Lack of pluralistic composition of governance and the diverse multi-ethnic caste-ridden nature of Nepal and its

stratified socio-economic structure posed particular challenges in uniting varied interests to make coherent collective claim and development (Nepal Human Development Report, 2004). Various literatures show that community forestry program remains no exceptional from the reality. The so-called social elites are also dominant to influence and direct the community forestry program in many ways. Dalits find no room in decision making process and benefit sharing while managing forests. As a consequence, they are bound to be voiceless and choice less. Various reports, research and critiques suggest that participation of Dalits in community forestry is just as a 'token', no effective. In this context, the following questions are incorporated in the study:

-) What is the socio-economic status of Dalit households of community forest user group members?
-) What makes Dalits face obstacles for the effective participation in community forestry?
-) What is the ratio of Dalits and non-Dalits in community forest user group members?
-) What is the influence of Dalit members of community forest user group in decision making process?
-) Who are the real beneficiaries of the forest products?
-) Is participation of Dalit community forest user group members empowering or disempowering?

1.3 Objectives of the Study

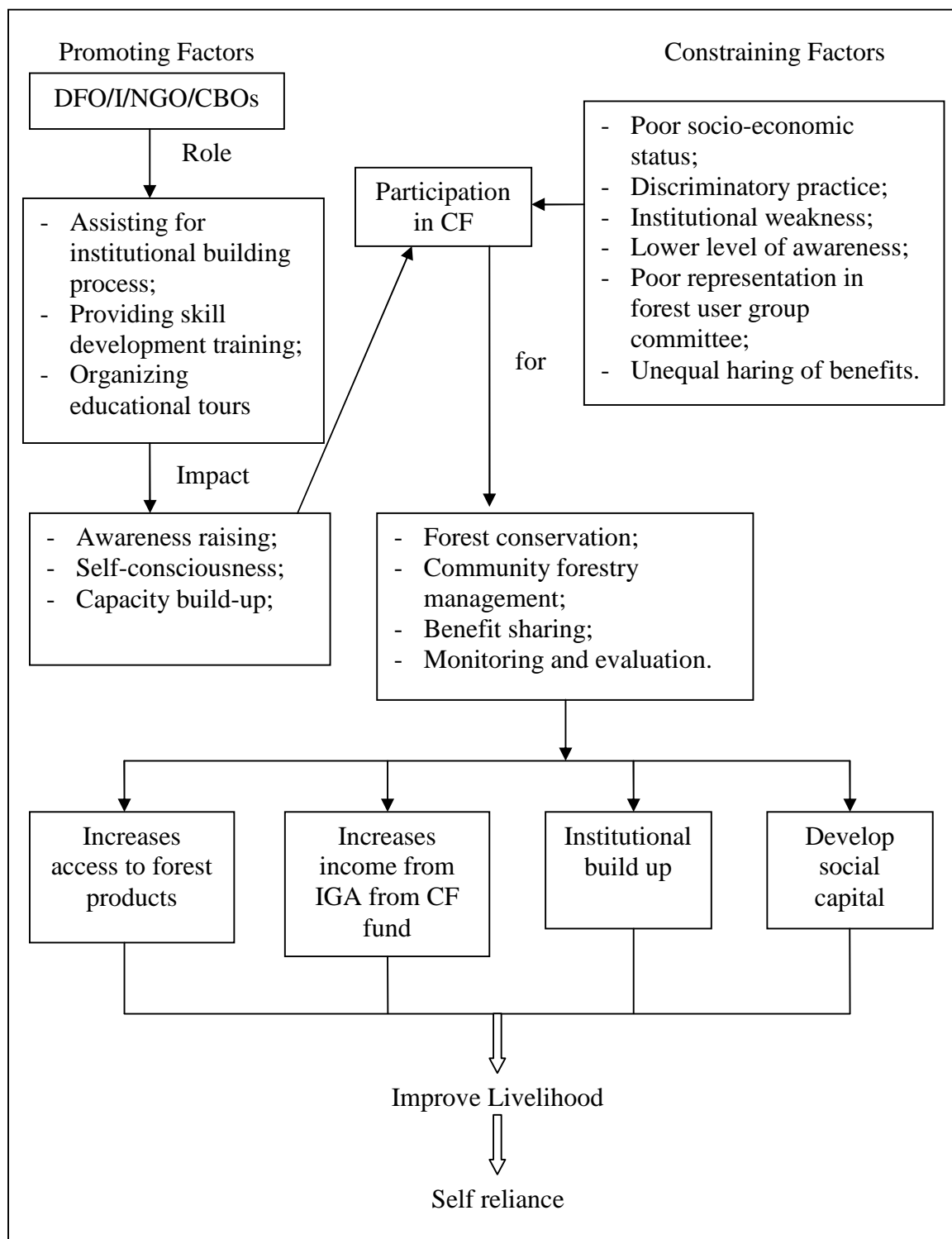
The general objective of the study is to assess participation of Dalits in community forestry. This participation ranges from forest management, decision making process and benefit sharing. The other specific objectives include:

-) To analyze the socio-economic status of the Dalit population of the CFUG members;
-) To analyze the obstacles for effective participation of Dalits in community forest.
-) To assess the pattern of Dalits' participation in CF.
-) To identify the solution to make Community Forestry Program more inclusive for Dalits.

1.4 Conceptual Framework of the Study

Two conceptual frameworks have been designed to make the analysis more precise.

1. Conceptual framework for promoting and constraining factors for Dalits participation in CF.



2. Dimension of effective participation

	Dimension of effective participation	Activities for promoting effective participation
Participation in CF	Forest management	<ul style="list-style-type: none">) Encouraging Agro-Forestry practice.) formulating and implementing operational plan of a CF effectively.) Encouraging the feeling of responsibility for protecting forest, as a common resource.) Managing the forest by self-discipline.) Promoting indigenous knowledge
	Decision making	<ul style="list-style-type: none">) Providing sufficient room to articulate interests and voice of all CUFG members.) Making decisions on consensus basis.) Motivating people for participation.
	Monitoring & evaluation	<ul style="list-style-type: none">) Implementing the decisions of operational plan of a CF effectively.) Encouraging to develop feeling of responsibilities among CFUG member for protecting forest.) Managing the forest by self-discipline.
	Benefit sharing	<ul style="list-style-type: none">) Providing accessibility to forest products (fuelwood, fodder, litter, green grass etc.)) Promoting transparency to mobilize CF fund.) Promoting equity concept for distribution of opportunities and benefits from CF.

The conceptual framework I and II illustrate how to develop community forestry program effectively. The conceptual framework - I is intended to show promoting and constraining factors for effective participation. The promoting factors like DFO supports to handover the forest to the local community people and formation of CFUGs. Similarly, I/NGOs facilitate

the local people by providing awareness training and skill development training and organizing educational tours so that Dalits can develop the level of awareness and can enrich their capacities. Similarly, conceptual framework - II shows the dimension of participation and ways to promote effective participation.

1.5 Rationale of the Study

The aim of community forestry is to uplift the socio-economic life of the poor by managing the forests resources. Therefore, it is one of the important valuable sources of poverty alleviation. Many studies in Nepal (Chhetri and Pandey, 1999, Collect et. al., 1996, Cohen and Norman, 1976) argue that people's participation in forest management is crucial for the success of forestry program. Since Dalits in rural society of Nepal are important components of the community forestry program, their participation is of major concern. However, very few micro-level studies have been carried out to assess about how effectively Dalits are participating in community forestry. The assessment of effective participation of Dalits in Community Forestry Program is vague and difficult in itself. However, this study is believed to fill this gap and it will provide a supplementary document while assessing Dalits participation in CF and factor relation to decision-making and benefit sharing in forest management.

Result of this study may help the concerned GOs, I/NGOs, donor agencies, planners, policy makers and other stakeholders in making the community forest development program more effective.

1.6 Definition of Key Concepts and Variables

The researcher has used some of the concepts and variables in the study to clarify the readers.

Dalits : The communities, who by virtue of atrocities of caste-based discrimination and untouchability, are most backward in socio-economic, educational, political and religious fields and are most backward to live in human dignity and social justice. They are treated as untouchables and are occupational caste. In the study area, Damais (Tailors) and Kamis (Blacksmiths) are taken as Dalits.

Upper Caste : The upper caste includes Brahmin, Chhetri and other ethnic groups.

Community Forest : A forest area handed over to a group of people entrusted to manage, use and protect under the provision of Forest Act and forest by-laws.

Interest Group : The households who depend on the forest for subsistence and who are recognized by other users as having the principal responsibility for forest management.

Forest User Group (FUG) : A group of forest users of a particular forest area. Members of a FUG assume rights and responsibilities for using and managing the local forests as per operational plan developed by the FUG and approved by DFO.

Forest User Group Assembly : A meeting concerned with the management of a particular forest and attended by all users and representatives of user groups. Major decisions are made in the assembly meetings.

Range Post : Range-post is a geographical area in a district administered by the forest ranger.

Operational Plan : It is a document of working strategy to manage a community forest.

1.7 Limitations of the Study

There is no denying the fact that the research is of great importance in terms of Dalits participation. However, it could not include some of the variables in the research due to resource and time constraints. As this study is conducted for the partial fulfillment of the requirement of Master's Degree, there may be short-comings that could have debarred the present study to be a scientific one. The study is also not free from the following short-comings.

- * The findings of the study are centered to Kalika CF of Surkhet district.
- * The findings of the study may not be generalized to the wider area.

1.8 Organization of the Study

This dissertation has been divided into five chapters-Introduction, Literature Review, Research Methodology, Data Analysis and Findings, Conclusion and Recommendations.

The First Chapter includes introduction of the study. Similarly, the Second and Third Chapters briefly deal with literature review and research methodology of the study respectively.

The Forth Chapter presents the results of the data analysis of the study. The Fifth Chapter is devoted to findings and conclusion with some recommendations for further improvement, investigation and policy consideration to community forest development, promotion and protection and to make Dalits participation more effective in the study site in the days to come.

CHAPTER II

LITERATURE REVIEW

Review of literature is an integral part of a research undertaking to enrich knowledge. In this chapter, an attempt has been made to review various forest related issues, policies, problems and solutions related to community forestry management system. This chapter has been organized as:

2.1 An Overview Caste System

Nepal had been described as a Hindu kingdom and Hindu polity till 2063 B.S. It is not necessarily a Hindu cultural pluralism within a hierarchical caste system where the practice of untouchability has become the fundamental practice of social stratification of power (UNDP, 2004). Khanal (2002) points out that the various castes in the Hindu society are divided into a hierarchy where Brahmins have the highest and untouchables have the lowest ranking. The sense of superiority conjoined with the practices of untouchability is much exaggerated and manifested in the rural part of our country. In Holton's view, the origin of untouchability is partly racial, partly religious and partly a matter of social custom.

2.2 Dalits in Nepal

Although the term 'Dalit' is used extensively in different reports, studies, deliberations and day-by-day dialogue, understandings differ as to its definition. The literal meaning of Dalit in Nepali dictionary is "the person who is suppressed". In the context of South Asia, Dalit is a common term used to address culturally, economically and socially marginalized individuals or communities. Dalits are the occupational castes and are treated as untouchables in the context of Nepal. The proposed Bill on Dalits in Nepal forwarded by the National Dalit Commission defines the term Dalits as "those who by virtue of atrocities of caste-based discrimination and untouchability, are most backward in social, economic, educational, political and religious fields and are deprived of human dignity and social justice.

