

論文の英文要旨	
論文題目	COMMUNITY FORESTRY IN PALPA DISTRICT, NEPAL IMPACT OF COMMUNITY FORESTRY IN A LOCAL COMMUNITY
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This research is a study about the influence of Community Forestry on the community in Palpa district of Nepal. Community forestry (CF, from now on CF) refers to the maintenance and management of forests by local communities. In Nepal, most of the forests were nationalized in 1957, and they were supposed to be maintained and managed by the government. However, as various problems rose due to nationalization, to solve it, the community using forest (Community Forest User Group: CFUG, from now on CFUG) became the decision maker and started managing the forests themselves. As a result, many community forests were born in various parts of Nepal.

#### **Outline of this thesis**

Firstly in chapter one, I described the background and objectives of this study. In brief, we explained about the relation between the community and forests in Nepal. Nepal is an agricultural country. More than 30% of the country's GDP depends upon the agriculture. Around 68% of the population is related to the agriculture. Forests play a vital role in Nepal's economy as well as the daily lives of the farmers. They are significant resources to obtain timber, firewood, fodder including non-timber products such as herbs. More than 85% of energy consumption in Nepal is from forest related products. This research is conducted in a mid-hill region of Nepal, and I described the issues of community forestry in villages of that area.

The Chapter two includes a literature review of the community forestry situation of Nepal and also its origin. I have also included the important findings of the literature review. 1) Nepal is one of the few countries which has formulated the community forestry policy and done its implementation. 2) Around 35% of the population in the country is related to

community forestry. 3) Community forestry has built up a good network among its users and also protected the environment. It has promoted the lifestyles of its users and also reduced the deforestation. 4) Further, the research results presented in this chapter showed that the success and importance of community forestry program in Nepalese context relies on proper management, equitable distribution and equal responsibility in decision making irrespective of the gender and caste.

However, several problems still exist in community forestry of Nepal. 1) The forests are not equitably distributed among its users. 2) There is a lack of representation from the socially and economically backward community. They also have less role in the decision-making process. Moreover, the evidence is scarce in the community forests of mid hill regions such as Palpa. This study explores the benefits of the community forestry and its management especially focusing on the economically disadvantaged and lower caste groups.

This study also includes the changes that have been made in the Nepal's community forestry policy. Since the establishment of the country Nepal in the 17th century, the forests in Nepal were in principle assumed to be owned by its king. The forests were then given to the local people for farming, and in return, the kingdom collected the tax. In the 19th century, the British East India Company promoted the deforestation of the southern plain region of Nepal (Terai). I have mentioned in details about the changes occurred in the scenario of community forestry from those old times till now.

Chapter three explains the formation and implementation of the community forest. The process of community forest formation is described in the Forest Regulation Law (1995). The process of handing over the forest to the community is described in CF Development Guidelines (2009).

Chapter four includes the research methods and descriptions of data collection procedure. For the survey site, three community forests in the Palpa district were selected. The primary data collection included direct observation, personal interviews, and group discussions. Also, we created a questionnaire and distributed it to members of three community forest user

groups. As secondary data, we gathered office records, reports and statistics.

Chapter five deals with the profile of study district and the particular village study site where sampled three CFUGs are located. I discussed the geographical conditions, land use, situation, population and religion of Palpa district, also its forest situation and the activities of Palpa district office. Also, I described the community forest user groups in the district.

In Chapter six, I explained in details of the area where the three community forests were surveyed. First, I mentioned geographical conditions and climatic conditions, and further described infrastructures such as population, economy, transportation, electricity and health. Also, I mentioned the social structure of caste and social organizations, an educational situation such as literacy rate, land use situation. Finally, I introduced the establishment year, size, type, etc. of the three community forests. CF users mainly depend upon agriculture and livestock. They practice traditional farming methods. Major sources of income are: 1) agriculture, 2) livestock 3) labor migration to overseas, 4) civil servants, office workers, others.

In Chapter 7, I analyzed the survey results. First of all, from the questionnaire results, I analyzed the 199 households about their sex, age, caste, occupation, house, education, and further analyzed the fuel used at home and the situation of firewood collection. I also analyzed the user's knowledge of the community forest and the relationship with the executive committee members. In addition, I analyzed the frequency of participation in group meetings by users and meetings organized by the executive committee and also the participation frequency of executive committee members. Furthermore, we analyzed the problems concerning the community forest activities, discussed various educational, economic and occupational conditions that restrict participation in activities, and motivation to participate in activities by each user.