2.3 Evolution and Emergence of Different Forest Related Policies under Different Regime

Regime	Forest policy	Objective	Ownership	Impact
Gorkha Empire (1768-1846)	-	The forest of Terai, the plain bordering to India were mentioned as a physical barrier against possible invasion from the South by East-India.	The state asserted its ownership of natural resources to institutions and individuals as a privilege in the form of Birta, Khorja and Rakam (Hobley, 1996)	-
Rana Regime (1946-1951)	-	Revenue collection to earn wealth by selling sal forests.	One-third of the forests of Nepal were under birta tenure and three quarters of this belong to Rana family.	Mass removal of sal and sisoo from terai forest
First democratic period (1951-61)	Forest Nationalization Act – 1957	For revenue collection and control over forest resources.	State had ownership over forest land	Reckless deforestation and encroachment of forest land for settlement
Panchayat Regime (1961-1990)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Several forest related Acts and subsequently amended. ✓ Formally initiated Community Forestry Program in late 1970s. ✓ Introduced policy of Panchayat Forest (PF) and Panchayat Protected Forest (PPF) in 1978. ✓ Master Plan for Forestry Sector (MPFS) in 1989. 	Decentralizing forest management for forest protection as a rights of protection and utilization to local administrative unit and local people.	State has ownership over forest land and decisions remained with the govt. services.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Peoples participation in forest management lacking and deforestation process continued. ✓ The resettlement program intensified the process of deforestation.
2 nd Democratic Period (1990 onwards)	New Forestry Policy – 1993	To handover national forest to the local community for forest management	Community people	Development of ownership resulted gradual improvement in forest condition in some places. But, CFs in some place experienced reckless deforestation because of mismanagement of the forests.

2.4 Emergence of Community Forestry Programs and Participation

The concept of CF crystallized somewhat in the late 1970, with the release of the landmark FAO publication *forestry for local community development* (FAO, 1978) where community forestry was defined as, “any situation which intimately involves local people in a forestry activity”. According to FAO, the community forestry departed from previous conceptions and centered on the idea of people’s participation getting local population to plan and execute their own project on a self-help basis.

In the beginning, community forest emerged in response partly to the failure of the forest industry development model to promote the socio-economic development and partly to the increasing rate of deforestation and forest land degradation in the third world. Indeed, it was recognized that these problems were interrelated and actually exacerbated by traditional approaches to forestry where little attention was given to relationship between the foresters and rural poor (Gilmour and Fisher, 1991). The Community Forestry Program is also accepted as a strategy to overcome the problems posed by the private forest nationalization process in 1957 for forest conservation efforts in the country (Chhetri, 1990).

This program in Nepal is considered to be one of the highly successful programs. It is also considered as problem solving strategy. The forest user groups are the means of achieving this goal. Forest in Nepal is an integral part of the farming system and is closely associated with the livelihood of the rural poor people as they derive the Forest Timber Products (FTPs) and Non-Timber Forest Products (NTFPs) (Chhetri, 1992). Forestry for local community development is a new people-oriented policy which aims to raise the living standard of rural people and involve them in the decision-making

process. So, it is about rural people for the rural people (FAO, 1978). The forest and its products are critical to the livelihoods of millions (Oakley, 1991). Therefore, it must be viewed with the rural life.

Community Forest is defined as “small scale, village level forestry practices where decisions and actions are made on a collective basis. The rural people participate in planning, establishment, management and harvesting of forest resources and receive a major proportion of the socio-economic and ecological benefits from the forest products”. After the implementation of Community Forestry, these products are equally distributed to all the CFUG members. In addition to it, people have started getting different training opportunities as well as they come in contact with different NGOs and INGOs. This contact helps them in planning the community forest for poverty alleviation through income generation (Gautam, 2001). Pokhrel (2004) rightly examines that community forestry has become instrumental in increasing natural, social, human, financial and to some extent physical capital (quoted in Bhandary, 2004, The Kathmandu Post). In order to maximize the benefits from community forestry, it is vital to ensure that the implementation process used to lead to an effective empowerment to the actual user of the forest. Special care need to be taken to ensure that the poor and other disadvantage groups are not absolutely worse off during any community forestry interventions exercise (Bartlett, 1991).

The implicit assumptions originally made about a community of beneficiaries are now questioned and have led to new initiatives focused on the participation of the forest users in the management of their forest resources. However, the degree to which users actually participate in decision making varies according to ideology of the organization. For some organizations, community forestry means the empowerment of the poor men and women through giving them control over access to the forest and decision making process. Governments of both developed and developing

countries should lend support to institutionalizing self-reliant mechanisms by which forestry activities will be increasingly based in endogenous decision-making and the full participation of the rural poor (FAO 1980, P. 7 cited in Hobley, 1991).

Nelson and Wright (1995) in a approving tone to the idea of World Bank classification of the poor as a primary stakeholders claim that “its definition of participation is now ahead of some of the bilateral agencies (cited in Chhetri 1999). They further add, “participation means their active not passive involvement and it should be transformation”

The participation with regard to rural development process... ‘participation includes peoples involvement in decision-making process, in implementing programs, their sharing in the benefits of development programs and their involvement in efforts to evaluate such programs (Laski, 1981 cited in Oakley and Marsden, 1984). Similarly, participation in development should be broadly understood as an active involvement of people in the decision making process so far as it affects them (Uphoff and Cohen, 1979 cited in ibid).

A development program can be successful by the active participation of local people. Success will depend to the high degree on identifying measures to stimulate the active participation of the millions of small farmers and landless people who daily use forest and trees to meet their needs. Oakley includes a typical set of objectives of forestry program designed on the basis of greater people’s participation.

- To involve people in forestry activities and provide the basic needs for forest resources by increasing the production of fuel wood, fodder and timber.
- To promote self-reliant among communities through active participation on the management of forest resource (Oakley 1991).

It is generally argued that the people who actually collect forest products must participate in the management process or otherwise they will follow unrealistic prescription (Fisher and Malla, 1967 cited in Fisher and Glimous 1989).

The govt. of Nepal has come forward to note “people’s participation in the development of forestry sector involves giving full authority to rural people to plan and initiate their own program. Unless the rural people (men and women) participate in the management and conservation of forests, the situation of forests in the country will continue to deteriorate (HMGN/WECS, 1995 cited in Chhetri, 1999).

Collect et al (1996) supports this view that successful community forestry depends absolutely on the calling participation of local people. CF should benefit all forest users. So, it is important for all process. Similarly, forestry for community development will not be successful unless it reflects the peoples own interpretation of their needs, problems, and aspirations (Baral, 1993).

2.5 Forest and Tenth Plan

The Tenth Plan (HMG/NPC, 2002) has emphasized on forestry sector to support national objective of poverty alleviation by ensuring people's participation needed for sustainable development of management of forest, plant resources, herbs, water-shed management and biodiversity conservation along with increasing employment opportunities through the development of forest based industries.

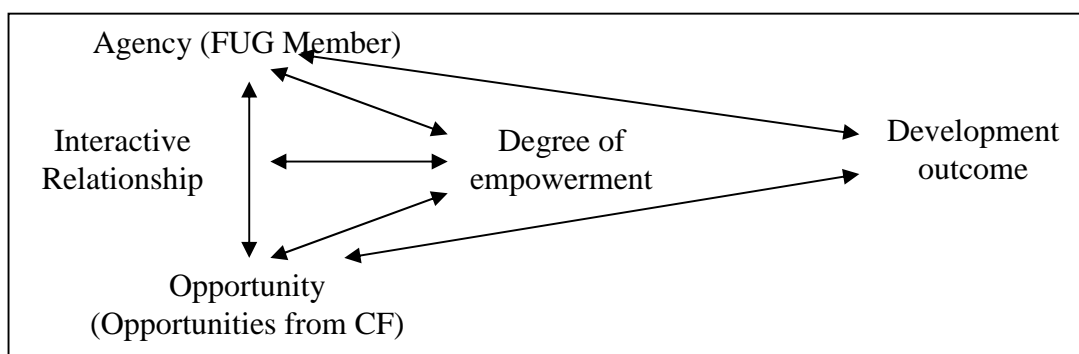
2.6 Empowerment and Opportunities

Participation and empowerment are highly interlinking processes to each other. Empowerment is always perceived as a strategy to promote

participation. UNDP– 2004 states that empowerment involves restructuring of opportunities for both supply side that of national action to make state institutions more responsible to people and removing existing social barriers and discrimination. And the demand side – the initiative taken by the poor themselves through social mobilization at the grass-roots level. Empowerment is about enhancement of assets and capabilities of diverse individuals and groups to engage, influence and hold accountable institutions which affect them. Empowerment is non-ending process and always operates 'from below' (Encyclopedia).

In this context, opportunities for poor people and other excluded groups (including Dalits) in decision-making process are critical and bring about changes in their commitment. However, sustaining inclusion and informed participation usually requires changing the rules so as to create space for people to debate on issues and participate in local and national level priority setting and the delivery of basic services (UNDP, 2004). Nepal-Australia Community Forestry Project, (1996) defines empowerment as a process of obtaining power, access to resources and the opportunities to make decisions and take action on their own behalf, by people who previously lacked such power.

A conceptual framework on the basis of Giddens analysis on the theory of structuration has been designed. Giddens theory of power argues that power is intrinsic to human agency.



Agency is defined as an actor or group and its ability to make purposeful choices of which empowerment can largely be predicted by their assets endowment. Assets are the stocks of resources that equip actors to use economic, social and political opportunities, to be productive and to protect themselves from shocks, (Moser, 1998, Swift 1989).

The assets requiring measurement or consideration in operational work include psychological, informational, organizational, material, social, financial and human assets. Actors need a raised level of consciousness if they are to translate their assets into choices i.e. to become agents. Assets interplay with each other and opportunities structure influence the accumulation and use of assets stocks. Opportunity structure comprises these institutions, which enable to choose options effectively for an actor. Prerequisite to empowerment is an opportunity structure that allows people to translate their assets based into effective agency through equitable rules and expanded entitlements. In this context, equity and distribution of product is a major factor impinging on any resources management system. Dani and Campell framed the following hypothesis: “Increased equity distribution of resources benefits within the limits of social acceptability encourages greater participation by user groups (Dani and Campell, 1986).

By utilizing the community forestry, the overall aim should be of community forest is to decrease the socio-economic hardship of the people living in the area. In this perspective, Dalits of the lowland area suffer from acute poverty and their basic needs must be met so that they can live better life. Both forest and agriculture practiced as balanced land-use system posses the unique quality of removing poverty.

Kayastha argued that forest creates ample job opportunities for employment and income and therefore can change the socio-economic status of people towards positive direction. A good number of village people are employed

in logging timber forest industries and afforestation activity. A lot of people in the villages become self-employed by making bullock carts, tools and furniture from timber. Some people even specialize in manufacturing wooden handicrafts and can earn good income by selling them. Similarly, a lot of poor families in the village collect fuel wood from the forest and sell them in the nearby markets and towns. It brings significant income in the village (Kayastha, 1991).

Malla (1970) viewed that the empowerment of rural disadvantaged groups of people especially women, poor and landless and low caste is also realized by the new extension method. Dahal viewed that involving women poor, low caste people in development activities is problematic. Therefore, they are taken as a disadvantaged group to development activities as well as Community Forestry Program (Dahal, 1994).

CHAPTER III

METHODOLOGY

This chapter deals briefly with the research methodology applied in the study. This is purely academic research based on social science. The major aspects of this chapter include: description of the study area, rationale for the selection of the study area, research design, nature and source of data, sampling procedure, data collection techniques and instruments, method of data analysis and ethical consideration.

3.1 Description of the Study Area

Situated at a distance of 600km. West-North from Kathmandu, Surkhet district is one of the beautiful places of Nepal. It is said that it was a big lake in the past. When a God named 'Sur' removed the water of the lake, the place became a better place to be inhabited and the region was called 'Sur Region'. Later, 'Sur Region' changed into Surkhet. Lying between 250-2200 meters above sea-level, Surkhet district is one of the important districts among others to supply forest products. The district is situated in between latitude 28[20' to 28[58' N and longitude 80[59' to 82[2' E. Covering a total area of 2,451.00 square kilometers, the district shares its borders with Salyan district in the east, Doti and Achham districts in the west, Achham, Dailekh and Jajarkot in the north and Kailali, Bardia and Banke districts in the south. It has maximum temperature of 32.8⁰ C and minimum temperature of about 4.5⁰ C. The region receives an average annual rainfall of about 1526mm. The major source of income of the district is agriculture. Most of the inhabitants of the district follow Hinduism as their religion. Tharus, Chhetris, Brahmins, Damais, Kamis, Magars, Gurungs, Badis etc are the ethnic inhabitants of the district.

The total forest area of the district covers 177854.70 hectare which is about 71% of the total area-249016.00 hectare. Of the total forested area, Kalika Community Forestry covers a total area of 187.00 hectare. It has a total house holds of 145 as users. The forest was handed over to the community by the government of Nepal in 2052/53 B.S.

3.2 Rationale for the Selection of the Study Area

The selection of the study area is one of the critical issues while undertaking a research work. Chambers (1983) points out the various common biases in the study site selection. Keeping this in mind, I admit that my study site is a part of community forestry project generally considered to be one of the successful CFs in Surkhet district. The rationale for the selection of the study area includes:

- i. The study population under the research is the most suppressed section of the society in the area. The ill practice of dominance and discrimination over Dalits is still prevailing.
- ii. The Dalits, who are the study population of the research, are called *Sukumbasi* (landless) locally, they have encroached the area of national forest for settlement. Several times, they were threatened to leave the area by DFO. The land they possess is *Ailani* (unused) and unproductive. Similarly, they do not have land certificate yet.
- iii. The Dalit population are in abject poverty, due to which, they are facing hardship in maintaining hand to mouth.
- iv. The researcher is familiar with the ecology and the landscape.

3.3 Research Design

- i. The research design is based on descriptive and exploratory.
- ii. It is descriptive as it is based on detailed investigation and record of the participation of Dalits in community forestry management,

decision-making process, implementation and monitoring and benefit sharing from the forest products.

- iii. It is exploratory in the sense that analysis is focused on exploring whether Dalits' participation in community forest is satisfactory or not. An attempt has been made to make the community forest management process more inclusive for Dalits.

3.4 Nature and Source of Data

Both primary and secondary data have been collected for the purpose of study.

- i. Primary data are based on household survey, observation, interview, focus group discussion and case study.
- ii. Both published and unpublished documents, records, books and relevant materials related to the subject matter have been incorporated as secondary data.

3.5 Universe and Sampling Procedure

There are 174 CFs in the district. Kalika CF is one of them, which was purposively selected for the research study. There are 145 HHs. Of the total HHs, Dalit HHs shares only about 10%. Therefore, the sampling procedure adopted in study is as follows:

Universe : From the universe of 145 HHs, only 53 HHs of the CF were purposively selected.

Study Unit : Among 53 Dalit HHs, 30 HHs were selected for the study on the basis of simple random sampling. Only one respondent was selected from each Dalit HH. Therefore, there were 30 Dalit respondents. Out of them, 22 were males and 8 were females. Eligible respondents (above 18 years) were Dalit member of the CFUG.

3.6 Data Collection Techniques and Instruments

For the collection of primary data, the following techniques were adopted.

Household Survey : Household survey was conducted to gather more information about the population characteristics of Dalits. Plethora of information in terms of Dalit participation of the CF was collected from structured questionnaire.

Observation : Participation observation was applied during research to study the location, and concerning relations of Dalits with other people including upper caste, forest-user group communities, their perception, involvement of Dalits in management and access of forest resources for Dalits etc.

Focus Group Discussion : Participatory Rural Appraisal (PRA) technique was applied for both male and female members of the CF to discuss about the past and present situation of community forestry management, people's perception about management, and operation of forest resources, dissatisfaction of Dalits. Check list was prepared for conducting focus group discussion.

Interview with Key Informants: Some knowledgeable persons such as elderly persons, members of forest-user group committee, range-post staff, community based representative personnel of WWF, staff of DFO, teachers and local leaders were selected as key informants to carryout the research. Checklist and guidelines were prepared for key informant's interview.

3.7 Ethical Consideration, Social Immersion and Report Building

The researcher has followed these techniques in the study area and adopted flexible approach to make the congenial environment to ease the

respondents and encourage them to have free and frank response. Besides, environment of trust and secrecy was maintained to gather more relevant information.

3.8 Reliability

To ensure the reliability of the research tools, the researcher has visited the study site and due attention was given to sample size.

3.9 Method of Data Analysis

The collected data were edited, coded, classified and tabulated for data organization. The quantitative data have been presented in tabular form and suitable statistical tools like percentage, ratio, mean etc. have been adopted for data analysis. Pie-chart and Bar-diagram have been used to make figure more attractive. The quantitative data have been interpreted and analyzed in descriptive way based on their numerical characteristics.

CHAPTER IV

RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

This chapter briefly deals with tabulation, analysis and interpretation of data and findings gathered through the field survey. An attempt is made to present the results in a systemic way.

4.1 Socio-cultural Characteristics

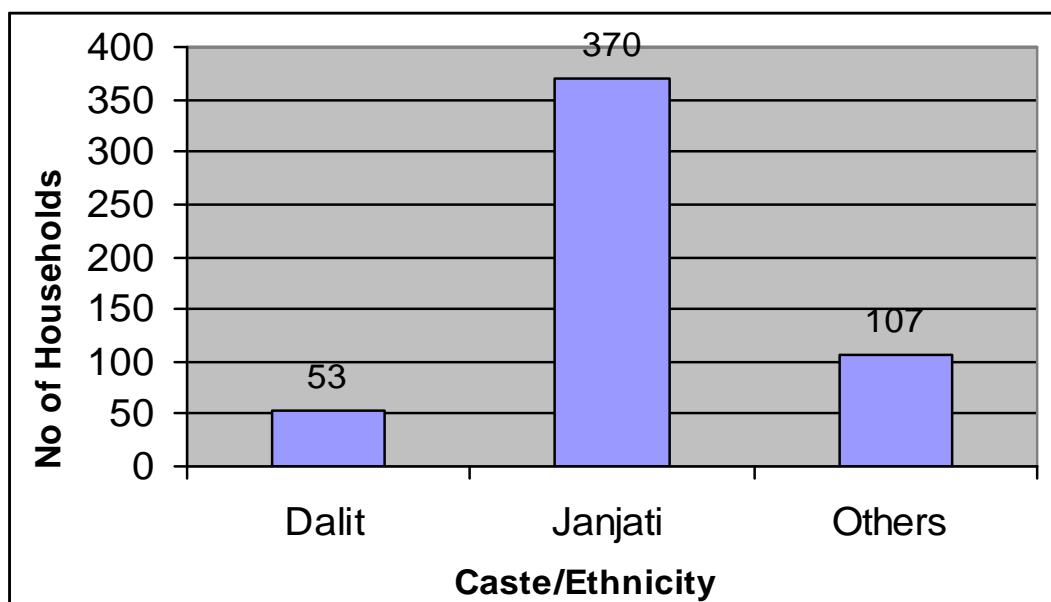
Socio-cultural characteristics of the respondents play an important role in conducting research work. In line with this, the researcher has made his attempt to explore socio-cultural aspects in the following ways:

Table 4.1 : Distribution of the Community Forestry User Groups Members' Households on the Basis of Caste/Ethnic Group

S.N.	Caste/Ethnicity	Household	
		Number	Percent
1.	Dalit	53	10.00
2.	Janjati	370	69.81
3.	Others	107	20.19
	Total	530	100.00

Source: Kalika CF Office, 2008

Graph 1 : Households' Status of the Community Forest User groups Members According to Caste Ethnic Background



The Table 4.1 and the bar diagram above show that among the 530 CFUG members, there are 53 (10%) Dalit HHs in this CF. Damais, and Kamis are the major Dalit in the study area. The dominant ethnic groups comprise 370 (69.81%) of the total CFUG HH numbers in which Tharus are dominant of all. The others other include Brahmins, Chhetris and Gurungs.

Table 4.2 : Distribution of the Respondents of Community Forest User Group members by Marital Status and Sex

S.N.	Marital Status	Total Population				Total	
		Male	Percent	Female	Percent	Number	Percent
1.	Married	21	95.45	7	87.50	28	93.33
2.	Unmarried	1	4.55	1	12.5	2	6.67
	Total	22	100.00	8	100.00	30	100.00

Source: Field Survey, May 2008.

This Table 4.2 shows that almost of the Dalit CFUG members of the CF are married. Many literatures show that married people take more household responsibility than unmarried people. Therefore, almost of the respondents take household economic responsibility.

Table 4.3 : Distribution of the Dalit Respondents of the Community Forest User Group Members on the Basis of Education and Sex

S.N.	Educational level	Total Population				Total	
		Male	Percent	Female	Percent	Number	Percent
1.	Illiterate	16	72.72	5	62.5	21	70.00
2.	Non-formally educated	2	9.09	1	12.5	3	10.00
3.	Pre-primary level (3 completed)	3	13.64	1	12.5	4	13.33
4.	Primary level (5 completed)	1	4.55	1	12.5	2	6.67
	Total	22	100.00	8	100.00	30	100.00

Source: Field Survey, May 2008.

The Table 4.3 shows that, of the total respondents, 70 percent of them are illiterate. This indicates that literacy rate of the Dalit respondents is much lower than the national literacy rate. It is true that education is positively correlated with development outcome because it is highly associated to raise the level of awareness to direct and influence any program. Since, CF approach is also a rural development program, it is futile to expect more outcome from the illiterate persons than from literate persons. More precisely, illiteracy is the major constraining factor, which deprives Dalits to render them voiceless and choice-less.

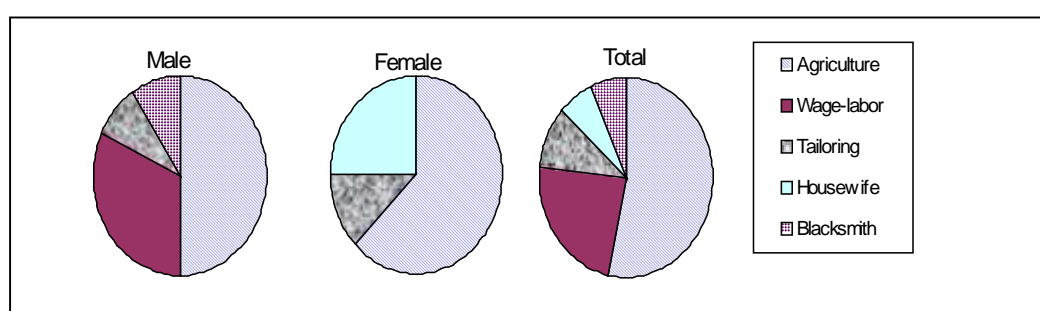
Table 4.4 : Distribution of the Respondents of the Community Forestry Forest User Group Members on the Basis of Main Occupational Status and Sex

S.N.	Occupation	Total Population				Total	
		Male	Percent	Female	Percent	Number	Percent
1.	Agriculture	11	50.00	5	62.5	16	53.33
2.	Wage-labor	7	31.82	0	0	7	23.33
3.	Tailoring	2	9.09	1	12.5	3	10.00
4.	Housewife	0	0	2	25.0	2	6.67
5.	Blacksmith	2	9.09	0	0	2	6.67
	Total	22	100.00	8	100.0	30	100.00

Source: Field Survey, May 2008.

The Table 4.4 shows that, of the total respondents, 16 (53.33%) of them have agriculture as main occupation. Similarly, who follow wage-labor as main occupation shares 7 (23.33%). Since CF is highly interlinked with agricultural activities, the livelihood of them (those who follow agriculture as major occupation) is directly concerned with the forest to run their livelihood. Therefore, their participation in CF is of vital concern.