Next, the interview results were analyzed. Interviews were conducted among 11 politicians, forestry officials, social activists and others. In the interview, I asked them about the community forestry group to which

the interviewee belongs, their knowledge of the current state of the community forest, and the frequency of participation in the activity. In addition, I also asked about the presence or absence of activity reports from CF users and the actual condition of CF fund management. We also touched on measures to aim for a better community forest and measures to cope with disasters and poverty. We analyzed the contents of the above interview. The results were summarized in the next chapter.

Chapter eight summarizes the research results of this research and presents conclusions and prospects for the future. Then, I provided the recommendations on how to better operate the community forests. Many members of CFUG are farmers, but there are also other members who have incomes from livestock business, labor migration, administrative jobs, etc. The dependence on agriculture differs among members. Economic level and family education level have an influence on the degree of dependence and management method for the community forest. The more families with high economic level, the lower the dependence on community forest. Though they participate in community forest activities because of their strong influence on social responsibility and decision-making power, income from employment outside the community and migrant work is larger than income from agriculture in the village. Employment opportunities outside the village are on the rise. As a result, there is a tendency for those who are not high in education standards, elderly people, women, etc. to stay in the village to manage forests. I also found that in one community forest, all executive committee members were female.

Forest resources are evenly allocated to members of CFUG. However, as already mentioned, the degree of dependence on forest resources differs among members. The economically strong members have a low dependency on the forests. Poor people have a high degree of dependence on community forests. Thus, such allocation of the forest resources is inequitable. Introduction of LP gas and biogas has decreased the utilization of forest products. Also, use of timber as a building material has declined as villages start to live in concrete and brick houses. However, the dependence on forests is still high among the poor community, such as collecting firewood, using timber as a building material, collecting feed, grazing and so on.

However, in the actual management of the executive committee, wealthy people with a low dependence on forests have a stronger voice.

Overall, the degree of dependence on forest resources throughout the community tends to decline. From the viewpoint of forest protection, it can be appreciated that the introduction of community forestry has played a substantial role. It can be said that the decrease independence has led to the expansion of forests and the reduction of the consumption of forest resources.

### **Conclusion and recommendations**

The study findings show that user group members' involvement is different at various stages of management and development of the community forest. All members of the CFUG need to be aware of the rights and responsibilities of the local forests. Decisions should not be made based on the financial or social power of some members. In many cases, the executive committee is managed by the leadership of a specific group of people with high social and economic status, and most of the decisions depend on them. Participation of lower class and ethnic minorities is stipulated by the law, but the practice on the site is different.

Also, recent economic and social change has brought about major changes in Nepalese society. Firewood is being replaced by LP gas and biogas, wood for construction is being replaced by bricks and concrete. Income due to outside labor migration is increasing. Regulations which are made several decades ago on the premise that all members of the community are equally dependent on forest resources and are responsible for the maintenance and management thereof cannot be dealt with the present scenario, where Nepalese society has vastly changed compared to past situation. Therefore, for the sustainable development of the community forests in Nepal, it is necessary to modify the old framework and policy. For example, it is better to allocate forest products based on the necessity of the families. I think that families using firewood as the main energy source should obtain more firewood than households using LP gas or biogas.

### **Directions for Future Researches**

The study has been conducted as a case study of Palpa's community forests and has limitations. Since this study is concentrated only in the Palpa

district, it may not be generalized to other parts of Nepal. Even for Palpa district, further research can be performed on community forests. Such research can include community forests linked with enhanced natural flora and fauna. A properly managed community forest can serve as a tourist destination for domestic and international tourists. Promotion of such tourism oriented role of community forest may bring the extra income for the CFUGs. Moreover, it may also help to decrease the out-migration of young people from the villages. None of the previous studies have focused on this aspect. Given that Palpa district has a positive impression about ecotourism; this can be examined for community forests in Madanpokhara. Another neglected and less studied issue is the potential of the introduction of medicinal herbs in the community forests of Nepal. Future research should also focus on such alternative benefits of community forests since the dependence on community forests for energy resources is gradually decreasing.