Graph 2 : Major Occupational Status of the Dalit CFUG Members



4.2 Average Monthly Income

It is no doubt that income of the people determines the level of their living standard. It also influences and directs the policy of the community forestry as well as in terms of resource exploitation from the forests. Those who have economic prosperity, are able to grab more opportunities from the community forest. Therefore, the monthly income of the sampled Dalit HHs under the study area has been presented below:

Table 4.5 : Distribution of the Dalit Households Number by Income Level

S.N.	Income level (Rs.)	Household		
		Number	Percent	Income per person per day
1.	Less than 1500	12	40.00	Rs. 4.54
2.	(1500-3000)	7	23.33	Rs. 13.63
3.	(3000-4500)	6	20.00	Rs. 22.72
4.	4500 (+)	5	16.67	
	Total	30	100.00	

Source: Field Survey, May 2008.

The Table 4.5 shows that in the CF, of the total Dalit households of the CFUG members, about 12 (40%) households have monthly income less than Rs. 1,500, followed by 7 (23.33%) Rs. 1,500-3,000, 6 (20%) Rs.3000-4500 and 5 (16.67%) Rs. 4500 +.

Considering the table, it can be interpreted that about 63.33 percent of the people (who have monthly income less than Rs. 3000) are living with absolute poverty and are struggling hard for making their living. As poverty makes poor more vulnerable, their effectiveness in community forestry participation will simply be a dream. Therefore, poverty is the major

constraining factor to promote Dalits' participation in community forestry effectively. The table is also supported by the recent survey on well being ranking made by the CFUG committee. Production from land and monthly income are the major variables considered during the survey.

Table 4.6: Distribution of the Dalit Households Numbers on the Basis of Landholding Size

S.N.	Land possession	Household	
		Number	Percent
1.	Landless	3	10.00
2.	Land holder	27	90.00
	Total	30	100.00
Land-size (in Kattha)			
1.	Below 3	14	51.85
2.	3-6	10	37.04
3.	6-9	2	7.41
4.	Above 9	1	3.70
	Total	27	100.00

Source: Field Survey, May 2008.

The Table 4.6 shows that 3 (10%) Dalit households of the CFUG members are landless and 27 (90%) households have land. Of the total households having land, 14 (51.85%) of Dalit households possess land below 3 Kattha, followed by household 10 (37.04%) having land-piece of 3-6 Kattha and 2 (7.41%) household possess land piece of 6-9 Kattha.

In the study area, generally, the households who have average family size (5-6) and hold land-piece less than 6 Kattha are not able to produce sufficient food for the whole year. If this value is counted, it shares about 26 (88.89%) households indicating that majority of Dalits households'

population fall under food deficiency. The households, which are able to feed their family members for the whole year, are involved in wage labor.

In the study area, the land that Dalits have is totally *Ailani* (left unused). Almost all of them have no land certificate. Therefore, they are called *Sukumbasi*. In addition to it, the agricultural production from the land is limited by worse soil texture (hard type soil, unproductive, less humus) and lack of irrigation facility. The rain-fed land further exposes Dalits to vulnerability for food deficiency and intensifies poverty. The poor Dalits living in poverty is the major obstacle that discourages them to participate wholeheartedly in community forestry management, preservation and promotion.

4.3 Subsistence Living

The level of subsistence also determines the effectiveness of Dalit participation in CF. It is said that an empty stomach can do nothing until and unless it is filled with grains. It implies that poverty always discourages poor in CF participation. Aiming to know the extent of poverty, subsistence level of the sampled Dalit households was also collected which is presented in tabular form below:

Table 4.7 : Distribution of Dalit Households number by Subsistence Level

S.N.	Subsistence level	Household	
		Number	Percent
1.	Up to 4 months	13	43.33
2.	4-8 months	6	20.00
3.	8-12 months	8	26.67
4.	Surplus	3	10.00
	Total	30	100.00

Source: Field Survey, May 2008.

The Table 4.7 shows that 27 (90%) of the Dalit households population are living in subsistence level and 3 (10%) of households population are able to generate income sufficient to run their livelihood.

Therefore, keeping in mind these fact and situation, if due attention is given in increasing productivity of land from forest management, it may encourage the poor Dalits to involve in forest management for a long run and sustainability. But the poors have no patient to wait for a long time as they are facing daily hand to mouth problem. Therefore, for the immediate relief, it is suggested to provide alternate income generating source to those by the concerned sectors overcome the problem of subsistence living. This will, naturally, lead poor Dalits to the involvement in community forestry management.

4.4 Participation of Dalits in Community Forestry Program

Peoples' participation can be defined as a value loaded inclusive concept of sustainable development that provides the organized form to local initiatives. It is based on the notion of bottom-up approach where people are central to any dimension of discussion. For rural development and related sector, this has meant a focus on village groups, local organizations and local leaders. The concept of community forestry in Nepal is also a result of such a focus.

Community forestry has been defined as small scale village level forestry practices where decisions and actions are made on a collective basis and where the rural people participate in planning, establishment, management and harvesting of forest crops and receive a major proportion of the socio-economic and ecological benefits from the forest products. Therefore this

chapter briefly deals with assessment of effectiveness of Dalits' participation in community forestry program in major aspects of:

-) Management of CF
-) Decision making process
-) Monitoring and evaluation
-) Benefit sharing
-) Constraints for Dalits' participation in CF

4.5 Participation of Dalits in Community Forest Management

The word management is a complex one. It includes the stage from the very beginning of CF to the benefit sharing. Participatory management is more than just voluntary labor.

Actually, the management makes decisions such as where and which area of the forest will be managed? When and in what period of the year will the forest be planted, protected and harvested? How and what practices should be followed for forest area conservation? What will be the major objective of managing forest? What organizational practices are needed for it? These are other decisions not included in the above list need to be taken, consensus or written agreement to decide, have no meaning. These agreements to a decision have to be reflected when the decisions are implemented. Only then the consensus for the decision is realized. But for successful management, it highly demands collective actions.

In the CF, nine years operational plan has been formulated in order to manage the forest effectively. During the study, it was found that almost all FUG members from Dalit households are dependent on forest products such as fuel wood, fodder, litter etc. Small landholding size and unproductive soil texture does not allow them for agro-forestry practice. Only few Dalit HHs are able to manage agro-forestry practice in their own farm. Therefore,

almost all Dalit HHs are primary users of the CF and they manage the forest for the fulfillment of their forest related products like fuel wood, leaf-litter, fodder, grass etc. There are variations in the rights of access and usage between poor and rich. The rights, sometimes is influenced by the economic and political clout of individuals. In the CF, CFUG members are able to prepare their yearly forest management plan. But the influence of Dalits participation does not seem to be effective. They involve knowingly or unknowingly in the meeting. There does not seem to be any specific set of rules for recruiting or dismissing user group's members. They involve only by self-consensus.

4.6 Participation of Dalits Community Forest User Group Members in Decision Making Process

Decision making process is political as well as social phenomenon. It is one of the most important phases of community forestry activities. The philosophy of CF says that, in this process, all the CFUG members from different strata irrespective of caste, ethnicity, sex, nationality etc. participate to define their problems, articulate their interests, problems are discussed and solution are traced by consent and consensus basis to manage the forest more effectively. More precisely to say, decision-making process is governance system.

In this study, to assess the effectiveness of Dalits participation in CF, various aspects are measured. These includes composition of FUG committee, pattern of participation, role played by Dalits in decision making process, level of satisfaction between Dalits FUG members and FUG committee, influence of elites, mechanism of formation of FUG committee etc. Attempt has been made to analyze these above-mentioned aspects.

4.7 Composition of Forest User Group Committee (FUGC)

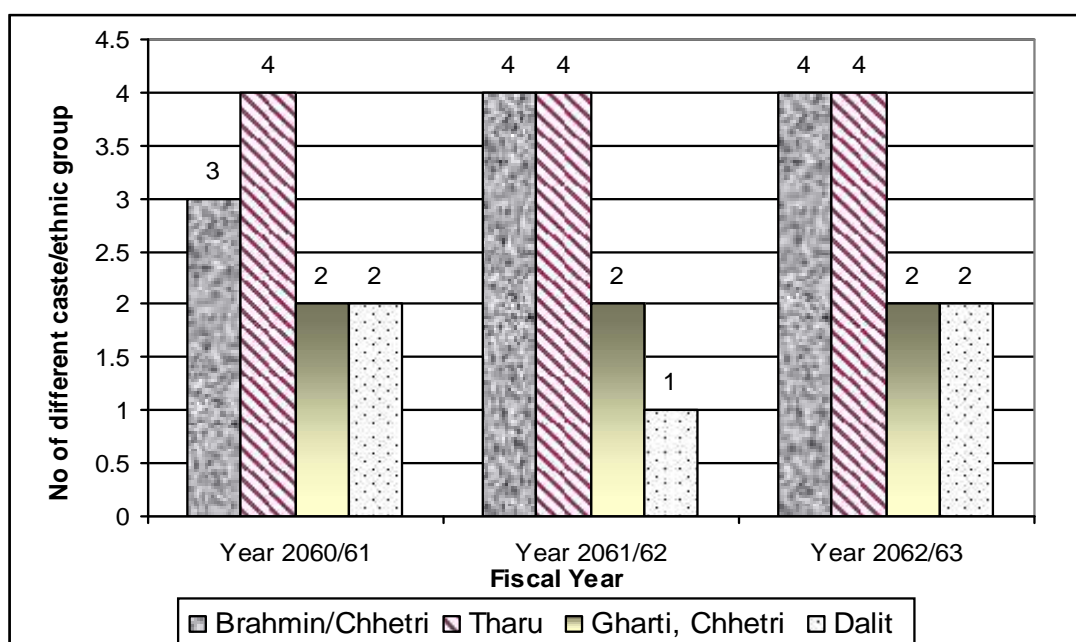
A group of people selected by the forest user group to be responsible to the forest user group for implementation of the operational plan is generally called forest user group committee. The committee is the representative of all the CFUG members and is entrusted to manage forest. Generally, the committee takes the main responsibility to influence and direct the forest management policy. Therefore, it is imperative to question what the ratio is between Dalits and non-Dalits in the CFG committee. The proportionate ratio between Dalits and non-Dalits has been given below:

Table 4.8 : Representation of Caste/Ethnic Group in Forest User Group (FUG)Committee in Last Three Years

S.N.	Caste/ethnic group	Year 2060/61		Year 2061/62		Year 2062/63	
		No.	Percent	No.	Percent	No.	Percent
1.	Brahmin/Chhetri	3	27.27	4	36.36	4	33.33
2.	Tharu	4	36.37	4	36.36	4	33.33
3.	Gharti, Chhetri	2	18.18	2	18.18	2	16.67
4.	Dalit	2	18.18	1	9.10	2	16.67
	Total	11	100.00	11	100.00	12	100.00

Source: Field Survey, May 2008.

Graph : 3 Composition of the Community Forest User Group (FUG) Committee in Last Three Year



Till date, eight forest user group committees have been formed in the CF. But the representation of Dalits in FUG committee has started lately. In Kalika CF, the representation of Dalits in FUG committee is 2 (18.18%), 1 (9.10%) and 2 (16.67%) in the year 2060/61, 2061/62 and 2062/63 respectively. Since Dalits represents only 53 (10%) of total HHs of FUG members, the representation of Dalits in FUG committee is satisfactory.

But so far the position held by Dalits in the FUG committee is concerned, all the Dalits (except on in the year 2061/62 who was vice-president) were members. On the other hand, the Brahmin and Chhetri are always holding the key posts like president, secretary, advisor and treasurer. Naturally, these positions are considered to be important to influence and direct the policy for CF management. The key informants during study informed the researcher that Dalits do not have confidence to hold the major posts. The Dalit members of the FUG committee agreed to join mainly after great appeal from FUG members.

This situation helped the research to come-up with analysis that Dalits are not in position to develop confidence to hold and influence the policy of the CF. The most ingredient factor missing here is leadership development quality because of illiteracy and low level of education. It is because, out of total Dalit representatives of last three years (5 in number), only one is educated with primary level of education.

4.8 Pattern of Dalits Participation in Committee Meetings/ Assembly

A meeting concerned with the management of a particular forest and attended by all users and representative of user groups is called general assembly. Major decisions are made in assembly meeting. Therefore, it is also an important aspect of decision- making process in CF.

In the Kalika CF, the general assembly meeting is conducted once a year and committee meeting is held in the first week of each month. For minor decisions like fixing date of assembly, penalty or fines, FUG committee is responsible. But for major decisions like time of opening forest, plantation, weeding and clearing time etc., group assembly is called on. Linked with this matter, how Dalits are participating in general assembly has been presented below in tabular form.

Table 4.9 : Distribution of the Respondents in General Assembly by Pattern of Participation and Literacy

S.N.	Pattern of participation	Literate		Illiterate		Total	
		No.	Percent	No.	Percent	No.	Percent
1.	Regular	4	44.44	2	9.52	6	20.00
2.	Irregular	3	33.34	17	80.96	20	66.67
3.	Not at all	2	22.22	2	9.52	4	13.33
	Total	9	100.00	21	100.00	30	100.00

Source: Field Survey, May 2008.

The Table 4.9 shows that in Kalika CF, of the total Dalits respondents, 20 (66.67%) of them are participating irregularly in assembly meetings, followed by 6 (20%) participating regularly and 4 (13.33%) not participated at all. If this trend is analyzed on the basis of literacy, of the total literate Dalits, 4 (44.44%) of them are attending assembly meeting regularly. Similarly, of the total illiterate, 17 (80.96%) are attending the assembly irregularly. The respondents, who have not participated the assembly at all, is because of lack of interest and household miseries.

During the research, to assess the participation of Dalits in general assembly, the minuting book of the CF was followed. But the committee could not supply the information. Therefore, data was collected from key informants which is given below:

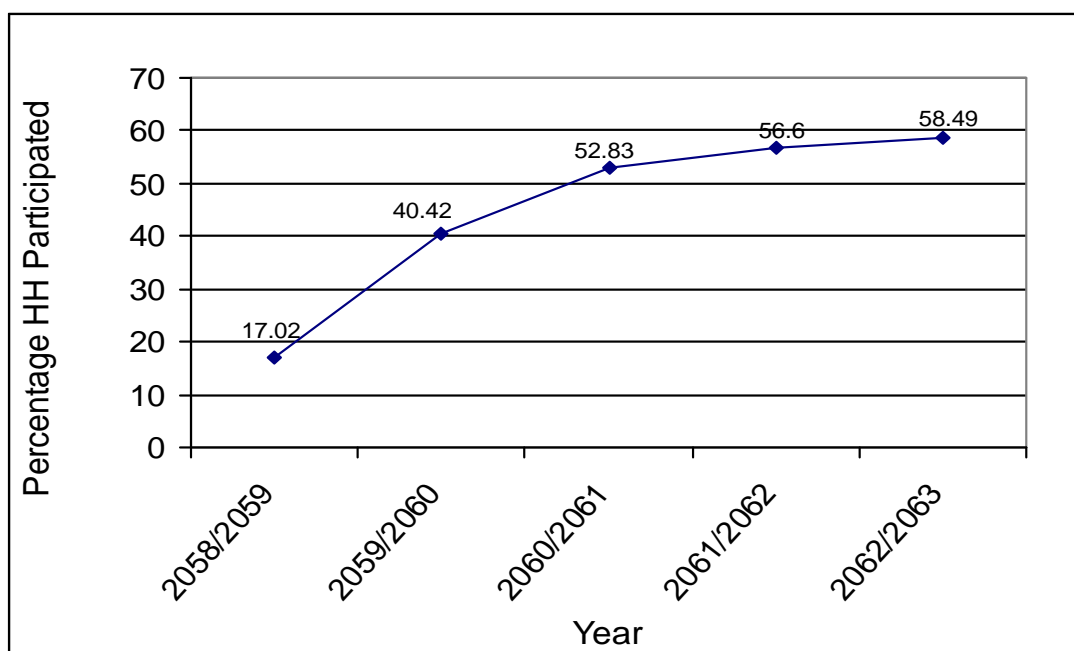
Table 4.10 : Distribution of the Participated Dalits in Assembly Meetings Year 2058/59 – 2062/63

S.N.	Years	Total Dalit HHs number	No. of HHs participated	Percent
1.	2058/2059	47	8	17.02
2.	2059/2060	47	19	40.42
3.	2060/2061	53	28	52.83
4.	2061/2062	53	30	56.6
5.	2062/2063	53	31	58.49

Source: Field Survey, May 2008.

The Table 4.10 reveals that the participation of Dalits is in an increasing order each year. However, after the year 2060/61, the increment is almost constant. This can be verified by the trend of participation.

Graph: 4 Trend of Dalits Forest User Groups Households Participated in Last Three Years



The ideology of CF emphasizes that participation of CFUG members in the forest management must initiate from their inner-feelings. Co-opted participation or passive participation holds no meaning in this regard. It is because they are the means of achieving goals of Community Forestry Program. Self-motivation is a pre-requisite for effective participation. Keeping this fact in mind, the respondents were asked to answer whether they participated in CF management by self-motivation or not. The responses made by them have been given below as:

Table 4.11 : Distribution of the Participated Respondents on the Basis of Self-Motivation

Responses	Respondents	
	Number	Percent
Yes	18	69.23
No	8	30.77
Total	26	100.00
Causes of non-self-motivated participation		
Fear of social elites	4	50.00
Fear of exclusion from CFUG members	3	37.50
Just for friends company	1	12.50
Total	8	100.00

Source: Field Survey, May 2008.

The Table 4.11 shows that, of the total participants (who participate regularly or irregularly in decision making process), 18 (69.23%) of them participate by self-motivation. Those who do not participate by self-motivation (30.77%) participate because of fear of social elites (otherwise they are scolded), fear of exclusion from CFUG members and just for friends company.

Many litterateurs reveal that co-opted participation has no meaning at all. Therefore, effectiveness of participation cannot be realized by such participation. The most important ingredient factor missing is the motivation and empowerment. These two strategies are the foundations for effective participation. It is because motivation and empowerment helps in the development of the feeling of rights and responsibility among CFUG members who feel independent to CF program.

4.9 Role Played by Dalit Community Forestry User Group (CFUG) Members in Decision Making Process

The principle of CF programs assumes forest as a social life, but not an object. It is because forest has attachment with livelihood of social life. Articulating the voice of subjugated group in decision-making process always holds priority to influence and direct the CF program. The level of awareness among CFUG members is the foundation for influencing decision-making process.

In Kalika CF, most of Dalits are informed to attend meetings but most of them do not know why the meeting is going to be held. Almost all Dalits in the area do not know how forest user group is formed, what operational plan is and what their role is in decision-making process. This signifies that very low level of awareness still exists among Dalits. During the study, key informants informed the researcher, Dalits are called in meeting just for formality and fulfilling quorum in the meeting. Therefore, the research was focused on analyzing what the roles are played by Dalits participants in assembly meetings and how decisions are made.

Table 4.12 : Distribution of Dalit Participants in Decision Making Process on the Basis of Role Played and Literacy

S.N.	Role played	Literate		Illiterate		Total	
		No.	Percent	No.	Percent	No.	Percent
1.	Proposer	2	28.58	0	0	2	7.7
2.	Supportive	1	14.28	4	21.05	5	19.23
3.	Decisive	1	14.28	0	0	1	3.84
4.	Passive	3	42.86	15	78.95	18	69.23
	Total	7	100.00	19	100.00	26	100.00

Source: Field Survey, May 2008.

The Table 4.12 above shows that, of the total Dalit respondents of the CFUG members who participate regularly and irregularly in decision-making process, 18 (69.23%) of them have no role in decision making process, followed by 5 (19.23%) supportive role. If their educational status is taken into consideration, 15 (78.95%) of them play passive role as they are illiterate. Similarly, for those who are literate, 2 (28.58%) of them have proposive role. This table also shows that literate Dalits have major role than illiterate. Similarly, those who are literate and are able to play the role of proposive and decisive, all of them informed the researcher that their voices are not heard. Social elites pretend to incorporate their voices but still they do not take seriously in discussion.

Here, participation means active, not passive involvement and it should be about transformation (cited in Chhetri, 1999). It is because participation in development should be broadly understood as an active involvement of people in decision making process so far if affects them (Uphoff and Cohen 1979 cited in *ibid*). Therefore, it can be concluded that the role played by Dalits in decision making process is not effective because of less accountability of the FUG committee towards its CFUG members as well as dominance thoughts of social elites. Therefore, making CFU committee accountable and changing the mindset of social elites to consider that Dalits are also the important component of our society is highly recommended.

4.10 Level of Satisfaction

The relationship of CFUG members with FUG committee always holds important aspect to evaluate the effectiveness of participation. It is because the committee is the representative of all the FUG members, which is entrusted to manage forest by making good environment by articulating the interests and voices of all CFUG members. Creating distance with CFUG members may promote a clash of interests and conflict so that effectiveness

in participation can not be realized. Considering this truth, the level of satisfaction of Dalit FUG members with FUG committee and the reason for dissatisfaction was measured is as follows:

Table 4.13 : Distribution of the Respondents on the Basis of Satisfaction with Forest User Group Committee

Satisfaction	Respondents	
	Number	Percent
Yes	21	70
No	9	30
total	30	100
Causes of dissatisfaction		
Dominance of elites	4	44.44
Nepotism/favoritism	5	55.56
Total	9	100.00

Source: Field Survey, May 2008.

The Table 4.13 shows that, of the total Dalit respondents, 21 (70%) of them were satisfied with FUG committee and 9 (30%) reacted that they were not satisfied. The main reason behind their dissatisfaction is nepotism/favoritism and dominance of elites. This table also shows that there is high probability of arising conflict between Dalit FUG members and FUG committee. Negotiation and making CFUG committee accountable to all FUG members is recommended to minimize the gap created by clash of interests.

Therefore, considering all these facts, figures and literatures show that effectiveness of Dalits participation in decision-making process is not satisfactory. The lack of leadership quality, illiteracy among Dalits, less accountable FUG committee towards FUG members and dominance of social elites are the major causes behind the ineffectiveness of Dalits' participation in decision making process.

4.11 Participation of Dalits in Monitoring and Evaluation

Organizationally, the control involves the settings of standards to compare performance, a comparison of actual results with standards and then steps, to close any gap that may exist between the two (Newman and Charles Summer 1962 cited in Lohani 1978).

Implementation of the operational plan for the management of forest is one of the important phases in CF program. The implementation of the operational plan includes forest protection, forest development and forest utilization. Ignorance in the implementation of operational plans leads either to over-protection of the forest with no development and underutilization of forest products or to over-harvesting leading to unsustainability. These both situations are unacceptable in forest management. How effectively do the FUG members implement the decisions of the users? Is the forest user group able to make and implement sound decisions without external support? Is there any improvement in forest condition? These are the core questions to be addressed while assessing implementation, monitoring and evaluation.

In the Kalika CF, almost all Dalits of CFUG members participate in implementation, monitoring and evaluation process with the exceptional case. How Dalits are participating in these processes has been described on the basis of information gathered from focus group discussion.

4.11.1 Forest Protection Mechanism

- i) Currently, there are two *Chaukidars* (forest-guards) to look after the forest. Out of two, one is from Dalit caste (who was Vice-President of FUG committee in the year 2061/62). The CF provides Rs. 2000/month as salary to each.
- ii) With the collective efforts of FUG committee and FUG members, they have been managing an inspecting (patrolling)

team on a rotational basis. They patrol the forest about 2-3 times a month to control illegal activities. In addition to it, FUG members have managed their own team to look after the forests. This also operates on a rotational basis. Almost all Dalits participate in this process regularly.

4.11.2 Control Over Illegal Activities

The past history of the CF shows that the forest was threatened by poachers and timbers smugglers. During the visit of the researcher, almost all the Dalits informed that illegal activities in the CF was gradually being controlled day by day and they were actively involving in controlling illegal activities. It is interesting to note that almost all Dalits perceive that the CF belonged to all users and they have equal rights to forest products as well as equal responsibility towards their forests. They further added that there were some provisions of illicit work in the CF. If somebody violates the rules, s/he will be punished. Moreover, they also elaborated to the researcher that if somebody informed the committee, it would punish him/her and seizes *Doko, Namlo, Bancharo, Khukuri* and *Hasiya*.

4.11.3 Development of Ownership

The level of awareness is an ingredient factor to determine the effectiveness of any program successfully. Here, the effectiveness of CF is determined by the level of awareness among the FUG members who are supposed to be the main actors for achieving the goal of CF. Keeping this fact in mind, the respondents were asked who took the major responsibility for monitoring and evaluation. The responses made by them have been mentioned in the table given below.

Table 4.14 : Distribution of the Dalit Respondents View for Monitoring and Evaluation with Regard to Major Role to be Played by Institutions/ Individuals

S.N.	Institutions/Individuals	Respondents	
		Number	Percent
1.	DFO	1	3.33
2.	FUG members	22	73.33
3.	FUG committee	5	16.67
4.	Forest guards	2	6.67
	Total	30	100.00

Source: Field Survey, May 2008.

The Table 4.14 shows that in the CF, of the total respondents, 22 (73.33%) of them responded that FUG members have the major responsibility for monitoring and evaluation. Similarly, 5 (16.67%) of them perceived that forest user group committee has major responsibility for monitoring and evaluation, followed by 2 (6.67%) perceived that forest guards have the major responsibility for monitoring and evaluation.

This table reveals that most of the Dalits CFUG members are aware of monitoring and evaluation. They perceive that they have major responsibility to monitor and evaluate the CF management process. It is because FUGs are the real beneficiaries from the forest. This indicates that they have sufficient level of awareness about monitoring and evaluation and they are actively involving in this process.

4.11.4 Pattern of Participation

In response to evaluate the pattern of participation of Dalits in monitoring and evaluation process, they were participating in the process. The responses made by them have been given below:

Table 4.15 : Distribution of Dalit Respondents in Monitoring and Evaluation Process on the Basis of Pattern of Participation and Literacy

S.N.	Pattern of participation	Literate		Illiterate		Total	
		No.	Percent	No.	Percent	No.	Percent
1.	Regular	3	33.33	13	61.9	16	53.33
2.	Irregular	6	66.67	8	38.1	14	46.67
3.	Not at all	0	0	0	0	0	0
	Total	9	100.00	21	100.00	30	100.00

Source: Field Survey, May 2008.

The Table 4.15 shows that, of the total Dalits respondents, 16 (53.33%) them participate regularly in monitoring and evaluation process, followed by 14 (46.67%) irregularly participating. Of the total literate respondents, 6 (66.67%) of them are participating irregularly and 3 (33.33%) regularly. Similarly, of the total illiterate respondents, 13 (61.9%) are participating regularly and 8 (38.1%) participating irregularly in M and E process.

This table reveals that, the proportion of illiterate Dalits participating regularly is more than those who are literate. It implies that the level of participation in monitoring and evaluation process is negatively correlated with literacy. The major cause behind it is that educated Dalits have still not developed the feeling of responsibility in monitoring and evaluation than those who are illiterate.

4.11.5 Improvement in Forest Quality

The improvement in quality of forestry is the major indicator of successful forest management practice, which is achieved only after the collective and supportive action of all FUG members. In the study area, the Dalits are able to evaluate the quality of forest. Almost all the Dalits perceive that the

quality of forest is being improving day by day as per expectation because of the following reasons.

-) Increased protection efforts because of controlled illegal activities.
-) Increased growth of tree-seedling and saplings because of natural regeneration and nursery plantation.
-) Over grazing is one of the major problem of the CF. This is because almost all Dalits have livestock in their house. However, this problem has been managed by regulating rotational grazing system. Almost, all Dalits are following the system strictly.
-) Natural forest fire in Chure hills is the most pronounced problem of the CF. To manage it, they received the awareness training to control forest fire.

4.11.6 Support Organization

DFO, WWF and the Range Post are supporting organizations by providing technical and financial support in nursery establishment, seedling production, expertise development for the management and development of forest. However, most Dalits responded that monitoring by such organizations is not effective due to irregular monitoring and sometimes unnecessary control and intervention.

4.11.7 Training

Forest guards, *Agharia* and *Gothala* have received the some of the training programs provided by the CF for the forest monitoring & evaluation process. During the visit of the researcher, most of Dalit respondents informed that they have not received training programs for the community forestry management and only selected members have received training.

This implies that management operation undertaken by FUG committee for required knowledge and skills in the training are not still satisfactory. Providing training programs for a few selected members of the users group does not help them to manage the CF in a sustainable basis. Scale of application of agro-forestry and harvesting operations has been very low.

4.11.8 Progress Report

The CF follows the annual progress report to address how many programs have been complete; which programs have been incomplete; why these programs are not completed, etc. These are submitted in the terminal meetings. Although Dalits participate in this meeting, almost all of them informed the researcher that they did not participate in discussion about the subject matter. They still have fear that if they discuss in the subject matter, the elites try to dominate them and laugh at their work and finally by-pass the matter.

4.12 Participation of Dalits in Benefit Sharing

Benefit sharing is one of the important aspects of CF participation. The benefits that can be derived from forests range from socio-economic and ecological which are often called tangible and intangible benefits respectively. It is generally argued that the people, who actually collect forest products must participate in the forest management, or otherwise they follow unrealistic prescription (Fisher and Malla 1967 cited in Fisher and Glimous 1989). More precisely to say, participation depends on the perceived benefits from forest by FUG members. In the absence of it (benefit sharing), people's participation can not be authentic and successful.

It is learnt that unequal sharing of benefits is the major cause for the raise of conflict. Therefore, are forest products being used according to the rules of the operational plan? Are all FUG households obtaining forest products

from their community forest? Is sharing of benefit equal? Are most forest user groups satisfied with the way the CF fund has been used? Is equity followed in distribution of forest products and CF fund? These are the major aspects to be covered while assessing the benefit sharing process in CF. Otherwise; unequal sharing of benefits will naturally lead to develop frustration with the CF program. At the same time, disparity will increase between the advantageous groups and the under privilege group. Therefore, people can realize the community forests as their own and encourage participation only if they share equal benefits.

4.12.1 Perceived Benefits by Dalits from the Community Forest Fund

In course of the research work, focus group discussion was followed to ask what benefits they perceive from the forests. The perceived benefits by Dalits from forests have been listed in the chart by dividing these benefits into direct and indirect benefits.

Direct benefits	Indirect benefits
<ul style="list-style-type: none">) Fuel wood (Daura) for cooking and heating.) Leaf for bedding (Sottar) livestock.) Leaf litter for production of compost manure.) Green grass for feeding livestock.) Twigs (Jhikra) for supporting climbers.) Bamboo & Khar for construction of house.) Medicinal plants for self-use and income generating activities.) Timber for house construction.) CF fund for income generating activities.) Trainings for skill development so that income can be generated. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none">) Maintenance of quality of environment.) Conservation of water resources.) Control over floods and soil erosion.) Increase of soil fertility.) Protection of biodiversity.

Source: Field Survey, May 2008.

Most of Dalits of the CF perceive only direct benefits. Very few of them were able to trace indirect benefits from the forests indicating that environmental awareness among Dalits has not been developed yet.

So far the criterion of the study to assess the effectiveness of benefit sharing by Dalits is concerned, it mainly deals with the benefit sharing aspects under the following headings.

- i) Benefits from forest products.
- ii) Benefits from CF fund.
- iii) Benefits from the supported programs by INGO (WWF – Nepal Program).
- iv) Benefits from equity and opportunities perspective.

4.12.2 Benefits from Forest Products

The distribution of forest products as managed by the CF is as :

- i) The rules regarding the collection of forest products such as leaf-litter, fuel-wood and fodder are made at the time of negotiation of the plan.
- ii) Each FUG HH members should pay Rs. 2 for one time to collect firewood from the forests. However, in case of green-grass, litter and fodder, no charge is taken. Ground grass is available seasonally. The harvesting days are specified at the meeting.

(Source: Kalika FUG Committee)

In the study area, most of Dalits responded that forests products are distributed as per rules of the operational plan and all of them are obtaining forest products like fuelwood, green-grass, fodder, litter, etc. from the CF. Almost of them told that the charge (Rs. 2) to be paid is reasonable and they can afford it easily. They are getting the forest products easily at any time

and have no claim in this matter. Almost of them are satisfied with sharing of benefits of forest products of daily needs from the CF.

But some of the Dalit respondents informed the researcher that in case if trees are dry or some timber forest products which are captured from illegal activities by the FUG committee are sold within the FUG members by auction. In this process, the one who pays the high price will get the products. If Dalits are included in this action, the rich people put them down by adding the price again and again. Even, tough, if Dalits want to buy the products but he/she does not possess money on the day and request to pay for the next day. But the FUG committee would not agree. In this way, they are exploiting by the rich people. This situation implies that very little attention has been given in equity.

4.12.3 Benefits from Community Forestry Fund

The distribution of CF fund always holds a major issue in benefit sharing process. The provision made for the regulation of CF fund as per the operational plan of the CF is as follows:

- i) All the income generated from the forest management and selling of forests products will directly go into the account of CF.
- ii) For the utilization of CF fund, it will be accordance the decisions made by general annual assembly on the following headings:
 - Forest protection activities.
 - Forest development
 - Infrastructural development
 - Official management
 - Contingency expenses
 - Miscellaneous

4.12.4 Pattern of Utilization of Community Forest Fund

During the visit of the researcher, the FUG committee of Kalika community forest had provided some information to the researcher about the pattern of utilization of CF fund. The major expenses made by the CF for the welfare of its FUG members are as follows:

a. Income Generating Activities

The CFUG committee has initiated *Kurilo* production and horticulture program aiming to increase the income of FUG members. For it, the CF has provided two *Kattha* of CF land to those who involve in the activities and are landless. Total beneficiaries are Tharus and no Dalits are beneficiaries of the program. This program is going to phase out due to marketing problem.

b. Infrastructural Development and Education

Road construction, installation of wells, hand-pump, etc are the major infrastructural development activities of the CF.

In the CF, there are two primary schools established with the initiation of the locally educated people who are also the FUG members of the CF. The CF assisted the genuine effort to contribute in the establishment of these schools by providing forest products like timber and *khar* for the construction of desks, benches, blackboard, window, doors, making roof etc. To assist in regulation and management of these schools, the CFUG committee provides annually Rs. 50,000 to support for salary of the teachers. About more than 200 children of the FUG members are enrolling in the year 2062/63. These children mainly come from poor Tharus and Dalits.

The researcher during visit, tried to obtain the record of admission, however could not accomplish the task. It is because the schools were closed by the time when the researcher had visited there. However, key informants informed to the researcher that about 20-25 Dalit children are enrolling in the school this year. Therefore, this effort of CF should not be undermined. Considering these statistics and information, it has been concluded that Dalits are benefiting from the direct use of forest products like fuel wood, fodder, litter etc. But, the effectiveness in benefit sharing from CF fund is not still satisfactory. It is because. the CF fund has not been utilized properly for the welfare of Dalits.

4.12.5 Benefits from Supported Programs by INGO

Under the Range Post of the area, there are 27 CFs. Kalika CF is one among these. World Wildlife Fund- Nepal Program (WWF-NP), a conservation organization, has been assisting the CF with various financial and technical supports to raise the livelihood of FUG members of the CF along with environmental conservation in the name of Terai Arc Landscape (TAL) Program. An attempt has been made to analyze how Dalits are benefited from the program on the basis of strength and weaknesses of the program.

a. Revolving Fund Program (RFP)

The WWF-NP under the name of TAL program is providing financial support of Rs. 25,000 per year as grant to the CF since 2061 B.S., aiming to encourage people's participation in income generating activities. The CFUG committee provides this fund to 25 persons (five persons from each group), on group guarantee basis. No interest rate is charged for the loan and the loan should be returned within a year. Till now, about 17 Dalit HHs of the FUG members are provided (not necessarily benefited) loans under the fund. The strength and weakness of the loan is presented in the table below:

Strength	Weakness
<p>) Loan without interest protect the FUG members from exploitation of local money lenders.</p> <p>) FUG committee provides the loan on group basis and therefore, there is less risk of not returning loan.</p>	<p>) Most of poor Dalits have no access to this fund because of fear of strict rules for returning the loan.</p> <p>) The Dalits who have received the loan are not utilizing it properly for the purpose what it was taken. Further, FUG committee does not seem to be responsible to control and monitor over the fund utilization.</p>

However, most of the Dalit respondents informed the researcher that this fund has not been taken by the poor Dalits because there are strict rules for returning the loan. If any member fails to return the loan within the fixed time, the FUG committee members will charge him by taking his property whatever they find. Moreover, key informants informed the researcher that social elites are also receiving the fund because of zero interest. They have tendency to claim that they are also FUG members of the CF and have the same rights to claim over the fund. They also informed that the Dalits who receive fund do not utilize it properly for the purpose what it was taken for. They spend the money overnight by taking alcohol or buying meat, rice, dal, kerosene, etc. to run livelihood. At the same time, FUG committee too, neglects its duties to monitor and control over the fund utilization pattern.

During the research study, Dalit respondents were asked to answer that who the real beneficiaries of the fund were. The responses of Dalits in the aspect are as follows:

Table 4.16 : Distribution of the Dalit Respondents' View on the Basis of the Beneficiaries Perceived by Them from the Fund.

S.N.	Beneficiaries	Respondents	
		Number	Percent
1.	Rich social elites	14	46.67
2.	Members of FUG committee	6	20.00
3.	Poor Dalits	10	33.33
	Total	30	100.00

Source: Field Survey, May 2008.

The Table 4.16 shows that, of the total Dalit respondents, 14 (46.67%) argue that rich social elites are the real beneficiaries of the fund, whereas 10 (33.33%) perceive the poor Dalits as the beneficiaries of the fund.

b. Improved Cooking Stoves (ICS)

In the study area, about 150 ICS have been installed under TAL program. And about 15-20 Dalit HHs have installed ICS in their houses. Almost all the Dalit beneficiaries from ICS informed the researcher that although installation of ICS was beneficial for them in cooking, it was not the urgent need.

c. Bio-gas Plant

It is also one of the important programs under TAL program of WWW-NP provided to the CF. Till now, 15 bio-gas plants were installed in 2062 B.S. and about 18 bio-gas plants (6 cubic meter capacity) are going to be installed this year. For the installation of bio-gas plant, Rs. 5,200 per plant is granted with annual interest of 9 percent, of which 3 percent interest goes to the Range Post fund and 6 percent to the CF fund. If the sanitation aspect is considered (bio-gas plant attached with toilet), further Rs. 2,000 is provided as grant.

For the mobilization of the fund under Gobar Gas Plant, the following criteria are developed by the CF.

- The eligible candidates must be the CFUG members of the CF with at least 2-3 *Katthas* of land with land certificate. Those, who live in *Ailani* land are not eligible to install bio-gas plant.
- The household must have sufficient livestock to provide dung enough to feed the biogas digester.

During the research study, Dalit respondents were asked whether the bio-gas plant is suitable for them or not. Almost of them responded that they were deprived of installing the bio-gas plant. It is because most of them have no land-certificate and are living in *Ailani* land. Moreover, they do not have livestock enough to produce dung to feed biogas digester. The interest rate is also not affordable. They further added that the program is not poor oriented, it is rather oriented to social elites.

To assess the overall programs under TAL, the Dalit respondents were asked to answer whether the program was suitable for Dalits or not. The responses of Dalits regarding the question are as follows:

Table 4.17: Distribution of Dalit Respondents' View on the Programs under Terai Arc Landscape

S.N.	Description of view	Population	
		Number	Percent
1.	Suitable	21	70
2.	Non-suitable	9	30
	Total	30	100.00

Source: Field Survey, May 2008.

The Table 4.17 shows that of the total Dalit respondents, 21 (70%) of view the programs under TAL was not suitable. The main reason behind it was

that the program was oriented to the rich and not pro-environment. Therefore, it could not address poverty of poor Dalits.

4.12.5 Benefits from Equity and Opportunities Perspective

Empowerment is defined as the capacity of groups/individuals to make effective choices, that is, to make choices and then the transform those choices into desired actions and outcomes (WB, 2006). Nepal-Australia Community Forestry Project (NACFP) – 1996 views the empowerment as obtaining power, access to resources and the opportunity to make decisions and take actions on their own behalf, by people who previously lacked such power. Participation is the process of empowering (Oakley et. al: 1991). Many of the literature reveal that opportunity is pre-requisite to empowerment. Here 'opportunity' implies opportunities for Dalits in the CF. To grab 'opportunity', the theory of equity is essential. In this context, equity for distribution of forest resources is a major factor impinging on any resources management system. Dani and Camell framed the following hypothesis "increased equity distribution of forest resources benefits within the limits of social acceptability encourages greater participation by user groups".

In the CF, poor Dalits see many more opportunities from the CF. They see income generating activities, capacity building training and proper benefit from CF fund as the major opportunities to run their livelihood. However, almost poor Dalits responded that these opportunities are limited only to those who are rich, educated and clever enough and have frequent and good relation with FUG committee. They further added that they had requested the FUG committee to provide these opportunities for poor Dalits on the basis of well-being ranking. But they ignored them flatly.

4.12.6 Constraints for Dalits in Community Forestry (CF) Participation

To analyze the constraints of Dalits for effective participation in CF, focus group discussion, and key informants views were adopted as methodology during the research time. Similarly, socio-economic characteristics of the Dalits were also taken into consideration. Therefore, an attempt has been made to describe some major factors that are considered to be constraining factors for effective participation of Dalit in CF.

a. Poverty

The main reason behind low participation of the Dalits in community forestry program is their poverty. Although the term poverty is vague in itself, here poverty implies hardship for Dalits to run their livelihood. Because of hand to mouth problem, poor Dalits are not able to participate in decision making process even if they are informed to participate there in meetings, assembly etc.

b. Illiteracy

There is no doubt that education and level of awareness have cause and effect relationship. This fact can not be neglected in the research here. In the study area, most of Dalits are illiterate and therefore have low level of awareness. The research has also revealed that only literate Dalits has propulsive and decisive role in decision-making process whereas most of illiterate Dalits have supportive role and passive role. The condition of education among poor Dalits is very miserable. As a consequence, they do not have any knowledge about community forestry program, forest related laws and by laws and its importance. So, they are blind supporters about CF development program made by upper caste or educated people. Illiteracy and low level of awareness limited Dalits to claim their rights and influence the CF related programs/policies effectively.

c. Lack of Leadership Quality

Lack of leadership quality has been traced as one of the major constraining factors for Dalits' effective participation in CF. In the study area, although Dalits are selected (not elected) in the FUG committee and almost all Dalits view that the programs under the TAL Program is not suitable for them, still they hesitate to express their views frankly and openly. Therefore, they are unable to influence the forest management practice to make favorable for poor Dalits.

d. Untouchability

Culturally and religiously, almost all FUG members of Kalika CF are homogenous groups. All users are Hindus but ethnically users are heterogeneous. The practice of untouchability is still prevailing in the study area between Dalits and non-Dalits and also within Dalits. This practice has narrowed the process of intermitting between FUG members to develop social capital for coherent collective actions for effective participation in CF.

e. Discriminatory Practice

Discriminatory practice is still alive in the CF program. This practice ranges from decision-making process to benefit sharing. In the CF, most of Dalits informed the researcher that if they expressed their thoughts frankly and forward their views against the program or sometime claim their rights, the elites pretended to incorporate their interests and voices but never took it seriously in discussion. Consequently, the Dalits feel that their partaking in the meeting will be purposeless. Then, they quit the meeting and develop the lack of interests in CF program.

CHAPTER V

SUMMARY, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION

This chapter briefly presents the summary and conclusion of the study and suggests some recommendations for further improvements in the days ahead.

5.1 Summary

Participation has become the essence of the modern development context. However, it is not a new concept to gain it momentum. The Community Forestry Program is a popular program to protect and manage the forest resources in a sustainable way. For the successful management of the program, effective participation of the CFUG members is essential. This thesis is conducted to assess the participation of Dalits in Kalika CF with the following other specific objectives.

-) To analyze the socio-economic status of the Dalit household population of the CFUG members.
-) To analyze the obstacles for effective participation of Dalits in community forestry.
-) To access the pattern of Dalit participation in CF.
-) To recommend the ways to make Community Forestry Program more inclusive for Dalits.

For the purpose of the study, the researcher had applied modern research methodology. This study was held on exploratory and descriptive research design. The sources of data were primary and secondary and the nature of data was qualitative and quantitative. There are 530 HHs of the CFUG members in the CF. Out of which, 53 HHs are from Dalits. Among the total

Dalit HHs, 30 HHs with 165 population were taken as study unit. Moreover, 10 key respondents were selected. The summary of the study has been given below:

1. The history of the CF shows that the quality of forest was threatened at an alarming rate due to reckless deforestation process.
2. Brahmin, Chettri, Janjati and Dalits are the ethnic groups of the CFUGs. Tharus are the dominant of all.
3. Of the total Dalit HH population, 32.12 percent of the people are under the age group of 30-45 years of age indicating that sampled household population is relatively adult. The sex ratio for overall study population is 108.86.
4. The dependent population of the Dalit HHs is 23.64 percent of the overall population. The overall age dependency population is 30.95. The child dependency ratio is 20.63, whereas old-age dependency ratio stands at 10.32.
5. Of the total Dalits HHs population, unmarried population is the highest (55.15%), followed by married population 41.22 percent. The number of married females is higher than male. Similarly, of the total Dalit respondents of the CFUG members, 93.33 percent are married.
6. The literacy figure of the Dalits HHs population is poor. The illiteracy of the Dalit HHs population counts 44.85 percent. Similarly the literacy of Dalit respondents of the CFUG members is also very poor. The illiteracy of Dalit respondents is 70 percent in which males are comparatively illiterate than females.
7. Farming is the major occupation of the Dalit HHs population (32.12%), followed by wage-labour (18.19%). Similarly, agriculture

is the main occupation of the Dalits of the CFUG members. Although, 90 percent of Dalit HHs have land, the distribution of land is uneven. The unproductive land and lack of irrigation facilities limited the productivity of land and therefore 90 percent of the Dalit HHs are living with subsistence and employ wage-labour as a primary source of income for subsistence.

8. The FUG members of Kalika CF are able to prepare their early forest management plan. The CF is managed by the local people for the fulfillment of their daily needs related to forest products such as firewood, leaf-litter and fodder for livestock and also for the protection of environment and soil erosion. The general assembly is held once a month (generally first week of every month). All the plans and programs are presented in the general meeting.

Most of the Dalits of the CFUG members who participate irregularly are illiterate whereas literate Dalits are participating regularly. Most of Dalits are participating by self-motivation and few of them participate knowingly or unknowingly. The effectiveness of Dalits participation in decision-making process has not been realized. It is mainly because Dalits have low level of awareness related to forest laws and by laws. The illiteracy and lack of leadership quality made difficultly for Dalits to influence the decision-making process. Moreover, discriminatory practices by social elites is still in existence.

9. Dalits participation in monitoring and evaluation is satisfactory. Most of them are participating regularly in forest protection and plantation. They have developed the sense of responsibility to protect the forest. As a result, the quality of forest is improving day-by-day. Dalits are able to control the illegal activities and overgrazing problem in the

forest. The record of the source of income and the expenditure and the condition of fund are properly mentioned in the general meeting. However, Dalits have less awareness to supervise the bill of income and expenditure.

10. The benefit sharing from the CF is somewhat controversy. Dalits of the CFUG members are not satisfied with the sharing of benefits from the forest products. The provision for getting forest products of daily needs like fuel wood, fodder, litter etc. are made available every time. However, most of them are not getting opportunities to utilize the CF fund for income generating activities. Most of the programs supported by WWF-Nepal Program are in favor of elites rather than for Dalits. The equity concept has not been introduced to provide opportunities for poor and Dalits. Little attention has been given to provide opportunities for skill-development, income generating activities, institutional building etc.

5.2 Conclusion

On the basis of facts, figures, opinion, literature and the experience gained by the researcher during the field visit, it is concluded that the effectiveness of Dalits participation in decision making process is not satisfactory because of illiteracy, poverty, low awareness level, lack of leadership quality and to some extent, discriminatory practice of the social elites. But, Dalits participation in monitoring and evaluation is satisfactory. The effectiveness of Dalits participation in benefit sharing is partially effective. It is because the provision of CF fund mobilization for the socio-economic upliftment of Dalits, (like income generating activities, capacity building etc.) are not available and the theory of equity for benefit sharing has not been followed. Moreover, the supported programs by WWF-NP are in favor of elites rather than Dalits.

5.3 Recommendations

Based on findings of the study, opinions of Dalits and key informants and the observation and experienced gained by the researcher, some suggestions are put forward to future researchers, planners and policy makers related to the CF development program to make more inclusive for Dalits participation. The researcher hopes, it will help to reduce the poverty of Dalits living there by encouraging them to participate in CF management process.

1. In Nepal, CF program has become a major issue for the management and protection of forest products. After the entire research, it is found that this program has overlooked or paid little attention to protect and manage Non-Timber Forest Products (NTFPs). Therefore, policy makers, planners and CFUG members of the CF must focus their attention towards NTFPs farming with adequate assessment of market value. For this, the CF should make provision for providing material assistance and technical assistance for those who involved in NTFPs farming. To make this farming pro-poor, some land of CF can be provided to those who are landless and poor Dalits.
2. The case study of operational plan showed that the operational plan does not properly mention to utilize the CF fund for poor. Most of expenditure of the CF fund has been focused for official management and infrastructural development. Therefore, the operational plan needs to be amended through broader discussion to make benefit sharing more transparency and favorable for Dalits. Provision should be made to introduce the concept of equity in forest management.
3. The traditional occupation of Dalits in the study area is in crisis due to the availability of the modern mass products. For the sustainability

and quality of traditional occupation, they should be trained in a new way (such as providing sewing and cutting training to Damais).

4. The two schools running in the CF is a genuine effort. For its proper management, system of coordination with District Education Office and other neighboring schools should be developed. Since literacy status of the Dalit population in the area is very poor and most of guardians are illiterate.
5. Very little attention has been given to providing capacity building and income generating activities for the Dalits. So, it is advised to seek viable options to employ Dalits in such activities.
6. Discriminatory practice is still prevailing in the area and there is high probability to create distance between Dalits and non-Dalits. For it, creating certain conditions for intermixing between Dalits and non-Dalits by organizing various programs like celebrating party as feasts and festivals, involving them in breakfast, tea, dinner etc. and worshiping Ghantababa God in temple by joint effort can lead to erode discriminatory practice for a long run.
7. The further research should be explored in terms of environmental issue and livelihood issue. Furthermore, it is adviceable to explore what mechanisms should be adopted to make CF program more inclusive for Dalits.

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Appendix A

Central Department of Rural Development Tribhuvan University, Kirtipur Participation of Dalits in Community Forestry Program (A Case Study of Kalika Community Forest User Group in Surkhet) Questionnaire for M.A. Thesis - 2008	ID <input style="width: 30px; height: 20px; border: 1px solid black;" type="text"/> <input style="width: 30px; height: 20px; border: 1px solid black;" type="text"/>
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Household Information

Name of CFUG :

VDC :

Name of the Respondent :

Ward No. :

Family types :

S.N.	Name of the family members	Age	Sex	Level of education	Occupation	Marital status
1						
2						
3						
4						
5						
6						
7						

Section A : Demographic and Socio-Economic Identification of CFUG Members

Q.N.	Questions	Classification of coding	Go to
A-1	Which religion do you follow ?	Hinduism - 1 Buddhism - 2 Christianity - 3	
A-2	Have you even attended school or acquired non-formal education or not ?	Yes - 1 No - 2	→ A-4
A-3	What level of education have you received ?	Non-formal education - 1 Pre-Primary level (3 completed) - 2 Primary level (5 completed) - 3 Lower secondary level (8 completed) - 4 Secondary level - 5 Above secondary level - 6	
A-4	How old are you ? years	
A-5	What is your major occupation	Agriculture - 1 Wage-labour - 2 Tailoring - 3 House wife - 4 Blacksmith - 5	
A-6	What is your secondary occupation ?	Agriculture - 1 Wage-labour - 2 Tailoring - 3 House wife - 4 Blacksmith - 5	
A-7	May I know your monthly income from all sources ?	Below Rs. 1500 - 1 Rs. (1500-3000) - 2 Rs. (3000-4500) - 3 Rs. 4500 and above - 4	

A-8	Do you have your own land ?	Yes No	- 1 - 2	→A-10
A-9	How much land do you have ?	Up to 3 <i>Kattha</i> (3-6) <i>Kattha</i> (6-9) <i>Kattha</i> Above 9 <i>Kattha</i>	- 1 - 2 - 3 - 4	
A-10	Have you tamed cattle too ?	Yes No	- 1 - 2	
A-11	Is your annual income sufficient to sustain your livelihood throughout the year?	Yes No	- 1 - 2	→A-12
A-12	How long does your family income hold your livelihood ?	Up to 4 months (4-8) months (8-12) months 1 year and above	- 1 - 2 - 3 - 4	
A-13	Do you have your private jungle?	Yes No	- 1 - 2	
A-14	From which forest do you collect forest products ?	Private forest National forest Community forest	- 1 - 2 - 3	

Section B : Participation in Decision Making Process

Q.N.	Questions	Classification of coding	Go to
B-1	Are you informed when the General Assembly of the CFUG members is held ?	Yes No	- 1 - 2
B-2	How do you participate while formulating policies related to the community forest ?	Regular Irregular Not at all	- 1 - 2 - 3 → B-6
B-3	Are you willingly participating in the decision making process ?	Yes No	- 1 → B-5 - 2
B-4	May I know the reason for not being participated unwillingly?	Fear of penalty Fear of elites Fear of exclusion from CFUG members Just for friends' company	- 1 - 2 - 3 - 4
B-5	Are you aware of the decisions made at your presence ?	Yes No	- 1 → B-7 - 2
B-6	If not, may I know the reasons behind it ?	Lack of interest Household miseries Dominance of elites	- 1 - 2 - 3 → B-7
B-7	What is your role while being participated ?	Proposer Supportive Decisive Passive	- 1 - 2 - 3 - 4
B-8	While being participated, have you ever influenced the plan formulation and decision making process for your betterment ?	Yes No	- 1 → B-10 - 2

B-9	If not, may I know the reason behind it ?	No access to CFUG committee - 1 Dominance of elites - 2 Lack of leadership quality - 3 Institutional weakness - 4	
B-10	Are you satisfied with the FUG committee of your CF ?	Yes - 1 No - 2	→ C-1
B-11	May I know the reasons of dissatisfaction, please ?	Poor representation of Dalits in the CFUG committee - 1 Dominance of elites - 2 Nepotism and favoritism - 3 Monopoly nature of CFUG members - 4	

Section C : Participation in Implementation, Monitoring and Evaluation

Q.N.	Questions	Classification of coding	Go to
C-1	How effectively are decision of operational plan implemented ?	Effectively - 1 Normally - 2 Not implemented - 3	
C-2	How do you participate in monitoring and evaluation process in the CF management ?	Regular - 1 Irregular - 2 Not at all - 3	
C-3	Do you follow the forest protection mechanism adopted by the CF effectively ?	Yes - 1 No - 2	
C-4	Do you observe any improvement in forest quality ?	Yes - 1 No - 2	
C-5	In your opinion, who should play the major role for the protection of the CF ?	District Forest Office - 1 FUG members - 2 FUG committee members - 3 Forest Guard - 4	
C-6	Have you received any training for monitoring and evaluation of the CF ?	Yes - 1 No - 2	
C-7	Have you ever discussed in meetings about the annual progress report of the CF ?	Yes - 1 No - 2	→ D-1
C-8	If not, may I know the reasons behind it ?	Fear of elites - 1 Domination of elites - 2 Lack of interest - 3	

Section D : Participation in Benefit Sharing

Q.N.	Questions	Classification of coding	Go to
D-1	Are forest products being used according to the rules of the operational plan of the CF ?	Yes - 1 No - 2	
D-2	Is sharing of benefits equal for all the CFUG members ?	Yes - 1 No - 2	→ D-4
D-3	Who are receiving the benefits more ?	Elites - 1 Members of the FUG committee - 2	

		Secondary user groups	- 3	
D-4	Are you obtaining forest products from the CF easily ?	Yes	- 1	
		No	- 2	
D-5	Is the principle of equity followed in distribution of forest products ?	Yes	- 1	
		No	- 2	
D-6	Are you satisfied with the nature of the mobilization of CF fund ?	Yes	- 1	→D-10
		No	- 2	
D-7	Have you ever received loans from the CF fund for IGAs ?	Yes	- 1	
		No	- 2	
D-8	Have you ever tried to get loan from CF fund ?	Yes	- 1	
		No	- 2	
D-9	If not, may I know the reasons behind it ?	Getting no opportunities	- 1	
		Negligence of CFUG committee	- 2	
		Other (Specify)		
D-10	Have you received any sort of training for your skill enhancement from the CF ?	Yes	- 1	→D-12
		No	- 2	
D-11	If not, may I know the reasons behind it ?	Getting no opportunities	- 1	
		Negligence of CFUG committee	- 2	
		Dominance of elites	- 3	
D-12	Who are receiving such training ?	Elites	- 1	
		FUG committee	- 2	
		Poor	- 3	
D-13	Are you satisfied with the programs offered to the CFUG by WWF-NP ?	Yes	- 1	→Focus group discussion
		No	- 2	
D-14	If not,, what are the reasons beind it ?	Program being not favorable to Dalits and poor	- 1	
		High interest rate of Revolting Fund Program	- 2	

Focus Group Discussion : Dalits CFUG Members of the CF

1. Does the operational plan of the CF address the problems of Dalits ?
2. How has Dalits' participation influenced the decision making process of the CFUG members ?
3. How has Dalits' participation influenced the monitoring and evaluation process of the CFUG members ?
4. What are the major benefits that you have been receiving from this community forest ?
5. Are the activities of this CF offered through TAL programs pro-poor and pro-Dalits ?

6. What are the major programs of this CF sanctioned for Dalits?
7. What are the principal reasons of Dalits participation for being not effective in forest management ?
8. What measures should be adopted to make Dalits' participation inclusive for forest management ?

**Interview of Key Respondents: Ranger of DFO, Teachers, Range Post Staff,
Community Based Representative Personnel of WWF, Local Leaders and
Members of the CFUG Committee**

1. In your opinion, can Community Forestry Program help reduce poverty even at national level ?
2. What are the principal reasons of Dalits' participation for being not effective ?
3. What measures should be adopted to make Dalits participation inclusive for forest management ?

Checklist

- 1. Details of community forest:**
 - a) Date of hand-over :
 - b) Area :
 - b) Total number of households :
 - d) Total number of ethnic group's household :
 - e) Status of forest (past and present) :
 - f) Status of bio-diversity :
 - g) Representation of ethnic groups in CFU committee :
 - h) Programs sanctioned for Dalits :
 - i) Participation of Dalits in General Assembly (of last 3 years) from the minuting book)
 - j) Rules for recruiting and terminating FUG members.

Photos